

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **Highways and Transport Committee**
held on Thursday, 21st July, 2022 in the The Capesthorpe Room - Town Hall,
Macclesfield SK10 1EA

PRESENT

Councillor C Browne (Chair)
Councillor L Crane (Vice-Chair)

Councillors S Akers Smith, M Benson, L Braithwaite, B Burkhill, H Faddes,
A Gage, L Gilbert, C Naismith, M Sewart, D Stockton and P Williams

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

Mrs S Baxter (Democratic Services Officer), Mr M Davenhill (Contract Asset
Manager), Mr C Hindle (Head of Infrastructure), Mr R Hibbert (Head of
Strategic Transport and Parking), Miss H Kirkham (HS2 Programme Director),
Mr T Moody (Director of Highways & Infrastructure), Mrs S Oakden (Principal
Accountant), Ms J Traverse (Executive Director - Place) and Mrs M Withington
(Principal Lawyer)

10 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

11 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

In the interest of openness in respect of item 9 - National Bus Strategy -
Enhanced Partnership Plan and Scheme, Mandy Withington, the Principal
Lawyer, declared that her son was employed by a local bus company, but
he was junior member of the company and had no involvement in the
decisions of the company.

12 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 16 June 2022 be approved as a
correct record and signed by the Chair.

13 PUBLIC SPEAKING/OPEN SESSION

Councillor D Murphy attended the meeting and spoke in respect of agenda
item 5-Notice of Motion 'Car Free Days and Parklets'. He stated that the
purpose of the motion was to encourage people to walk and cycle by

supporting such initiatives like World Car Free Day scheduled to take place on 22 September 2022.

A statement was read out by Mrs S Baxter, the Democratic Services Officer on behalf of Councillor R Moreton in respect of agenda item 6-Winter 2021/22 End of Season Review. Within his statement Councillor R Moreton explained his reasons for putting forward a motion at the recent full Council meeting, which requested that the Council, prior to carrying out the next planned review of the winter service gritting programme for the 2022/23 season and in advance of any changes to secondary gritting routes, the scoring assessments threshold for inclusion in the winter Gritting Programme should be reconsidered. Further to this he was of the opinion the scoring assessment criteria needed improving to include all school routes and areas which had steep hills and inclines, such as Timber's brook, Buglawton, Mossley and other areas within Congleton.

Councillor R Bailey attended the meeting and spoke in respect of agenda item 6-Winter 2021/22 End of Season Review. She thanked officers and the Committee for the work undertaken on the Winter 2021/22 End of Season Review. She requested that Members support the officer recommendation to reinstate Coole Lane Audlem to the winter gritting programme. Further to this she referred to the top up pilot scheme and explained she had met with all her parishes and hoped that they had responded to the Council directly. She advised that the main view of the parish of Audlem was that if engagement in a top up pilot scheme took place there could be risks associated with liability. She hoped this would be overcome for those areas who wanted winter gritting but where the finance was unavailable.

14 NOTICE OF MOTION 'CAR FREE DAYS AND PARKLETS'

Consideration was given to a report responding to the Notice to Motion raised at Council relating to the opportunities for town or parish councils and local communities to promote initiatives, as part of World Car Free Day, entitled "Car Free Days and Parklets".

The Committee generally supported the Notice of Motion put forward which encouraged people to change their mode of transport for one day. It was pointed out clear the motion did not prevent those people who needed to access a car from doing so.

A point was raised that any communication needed to make it clear to the public how any requests for put forward would be dealt with. Officers reassured the Committee that if an event promoter could not demonstrate that they had engaged with the community then a street closure notice would not be granted.

Councillor A Gage expressed a number of reservations about the motion submitted. He advised he had spoken to a number of individuals, none of whom had responded positively to the initiatives. He felt that the Committee were being expected to hand over a level of power to officers

with very little control and therefore could not support the recommendation.

In response the Chair confirmed that the powers Councillor A Gage had referred to were already in existence and that the Committee were merely being asked to approve a communication plan making it clear to those individuals who wanted to set up a parklet or road closure as the process to be followed in order to achieve this.

Councillor L Crane requested that the Committee support the motion subject to a minor amendment to the last sentence contained at paragraph 6.4.2 of the report which replaced the words 'on the 22nd September 2022' with the following the words 'World Car Free Day 2023. To be brought back to this Committee for review' in order for Members to be given the opportunity to debate the matter further.

RESOLVED

That the Highways and Transport Committee endorse the proposed response to the Notice of Motion (subject to the inclusion of the amendment as outlined above) which would be made available on the Council's highways webpage.

15 WINTER 2021/22 END OF SEASON REVIEW

Consideration was given to a report updating Members on the implementation of the revised policy for the winter gritting route network in the Borough during the winter of 21/22.

Members thanked officers for their hard work in what had been a long process to get to the stage where officers were now able to put forward final recommendations for approval by the Committee in respect of the winter treatment network for 2022/23.

Councillor D Stockton proposed an amendment to the recommendations to include a further recommendation under paragraph 3.1 of the report as follows:-

'The inclusion of Lacey Green, Wilmslow into the 2022/23 treated network'. This amendment was seconded, debated and a vote was taken in which the amendment was lost.

Councillor A Gage commented that the winter gritting network should be expanded in order to safeguard against the potential for loss of life and he expressed his surprise that Coole Lane had not been included previously within the winter gritting network. In addition he requested further reconsideration should be given by officers to those routes with tight bends which he felt were as important and should be treated with the same priority as those routes with inclines and declines. The Chair

responded that he was sure all Members would advocate expanding the gritting network, however any decision relating to this matter would form part of the budget setting process and therefore outside the remit of the Committee.

RESOLVED (Unanimously)

1. That the following amendments to the winter treatment network for implementation from the start of the 2022/23 winter season onwards be approved:

- The inclusion of Coole Lane, Audlem into the treated network.

- The inclusion of Brook Street, Macclesfield into the treated network.

2. That authority be delegated to the Director of Highways and Infrastructure in consultation with the Section 151 Officer to approve entering into funding agreements with Town and Parish Councils in relation to winter gritting 'top up' funded routes as described in paragraphs 7.19 to 7.21 and Appendix 2 of the report, to be implemented for the 2022/23 winter season.

3. That authority be delegated to the Director of Highways and Infrastructure to make minor operational changes to the Winter & Adverse Weather Policy, Adverse Weather Plan and roads included in the treated network, with any changes being subsequently reported to the Highways and Transport Committee.

16 ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW 2021/22

Consideration was given to a report updating Members on the performance across the Infrastructure and Highways services for the financial year 2021-22.

Comments were made in respect of the new monthly work programme on the website which was welcomed as well as the return of 'Fix My Streets'. In addition the extra emphasis the Council had placed on tree maintenance within the last year was also welcomed. Further to this it was requested whether or not it would be possible for the Committee to reconsider the matter relating to car parking charges and if this request be looked into expediently.

Reference was made to training on page 49 of the report and whether there was an update on this matter. In response to this Mr T Moody, the Director of Transport and Infrastructure advised he investigate the issue raised outside of the meeting and provide a written response.

Councillor L Gilbert reiterated his request he had made earlier in the year for copies of Highways policies. He had been informed operational

policies existed and that a schedule of policies would be provided by the previous Director Of Highways and Infrastructure. It was agreed that this matter would be investigated outside of the meeting and any relevant information would be circulated to Committee Members. The Chair suggested that any existence of such policies could form part of a future training exercise for Members.

It was noted bus patronage was still poor particularly in rural areas and that as much as possible should be done, including Members writing to local MP's in order to garner stronger support for the provision of public transport in rural areas.

Members asked if there had been any response from the DfT in respect of the decision by government not to allocate any funding to the Council's BSIP. In response officers confirmed that the DfT had written to the Council and the response would be circulated to Committee Members.

RESOLVED

1. That the report and comments outlined above be noted.
2. That the on-going work of the Highways Service to support delivering the Council's Brighter Futures customer strategy be noted.

17 ON-STREET ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING

Consideration was given to a report on seeking Members approval for the delivery of electric vehicle charging points that supported residents who did not have the ability to charge their vehicle at home.

Members welcomed the recommendations contained within the report with comments focussing on the practicalities of the proposals including the siting of electric vehicle charging points, particularly for those properties fronting on to the highway with no off street parking, how the Council would ensure people only parked in electric charging spaces for charging and how would displacement parking be managed.

Further points were made in relation to including an item on the work programme regularly updating the Committee on the subject, that electric vehicle charges should be fair throughout the borough, and that the proposals were not being used as a method of taxing those individuals who did not have driveways.

In response to the request for an item to be included on the work programme, the Chair advised it could be included within the annual review rather than as a stand-alone item on the work programme.

RESOLVED (Unanimously)

1. That the delivery of the next phase of charge point locations noted in this report to support residents who did not have off street parking be approved, subject to formal approval of the application by Government.

2. That the next steps for the development and delivery of the wider electric vehicles infrastructure programme as set out in paragraph 2.7 of the report be noted, and that further reports would be submitted to the Committee to seek necessary approvals.

(Prior to consideration of the following item, the meeting was adjourned for a short break).

18 NATIONAL BUS STRATEGY - ENHANCED PARTNERSHIP PLAN AND SCHEME

Consideration was given to a report updating Members on the progress towards making the Cheshire East Enhanced Partnership (EP) Plan and Scheme documents, including an update on the Department for Transport's (DfT) Local Transport Fund and Network Review process.

It was commented that it was disappointing to hear no further update on funding opportunities beyond 4 October 2022. A request was made for Members to have access to the Network Review. In response Richard Hibbert, the Head of Strategic Transport and Parking confirmed that a concise summary of the review could be circulated to Members.

A further comment was made in respect of whether there should be an amendment to the recommendation to allow the opportunity for the Chair and Vice Chair to be consulted. The Chair reassured the Committee that as both he and the Vice Chair were Members of the EP Board therefore they would provide that oversight as members of the Board and as part of the governance arrangements there was a requirement the Chair and Vice Chair report back to the Committee.

RESOLVED (Unanimously)

1. That it be agreed the EP Plan and EP Scheme be made in Cheshire East in accordance with the regulations and that the Director of Highways and Infrastructure and the Director of Governance and Compliance be authorised to take all steps necessary to bring the EP Plan and EP Scheme into effect.

2. That it be agreed that arrangements be made for the inaugural meeting of the EP Board in September – with subsequent meetings arranged as defined in the EP Plan.

3. That the Director of Highways and Infrastructure be authorised to make all necessary arrangements to commence works as defined in the EP Plan and EP Scheme.

4. That the completion of a whole Network Review as required to access the final instalment of the Local Transport Fund be noted.

19 WORK PROGRAMME

Consideration was given to the work programme.

Mrs S Baxter, the Democratic Services Officer advised of the following amendments to the work programme:-

- That a report on 'It's Not Just Water: An investigation into the manageable causes and impacts of severe flooding across Cheshire East including flood risk management, recovery and the reduction of future risk' be considered at the September meeting.
- That the Flowerpot Junction Improvement Scheme be moved to the November meeting.
- That the item relating to the Greenway Crossing of the River Dane be moved to the November meeting.
- That the item relating to DfT Active Travel Social Prescribing Grant be removed from the work programme as the bid information was received in time for the July meeting and therefore would be dealt with under urgent powers if successful.

Councillor A Gage made reference to the Ward Budget Member Scheme and thanked the Chair for extending the deadline to allow an additional two weeks for Members to put forward proposals that could be funded from their ward budgets.

RESOLVED

That the amendments to the work programme be noted.

Prior to the close of the meeting the Chair announced that Mrs S Baxter, the Democratic Services Officer for the Committee and long standing employee of Cheshire East Council would be leaving the authority. On behalf of the Committee he thanked Mrs S Baxter for her contribution over the years, in particular her support to him as Chair and Vice Chair of both the Highways and Transport Committee and the Northern Planning Committee. He wished her all the very best with her future career.

In response Mrs S Baxter, thanked Members and officers for their support over the years and wished the Committee all the best for the future.

The meeting commenced at 10.30 am and concluded at 12.52 pm

Councillor C Browne (Chair)