

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **Highways and Transport Committee**
held on Thursday 2 March, 2023 in the Capesthorne Room - Town Hall,
Macclesfield SK10 1EA

PRESENT

Councillor L Crane (Vice-Chair)

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

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

Tom Moody, Director of Highways and Infrastructure
Mike Barnett, Head of Highways
Richard Hibbert, Head of Strategic Transport and Parking
Mandy Withington, Principal Lawyer
Samantha Oakden, Principal Accountant
Nikki Bishop, Democratic Services Officer
Paul Mountford, Democratic Services Officer

52 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Craig Browne.
Councillor David Edwardes attended as substitute.

53 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

54 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 26 January 2023 be
approved as a correct record.

55 PUBLIC SPEAKING/OPEN SESSION

There were no public speakers.

56 NOTICE OF MOTION: TREE PLANTING

The Committee considered the report in response to a Notice of Motion
put to Full Council in October 2022 in relation to the planting of trees on
the highway. The motion, which had been proposed by Cllr Tony Dean
and seconded by Cllr Quentin Abel, proposed that Cheshire East

Highways worked with Town and Parish Councils to address issues raised around existing tree planting policies.

Councillor Tony Dean, who addressed the Committee as the proposer of the Notice of Motion, encouraged Committee Members to ensure that Cheshire East Highways adopted a flexible approach when considering tree planting requests and applying the framework criteria set out in the report. It was felt that the requirement to obtain a street works permit and/or licence to plant, could be costly and potentially discourage Town and Parish Councils from planting trees.

It was confirmed that a more robust tree planting policy would be developed and brought forward for consideration at a Highways and Transport Committee meeting within the next 12-18 months. Committee Members requested that the revised draft policy focus upon encouraging and promoting suitable tree planting across the borough.

RESOLVED (unanimous):

That the Highways and Transport Committee approves the proposed response to the Notice of Motion, noting:

- a) The clarification detailed in section 6.20 of the Highway Tree Safety Inspection Policy and Code of Practice Committee Report relating to tree planting.
- b) The proposed development of a Highway Tree Planting Policy in the next 12 -18 months.

57 HIGHWAYS TREE SAFETY INSPECTION POLICY AND CODE OF PRACTICE

The Committee considered the draft Highway Tree Maintenance and Inspections Policy and Code of Practice for Highway Tree Safety Inspections which had been developed to ensure that the Council's highway tree stock was maintained in a safe and sustainable manner, and in line with best practice, helping to keep the travelling public safe.

RESOLVED (by majority):

That the Highways and Transport Committee

- a) approves for implementation the policy for Highway Tree Maintenance and Inspections.
- b) approves for implementation the Code of Practice for Highway Tree Safety Inspections.
- c) agrees that authority is delegated to the Head of Highways to make and approve technical amendments to the policy for Highway Tree Maintenance and Inspections and The Code of Practice for

Highway Tree Safety Inspections as required and to update the Highways and Transport Committee on any significant changes at a future meeting.

58 HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT 2023-24 PROGRAMMES

The Committee considered the report which provided an overview of the capital and revenue budgets available for the highway service for 2023/24 and the allocation of those budgets to various programmes of work.

Committee Members queried the allocation for traffic and road safety (including education to schools). It was confirmed that Cheshire East Council worked in partnership with Cheshire Fire and Rescue to deliver road safety education within schools. Mike Barnett committed to providing a more detailed briefing on this matter, including a list of the schools that had been involved in the programme.

Cllr Akers-Smith raised concerns around the criteria for road safety investment. Officers provided an overview on the capital funding for road safety investment and confirmed that this funding was spent reactively in accordance with DfT guidance (casualty reduction). It was confirmed that there were aspects of other programmes such as Active Travel and Safer Routes to School that were preventative in dealing with issues which could lead to a serious collision. Richard Hibbert committed to providing a list of the projects that were included in the programme that would address the safety concerns raised by Committee Members.

RESOLVED:

That the Highways and Transport Committee notes the apportionment of revenue and capital funding to the key elements of the highway services shown in tables 2, 4, 5 and 6 of the report.

59 2022/23 FINANCIAL UPDATE

The Committee considered the report which provided an overview of the financial position for 2022-23.

Cllr Gilbert queried the £0.5m S106 capital investment allocated for the A50/A54 Holmes Chapel and asked when a discussion would take place with local ward members to agree how this funding could be repurposed. Tom Moody agreed to meet with Cllr Gilbert to progress this matter.

Cllr Crane thanked officers for their work in ensuring that key services continued to be provided within difficult financial constraints.

RESOLVED:

That the Highways and Transport Committee

1. Notes the report to the Finance Sub-Committee on 8th March 2023 and specifically the recommendation that service committees be recommended to (take in 1.1.1.1 and 1.1.1.2 from the report recommendations).
2. Notes Appendix 7 and the following sections specific to the Highways and Transport Committee:
 - Changes to Revenue budget 2022/23
 - Corporate Grants Register
 - Debt Management
 - Capital Strategy
 - Reserve Strategy

60 WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee received an update on the Work Programme. It was noted that:

- The Flowerpot Junction Improvement Scheme item had been deferred and a date would be agreed by officers as to when this would come forward to Committee for consideration.
- Officers were preparing the Work Programme for the new municipal year which would be shared with the Committee at the first meeting in June.

Cllr Gilbert requested that an item on 'Street Lighting Policy' be considered as a future Work Programme item.

RESOLVED:

That the Work Programme be noted.

The meeting commenced at 10.30 am and concluded at 11.06 am

Councillor (none)