

# **CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL**

Minutes of a meeting of the **Highways and Transport Committee**  
held on Thursday, 21st September, 2023 in the Capesthorne Room - Town  
Hall, Macclesfield SK10 1EA

## **PRESENT**

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

Councillors P Coan, A Coiley, H Faddes, A Gage, C Hilliard, R Moreton,  
H Moss, J Priest, M Sewart, A Burton and A Kolker

## **OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE**

Tom Moody, Director of Highways and Infrastructure  
Richard Hibbert, Head of Strategic Transport and Parking  
Chris Hindle, Head of Infrastructure  
Matthew Davenhill, Contract Asset Manager  
Steve Reading, Principal Accountant  
Mandy Withington, Solicitor  
Nikki Bishop, Democratic Services Officer

## **1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Russell Chadwick  
and Councillor Liz Braithwaite.

Councillor Andrew Kolker and Councillor Anna Burton were present as  
substitutes.

## **2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

## **3 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

### **RESOLVED:**

That the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 20 July 2023 be agreed  
as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

## **4 PUBLIC SPEAKING/OPEN SESSION**

Mr Tim Campling, on behalf of the residents of Bennettshitch Road,  
addressed the Committee in relation to item 5 (Winter 2022/23 End of  
Season Review). Mr Campling highlighted that local residents were  
dependent upon Bennettshitch Road for access and services including

emergency service vehicles and stated the impact that ongoing drainage issues had on the surface of the road. Mr Campling highlighted the safety hazards that surface water and ice represented to residents and visitors and that a number of injuries had been reported over the last five years. Mr Campling questioned if Bennettshitch Road would be included in the gritting schedule for 2023-24, what steps were taken to ensure that the quality of repairs carried out by contractors were satisfactory and how the current scoring system took into account extreme weather conditions and visitor footfall. The Chair highlighted that the Council spent approximately 17% of its highway revenue budget on the highway winter service and that any increase in winter service costs had to be managed through the reduction of other maintenance activities such as gully emptying. It was confirmed that the Council undertook regular audit inspections of work carried out by contractors but would however ask the appropriate officers to further review the road repairs and drainage issues on Bennettshitch Road.

## **5 WINTER 2022/23 END OF SEASON REVIEW**

The Committee considered the report which provided an update on the Council's Highways Winter Service Operations during the 2022-23 winter season and also outlined the service for the winter 2023-24. The Committee noted that the Council did not have sufficient funds to treat every road within the Borough however the network was managed with less funding than what was required to deliver the highest service levels across all the various highway assets and services.

An update was provided on the winter service routes for 2023-24. The Committee noted that the only amendments to the winter service routes would be those which addressed changes to bus routes which were eligible for gritting. The Committee sought assurance that, should the weather conditions become severe during the winter period, consideration would be given to reviewing the winter service routes for 2023-24, particularly those routes used for the FlexiLink/Go-too bus services. It was confirmed that the FlexiLink/Go-too bus services were demand-responsive services and during a period of severe weather conditions, the services would be restricted to suitable routes. Officers confirmed that the changes and impact on bus routes would be closely monitored during the winter period and highlighted that, ahead of the 2024-25 winter season, a member engagement session would be undertaken to allow members the opportunity to highlight criteria that they felt should be considered for inclusion in future risk assessments.

The Chair thanked the Town and Parish Councils (Bollington Town Council, Wilmslow Town Council, Macclesfield Town Council and Alderley Edge Parish Council) who had entered into agreements to top up gritting for roads considered to be locally important by the Town and Parish Councils. It was highlighted to the Committee the estimated costs of reducing the threshold which sees roads included for treatment in the winter service routes and the costs to treat all primary schools across the

borough. The Committee were informed that any amendments in future years to the winter service gritting criteria would likely have to be funded through the reduction of other key revenue activities such as drainage works and grass cutting.

**RESOLVED (unanimously):**

That the Highways and Transport Committee:

1. Note the findings of the 2022-2023 Winter End of Season Review.
2. Note the proposed process for highlighting issues that may lead to a new criteria for the scoring matrix.

**6 ELECTRIC VEHICLE INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAMME - UPDATE**

The Committee considered the report which provided an update on Electric Vehicle Infrastructure across the borough and the use of funding secured from the Office for Zero Emission Vehicles which would lead to the delivery of additional electric vehicle chargepoints across Cheshire East. The Committee welcomed the report and were pleased that, under the On Street Residential Chargepoint Scheme, the Council had been awarded £151,100 towards investment in chargepoints.

The Committee queried how many electric vehicle chargepoints would need to be installed in existing Cheshire East car parks, as a result of the government's proposals to phase out petrol and diesel cars by 2035. It was reported that approx. 25% of spaces in Cheshire East carparks would need to become EV chargepoints. It was confirmed that future updates on the proposed sites would be added to the Committee Work Programme.

**RESOLVED (unanimously):**

That the Highways and Transport Committee:

1. Note the update provided in the report.
2. Note that the Director of Infrastructure and Highways will take actions to increase staff resources to support EVI expansion, utilising the LEVI Capability Fund grant received by Cheshire East Council.
3. Agree that the Director of Infrastructure and Highways, in consultation with the Chair of Highways and Transport Committee, finalise and submit a business case to Government to secure the Council's LEVI Fund grant.

## **7 MIDDLEWICH EASTERN BYPASS - SUBMISSION OF A FULL BUSINESS CASE TO THE DEPARTMENT FOR TRANSPORT**

The Committee considered the report which sought approval of a funding strategy for the Middlewich Eastern Bypass scheme and to submit a Full Business Case to the Department for Transport. It was highlighted that the Middlewich Eastern Bypass scheme would improve the highway network in Middlewich by relieving congestion and road safety concerns in Middlewich town centre, improving journey times on the wider highway network and would enable the full development of Strategic Location LPS 44 (Midpoint 18) in the adopted Local Plan Strategy. The scheme would also support economic growth, employment and housing delivery in the town and the surrounding area.

The Committee welcomed the report and highlighted the positive impact that this scheme would have particularly for Middlewich residents. The Committee thanked officers for the ongoing hard work that had been done to progress the scheme. The Committee queried the level of risk associated with the project. It was highlighted that some level of risk should be accepted and that NEC3 Option C (target cost approach) would be utilised within the contract with the appointed contractor. It was noted that the Council had recent and ongoing successful experience of delivering major projects using this procurement option.

### **RESOLVED (unanimously):**

That the Highways and Transport Committee:

1. Approve the Draft Full Business Case for the Middlewich Eastern Bypass, annexed to the report.
2. Authorise the Executive Director – Place in consultation with the Committee Chair to make minor modifications to the Draft Full Business case prior to submission of the Full Business Case to the Department for Transport (DfT).
3. Approve the submission of the Full Business Case for the Middlewich Eastern Bypass (Appendix 1) to the DfT seeking a grant contribution of £46.80 million towards the total scheme cost.
4. Subject to approval of the Full Business Case by the DfT, approve the release of the Department for Transport grant funding to the value of £46.80 million for a contribution towards the delivery of the scheme.
5. Note that the total estimated scheme cost has increased from £92.50 million to £95.74 million.

6. Recommend that a virement for £3.24 million is considered by the Director for Finance and Customer Services in consultation with the Chair of the Highways and Transport Committee and the Chair of the Finance Sub-Committee, from the Strategic Capital Projects programme, increasing the Council contribution to £24.81 million towards the scheme.
7. Approve the forward funding and underwriting at risk of the agreed contribution to the scheme from HS2 in accordance with Assurance C6.22 the Phase 2b (Crewe - Manchester) Draft Register of Undertakings and Assurances v1.4
8. When the HS2 contribution is paid, approve the reimbursement of the Strategic Capital Programme budget with that contribution.
9. Approve the ongoing forward funding of expenditure on the scheme, including all costs of entering into the construction contract, in advance of Section 106 (S106) developer contributions, and note that this presents financial risks as outlined in the financial implications of the report.
10. Note the authorisation already given by Cabinet on 15 January 2019 to delegate to the Executive Director – Place in consultation with the Finance and Communications Portfolio Holder, exercise powers to undertake all the Page 39 necessary and prudent preparatory site clearance and general construction works in advance of Stage 2 Construction phase before funding approval from DfT.
11. Note the authorisation given by Cabinet on 15 January 2019 to delegate to the Executive Director – Place in consultation with the Finance and Communications Portfolio enter into a two stage Delivery Agreement with the Contractor for the delivery of the MEB via the Scape Framework.

## 8 **WORK PROGRAMME**

The Committee considered the Work Programme. It was noted that the following items had been added to the Work Programme:

- Street Lighting Energy Saving Proposals – for consideration in January 2024.
- Notice of Motion: Access to the national parking platform – for consideration in November 2023.
- Cheshire East HS2 Programme Update – for consideration in January 2024.
- Response to the petition to install a pedestrian crossing on the Hill, Sandbach – for consideration in November 2023.

**RESOLVED:**

That the Work Programme be received and noted.

The meeting commenced at 10.00 am and concluded at 11.00 am

Councillor C Browne (Chair)