

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **Highways and Transport Committee**
held on Friday, 19th July, 2024 in the The Capesthorne Room - Town Hall,
Macclesfield SK10 1EA

PRESENT

Councillor M Goldsmith (Chair)
Councillor L Crane (Vice-Chair)

Councillors S Adams, C Browne, L Braithwaite, R Chadwick, D Clark, P Coan,
A Coiley, D Edwardes, H Faddes, A Gage and M Muldoon

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

Tom Moody, Director of Highways and Infrastructure
Domenic De Bechi - Head of Highways
Steve Reading, Principal Accountant
Mandy Withington, Solicitor
Rachel Graves, Democratic Services Officer

12 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors C Hilliard, J Priest and M
Sewart. Councillors S Adams, D Clark and D Edwardes attended as
substitutes.

13 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

14 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 20 June 2024 be approved as a
correct record.

15 PUBLIC SPEAKING/OPEN SESSION

There were no public speakers.

16 HIGHWAY SERVICE CONTRACT

The Committee considered the report on the review of the Highways
Service Contract (HSC).

On 3 October 2018 the Council had commenced a 15-year contract to
deliver highways services with Ringway Jacobs Ltd (the Highways Service
Contract).

The HSC contained a mid-term break clause which allowed the Council to shorten the service period to 8 years in specific circumstances. If exercised the Council was required to notify Ringway Jacobs by 2 October 2024.

The Council had appointed the Future Highways Research Group to undertake a peer review of the HSC. The Peer Review report, at Appendix 1 to the report, made 20 recommendations for improvement. An improvement plan would be developed in response to these recommendations.

From the findings of the peer review, it was recommended that the Council should not exercise the break clause.

A Member Advisory Panel had been created to advise the Director of Highways and Infrastructure, from an elected member perspective, on matters concerning the peer review. The report of the Member Advisory Panel was set out in Appendix 3 to the report.

The Committee referred to the funding for the highways works and how the contract operated. It was explained that an open book approach was used, and the Council has regular discussions with the contractor on costs. Reference was made to the quality of repairs done and resources available to carry out the work and the expansion of the client team to include a quality control officer. The Committee noted the disconnection between the public perception of the state of road in Cheshire East and the industry professional view reported in the peer review report.

17 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED:

That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item pursuant to Section 100(A)4 of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and the public interest would not be served in publishing the information.

18 HIGHWAY SERVICE CONTRACT

The Committee considered the confidential Appendix 4.

19 READMITTANCE OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED:

That the press and public be re-admitted to the meeting.

20 HIGHWAY SERVICE CONTRACT

The recommendations were proposed and seconded and put to the vote.

RESOLVED (unanimously): That the Committee

- 1 note the findings of the peer review, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report, and the views of the Member Advisory Panel, as set out in Appendix 3 to the report.
- 2 approve the contact break clause is not exercised.
- 3 delegate to the Director of Highways and Infrastructure to develop and implement a plan to respond to the findings of the peer review.
- 4 Approve that resources to consider the successor delivery model are included in financial planning from April 2028 to October 2033.

21 WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee considered the Work Programme.

It was noted that the report on the Flowerpot Junction Improvement Scheme would now be brought to the Committee in January 2025.

There was still no clarity on how the National Parking Platform would be rolled out and it was therefore proposed that the update report be moved back to the November 2024 meeting.

RESOLVED:

That the Work Programme be noted.

The meeting commenced at 10.00 am and concluded at 11.20 am

Councillor M Goldsmith (Chair)