

# **CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL**

Minutes of a meeting of the **Cabinet**  
held on Tuesday, 7th May, 2013 at Committee Suite 1,2 & 3, Westfields,  
Middlewich Road, Sandbach CW11 1HZ

## **PRESENT**

Councillor M Jones (Chairman)  
Councillor D Brown (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors J Clowes, J P Findlow, L Gilbert, J Macrae, B Moran, P Raynes  
and D Topping

## **Members in Attendance**

Councillors Rhoda Bailey, L Brown, K Edwards, P Groves, P Hoyland,  
B Livesley, P Mason, A Moran, P Nurse, A Thwaite and R West

## **Officers in Attendance**

Kim Ryley, Paul Bradshaw, Lorraine Butcher, Rachel Musson, Mike Rowan,  
Caroline Simpson, Paul Mountford

## **Apologies**

Councillor Rachel Bailey

## 180        **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

## 181        **PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME/OPEN SESSION**

There were no members of the public wishing to speak.

## 182        **QUESTIONS TO CABINET MEMBERS**

Councillor P Nurse asked about the current position with regard to the  
AstraZeneca site at Alderley Edge.

The Leader of the Council responded by saying that the Council was about  
to announce the creation of 300 new jobs at the site as the Council  
continued to work with AstraZeneca and others to attract new companies.

## 183        **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

### **RESOLVED**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2013 be approved as a  
correct record.

## KEY DECISION 54 - A6 TO MANCHESTER AIRPORT RELIEF ROAD - OUTCOME OF FIRST PHASE CONSULTATION AND EMERGING PREFERRED SCHEME

Cabinet considered a report on the outcomes of the first phase of the consultation on the A6 to Manchester Airport Relief Road which took place between October 2012 and January 2013 on junction options.

The results of the consultation were being used to inform the development of an emerging preferred option for the scheme which would then be subject to a second phase of consultation later in the year.

The Leader of the Council gave an assurance that local ward members would be kept informed of progress.

### RESOLVED

That

- (1) the high level of public support for the scheme, with over 80% of those expressing a preference being in favour, be noted;
- (2) the following options be approved as the Council's preferred junction options:

| Location                                      | Recommended Junction Option   |
|---|---|
| Location 1. Styal Road, Wythenshawe           | Option 1 Traffic lights controlled cross roads over airport spur rail lines   |
| Location 2, A34 / Stanley Road, Stanley Green | Option 1 Upgraded roundabout with traffic lights.   |
| Location 3, Woodford Road, Bramhall           | Option 2 Scheme passes under Woodford Road with new traffic lights controlled junctions introduced.   |
| Location 4, Chester Road Link, Poynton        | Option 1 Scheme connects to Chester Road via a new short link road. The scheme has a large traffic lights controlled gyratory junction. This option best caters for a future Poynton Relief Road. |
| Location 5, Woodford Road, Poynton            | Option 1: Scheme passes under a new bridge for Woodford Road.   |
| Location 6, Macclesfield Road, Hazel Grove    | Option 1: Traffic lights controlled cross roads.  |

- (3) the Head of Environmental Protection and Enhancement be authorised to approve minor modifications to the preferred junction options above, including those specific measures outlined for each junction in Section 10 of the report.

185        **VISION AND STRATEGY FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH: EAST CHESHIRE - ENGINE OF THE NORTH**

Cabinet considered a report seeking approval for the East Cheshire-Engine of the North: Our Vision and Strategy for Economic Growth.

This was a high level document which built upon other key strategies and policies and which set out a Vision for Growth, a Strategy for Change and an Investment Plan. The document was needed to pull together all aspects of the Council's economic growth activity into one 'vision' for economic growth which succinctly captured the scale of the Council's ambition, the potential impact on the national and regional economy and the benefits at a local level. It identified the role of the Council in delivering economic growth, and explained how the Local Plan, place-based initiatives, commissioning, infrastructure investment, business rates and access to finance would be put in place to enable the conditions for growth.

**RESOLVED**

That

- (1) the document 'East Cheshire - Engine of the North: Our Vision and Strategy for Economic Growth' be approved; and
- (2) the Vision and Strategy be pro-actively promoted to key influencers, locally, nationally and internationally, and to both the public and private sectors.

186        **CONNECTING CHESHIRE PROJECT UPDATE**

Cabinet considered a report detailing progress on the development and delivery of the Cheshire, Warrington & Halton Local Broadband Plan.

The project had completed a procurement process to appoint a strategic telecommunications investment partner, the successful bidder being British Telecom PLC (BT). The strategic telecommunications investment partner would provide over £9.0m to deliver and gap fund the rollout of fibre broadband to rural areas of Cheshire, Warrington and Halton. The project was expected to deliver total coverage of over 96% of premises able to take-up a fibre broadband service by the summer 2015 compared with around 78% coverage at present.

To complement the deployment of superfast broadband services an integrated demand stimulation campaign would be led by the project to encourage take-up of fibre broadband.

In July 2013 a partner would be procured to deliver a tailored programme of business support for eligible Small and Medium sized Enterprises (SMEs) to ensure they could make best use of high speed digital services.

An addendum was circulated at the meeting which discussed a potential concern of the Council's as to the extent to which British Telecom's contract dealt with rescoping the project in the event that funding was withheld. Following discussions with BT, BDUK and the Minister Ed Vaizey, the Council had agreed to accept the contract on the condition that BT signed an accompanying letter committing to establish robust processes to manage such a situation should it arise.

### **RESOLVED**

That the report be noted and the appointment of BT as the project's strategic telecommunications investment partner be endorsed.

#### **187      PROPERTY ASSET TRANSFER: TRANSFER OF THE FORMER WATER STREET SCHOOL, BOLLINGTON**

Cabinet considered a report seeking approval for the transfer of the land and buildings known as the Former Water Street School, Bollington to the Bollington Initiative Trust.

The proposed asset transfer was in line with the Localism Act and would enable the local community to have a direct say on how the asset was managed. The proposed sale would generate a significant revenue saving and relieve the Council of ongoing maintenance and management liability.

Bollington Initiative Trust was a Macclesfield-based charity involved with the acquisition and conservation of public buildings and open spaces for continued public use and access. The Trust had been managing the site for some time under a management agreement. It intended to fully repair the building and carry out improvements for the benefit of community users. In order to fund this, the Trust may need to dispose of or let the first floor for commercial, residential or other uses. The ground floor would be used for community purposes. The Trust may also choose to dispose of some land, as identified in the report, for the furtherance of its charitable purposes at Water Street School. The Trust had submitted a detailed business case in support of its proposal.

An addendum was circulated at the meeting which set out a number of minor changes to the report.

## **RESOLVED**

That

- (1) both the Council's freehold and leasehold interests in the site shown edged in red on the plan attached to the report be transferred to Bollington Initiative Trust upon the terms outlined in Section 10 of the report as amended; and
- (2) delegated authority be granted to the Director of Economic Growth and Prosperity and the Interim Monitoring Officer and Head of Legal Services to finalise the details of the proposed freehold transfer and long lease assignment of the property and any statutory declarations/statements of truth as may be required to regularise title and transfer the whole site to Bollington Initiative Trust.

## 188      **DEVELOPMENT COMPANY**

Cabinet considered a report recommending that the Council set up a Development Company, wholly owned and controlled by the Council, to drive forward the development of the Council's land assets for housing and economic growth.

The report summarised the work of Deloitte LLP (business and financial advisors) and Bevan Brittan LLP (legal advisors), appointed to evaluate options and report back on a preferred model to provide the best opportunity to realise the ambitions of the Council, and to create the infrastructure necessary to ensure greater prosperity for local residents.

The preferred option was the delivery of the Council's objectives through a wholly-owned and controlled arm's length company, where the Council retained ownership of the physical assets. The principal advantage of this option was that it allowed the Council to focus its delivery through the separate arm's length company, without distracting the company's management and staff with the Council's other day-to-day operational requirements. The Company could also better promote the Council's land and property assets for development through the Local Plan and planning process.

## **RESOLVED**

That

- (1) Council be recommended
  - (a) to approve the setting up of a Development Company – East Cheshire, Engine of the North, wholly owned and controlled by the Council, in the form described in the report, to drive forward the development of the Council's land assets, as a key element for the Council's wider plans for housing and economic growth;

- (b) to appoint initially to the Board of the Company the following non-executive Directors: Cllr A Thwaite (Chairman), Cllr D Druce (Vice Chair), Cllr D Newton (Vice Chair), Cllr P Groves, the Director of Economic Growth and Prosperity (Caroline Simpson), the newly-appointed Head of Development (Darran Lawless) and to agree that the Interim Borough Solicitor (Mike Rowan) take on the role as Company Secretary; and
- (c) to approve that a Shareholder Committee be established comprising of the Leader, Deputy Leader, Portfolio Holder for Prosperity, Portfolio Holder for Resources and the Chief Executive.
- (2) subject to (1) above, the Interim Chief Executive and Interim Borough Solicitor and Monitoring Officer be granted delegated authority to take forward the actions required to implement the recommendations and set up the Development Company, reporting back to Cabinet in October 2013 on progress, specific actions to take forward being:
1. to set up the Company as operational (separate legal entity) and establish its Memorandum and Articles of Association by end May 2013;
  2. to finalise initial staffing arrangements and related HR considerations; insurance arrangements; and other operating procedures to ensure that the Council's budget envelopes and capital plans in relation to the activities of the Company are clearly understood by end May 2013; and
  3. to develop a 3-Year Business Plan for the Company, to establish the portfolio of assets it is required to act upon; any provision of resources to facilitate land acquisitions; set objectives against which its performance will be measured.; and draw up Company Objects and, if relevant, an Agency Agreement by end October 2013.

The meeting commenced at 10.00 am and concluded at 11.05 am

M Jones (Chairman)