

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **Crewe Town Board**
held on Friday, 3rd January, 2025 at Virtual Meeting via Microsoft Teams

PRESENT

Tony Davison (Chair)
Simon Yates, Rick Carter, Guy Kilminster, Doug Kinsman, Councillor
Nick Mannion, Graham McKnight and Councillor Jill Rhodes

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE

Pete Turner, Lindsay Lewis, Martin Wood

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

Peter Skates, Director of Growth and Enterprise
Jez Goodman, Development and Regeneration Manager
Sam Jones, Democratic Services Officer

71 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (1 MINUTE)

Apologies for absence were received from Connor Naismith MP, Andy Butler, Paul Colman, Jasbir Dhesi, Sally Hepton and Kate Blakemore.

72 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (1 MINUTE)

There were no declarations of interest.

73 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (3 MINUTES)

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 06.12.2024 be approved as a correct record.

74 LEIGHTON HOSPITAL (15 MINUTES)

The Board received an update on the Leighton Hospital Redevelopment from Ian Moston, Chief Executive Officer, and Russ Favager, Board Senior Responsible Officer – Leighton New Hospital Programme and Estates Redevelopment.

The Board were updated that:

- Leighton Hospital was due to be redeveloped due to the amount of reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete (RAAC) beams within the building's structure, which were no longer deemed fit for purpose.

- The new hospital would be built on the existing site, with an area of 110,000 square meters, have 572 overnight stay beds, was modelled up to 2040 demand levels, and would be built as a health and care neighbourhood.
- The new hospital would be built in a standard repeatable design to maximise staffing and manufacturing efficiencies and improvements in patient care, and make the best use of technology.
- The redevelopment would focus on social value by improving health, wellbeing and by providing a sense of community, protecting and improving our natural environment, making sustainable and resilient supply chains and strengthening skills, employment and inclusion.
- A part of the redevelopment site would be open to specialist treatment sites, a multi-story car park, hospices, and retail and innovation units.
- The planning application would be submitted in spring / summer 2025 with the aim for construction to be completed by 2031.
- Opportunities were being looked into as to where the new hospital could link in with businesses across Cheshire East in terms of innovation.
- The difficulties of getting to and from the hospital for staff and patients by public transport was noted.
- The multiplier effect of all government departments (health, transport, communities) investing in Crewe at the same time was noted.

RESOLVED:

That the Board receive a further update late in the 2025.

That the updates be noted.

75 TOWNS FUND PERFORMANCE UPDATE (15 MINUTES)

The Board received an update on several of the Towns Fund Projects and Additional Programme Management updates from Jez Goodman, Development and Regeneration Manager, and individual project sponsors.

Following submission of the April – September 2024 Performance Report, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government had requested further clarification on project progress, and updated that extensions to project timescales would be confirmed on a case by case basis.

Repurposing Our High Streets – The number of vacant units was down from 32 to 24 with several new tenancies pending. New case study videos were now online at www.openincrewe.co.uk. Some minor amendments to the grant application process and criteria had been introduced to enable swifter process with fewer restrictions.

History Centre and Public Realm – The new History Centre build would commence in January 2025 with the replacement surface car park open from March 2025. The Ice Cream Van element was progressing in connection with Cheshire College South and West.

Youth Zone – Telecoms works were expected to recommence on 6 January 2025 and last approximately 3 – 4 weeks. There was likely to be disruption to those who use the service road for parking. Time delay risks could be mitigated through an extension of time for Youth Investment Fund and / or Towns Fund. A coal tar had been identified below the site which was being investigated.

Crewe Youth Club – Major building work underway and was on target for completion in March 2025.

Cumberland Arenda - Work on site to remove telegraph poles was due to start shortly and building works were to commence January 2025 and to open by October 2025.

Valley Brook Corridor – The project was looking to actively change the project design to avoid highway impact. Alternative plans were being looked in to with a first draft of revised feasibility expected mid-January 2025 with updated provided to the Board in February 2025.

Warm and Health Homes – Improvements would be standardised and focus on the building fabric and windows. Red ash had been identified around the area of public realm and was being investigated.

Southern Gateway – Main works to be completed by March 2025.

Wayfinding – Two fingerposts to be installed at History Centre public realm site.

***Mill Street Corridor** – Phase 1 works completed and Phase 2 works to commence in January 2025 with relocation of site compound to Railway Street car park.

***Pocket Parks** – Contaminated land checks at Lime Tree Avenue were completed, with target for planting to commence at this location and Samuel Street in January 2025, with equipment to be installed March – April 2025. Westminster Street Pocket Park consultation expected January 2025 and to be completed by January 2026.

***Jubilee / Wishing Well Project** – Planning application had been submitted and construction on site was hoping to commence in early 2025 and be completed by the summer.

* Projects not funded through the Towns Fund.

RESOLVED:

That the Valley Brook Project team would present to the Board on 7 February 2025.

That the updates be noted.

76 STRATEGIC UPDATE FROM CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL (15 MINUTES)

The Board received a Strategic Update from Peter Skates, Director of Growth and Enterprise.

Leighton – In addition to the hospital redevelopment, a lot of residential planning applications and alternative use developments were expected as the hospital would be at catalyst for wider development in, and surrounding, Crewe.

Crewe Roundtable Event – The Crewe Roundtable Event took place on 6 December 2024 and there were focused discussions between key stakeholders around the future of HS2 and Northern Powerhouse Rail, with Crewe at the centre. A further summit would hopefully be scheduled in spring 2025 with senior Ministers.

Devolution – The government had published their English Devolution White Paper on 16 December 2024.

Cheshire East Council's Financial Position – The Council's Finance Sub-Committee would review the Council's Third Financial Review and forecast budget for 2025/2026 on 9 January 2025.

RESOLVED:

That the updates be noted.

77 AOB (5 MINUTES)

There were no other items for discussion.

78 DATE OF NEXT VIRTUAL MEETING

That the date of the next meeting be confirmed as 07.02.2025 commencing at 09:30am.

The meeting commenced at 9.45 am and concluded at 11.25 am

Tony Davison (Chair)

