

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **Environment and Communities Committee** held on Thursday, 5th June, 2025 in The Capesthorne Room - Town Hall, Macclesfield SK10 1EA

PRESENT

Councillor D Jefferay (Chair)
Councillor H Seddon (Vice-Chair)

Councillors L Braithwaite, D Clark, T Dean, H Moss, B Posnett, L Smetham, M Warren, H Whitaker, A Burton and A Coiley

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

Chris Allman, Director of Planning and Environment
Ralph Kemp, Head of Environmental Services
Steve Reading, Finance Manager (Place & Corporate Services)
James Thomas, Principal Solicitor
Laura Woodrow-Hirst, ASB and Community Enforcement Manager
Rachel Zammit, Health Promotion and Improvement Manager
Sam Jones, Democratic Services Officer
Frances Handley, Democratic Services Officer

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors M Brooks and M Houston, A Moran. Councillors A Burton and A Coiley were present as a substitutes.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

In the interests of openness and transparency, the following Declarations of Interest were made:

In relation to Item 6, Councillor Liz Braithwaite stated that she was a Ward Councillor for the area mentioned within the report.

3 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Committee raised concerns regarding a written response from the previous meeting. The response was published and circulated to Committee Members on 2 June 2025. The published responses can be found on the link below;

[Written responses to questions raised in Environment and Communities Committee PDF 150 KB](#)

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 27 March 2025 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

4 PUBLIC SPEAKING/OPEN SESSION

David Mayer addressed the committee in relation to agenda item 7, as a member of Global Justice Macclesfield. Mr Mayer stated that a motion had been submitted to Full Council about this by Cllr Sam Corcoran, the Environment and Climate Change Champion. Mr Mayer stated that a large proportion of the UK support the government's net zero target and asked the committee to endorse the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Mr Mayer stated that the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty was based on Atomic Weapons Non-Proliferation Treaty, which had been agreed and endorsed by about 180 countries and had been largely successful.

Mr Mayer stated that the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty complimented Cheshire East Council's plans to become a carbon neutral council by 2030, and a carbon neutral borough by 2045. Mr Mayer said that supporting this Treaty would assist poorer countries which were already affected by climate change, and regions within the UK which were also dealing with the increasing impact of extreme weather events.

Mr Mayer stated that The Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty Initiative was a global effort to foster international cooperation to accelerate a transition to renewable energy for everyone and to end the expansion of coal, oil and gas, and equitably phase out existing production. Mr Mayer stated that many cities (including, London, Birmingham, Manchester and Glasgow), local authorities, world bodies, and so far 16 countries had already endorsed the Treaty. Mr Mayer said that by signing up to the Treaty the Council were not being requested to spend any more money, but add its support to the treaty which, in his view, was the best chance to limit global warming to a manageable level.

5 FINAL OUTTURN 2024/25

The Committee considered the report which provided members with an overview of the Cheshire East Council final outturn for the financial year 2024/25. Members were asked to consider the financial performance of the Council. The report also proposed treatment of year end balances that reflected risks identified in the Medium Term Financial Strategy which was approved by Council on 26 February 2025.

The supplementary agenda provided a revised version of the report which was considered.

The Committee raised concerns of the overspend of other service areas and asked what actions were being taken to address this. It was also asked what the plans were to recover the debts owed to the Council in relation to the Environment and Communities Committee.

The Committee were updated that the necessary actions were being taken to reduce the amount of overspend and explained that there is still a national issue and awaiting further updates. Officers stated that the Council has a successful approach to debt recovery and would endeavour to ensure that all monies owed to the council were paid. Officers committed to providing further details of what is included for Environment and Communities.

The Committee raised concerns over capital expenditure in relation to a variance of 59%, and queried the general reserves being used, and asked what the difference between the interest that would be paid on the exceptional financial support, and the interest that could be gained on having it in the reserve account. Officers committed to providing a written response.

Members commended Cheshire East finance staff for their work and dedication.

RESOLVED (by majority):

The Environment and Communities Committee is recommended to:

1. Consider the overall financial performance of the Council in the 2024/25 financial year, as contained within the report, as follows:
 - a) A Net Revenue Overspend of £17.6m against a revised budget of £365.8m (4.8% variance) funded by conditional Exceptional Financial Support (Capitalisation Direction) via borrowing.
 - b) General Reserves closing balance of £6.3m.
 - c) Capital Spending of £88.4m against an approved programme of £215.8m (59% variance).
2. Consider the contents of Annex 1.
3. Approve the Supplementary Capital Estimates (SCE) and Capital Virements between £500,000 and £1,000,000 in accordance with Financial Procedure Rules for the following Committee's as detailed in Annex 1, Section 5, Table 4
4. Approve the new Reserves in the Reserves Section (Annex 1, Section 5, Table 1) which includes proposed movements to reserves.

6 **MACCLESFIELD TOWN CENTRE PUBLIC SPACES PROTECTION ORDER (PSPO) RENEWAL**

The committee considered a report concerning the extension of an existing Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) under section 60(2) of the Anti Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 (the ASB Act) for Macclesfield Town Centre.

Cllr Ashely Farrall addressed the committee as a visiting member as a Ward Councillor for Macclesfield Central speaking on behalf of residents of the town centre. Councillor Farrell stated that he fully supported the extension of the Macclesfield Town Centre PSPO, and that the current PSPO had been a valuable and effective tool since its implementation in July 2022. Cllr Ashely Farrall stated that it was a result of close collaboration between Cheshire East Council, Cheshire Police and local stakeholders, who at the time were responding to a real need that residents and businesses were constantly reporting issues of alcohol fuelled disorder, causing alarm or intimidation and a general decline in the public environment, and intervention was needed. Cllr Ashely Farrall stated that the PSPO has delivered results and that Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) had dropped by 65%, alcohol related incidents had more than halved and that in the year to March 2025, only two alcohol related ASB incidents had been reported. Councillor Ashley Farrell stated that they were not just statistics, but this represented real improvements to the people who live, work and visit the town centre on a daily basis. Cllr Ashely Farrall noted that the orders could be used proportionately and sensitively, and no fixed penalty notices had been issued under the order, and it was not a tool for criminalising vulnerable individuals; it was a mechanism for early, calm and preventative action that empowered officers to step in before behaviour escalated. Cllr Ashely Farrall repeated that the order should not, and would not, be used to criminalise people experiencing homelessness in the town.

Cllr Ashely Farrall stated that during the recent consultation, 84% of respondents supported extending the PSPO and residents said that the town centre felt safer and more inviting as a result. Cllr Ashely Farrall said that the signage and public engagement made it clear what was expected, and what the consequences of non compliance were. As a ward councillor, Councillor Farrell stated he would continue to work with officers and the community to ensure it remained effective and fair and that this not only built trust with enforcement teams, but in the Council's ability to listen and act, and urged the committee to approve the extension of the PSPO until 2028.

Members welcomed the recommendations and were in support of the recommendations to extend the order and queried whether the defined area could be changed in the duration of 3 years if the evidence suggests that it should be.

The committee were updated that the geographical area could be varied or changed however any changes or variation on a public space protection order would have to go through public consultation and to be reviewed and brought back to the committee to make the decision and would require a considerable amount of work.

RESOLVED (unanimously):

The Environment and Communities Committee is recommended to:

1. Approve the proposed extension of the PSPO as provided in Appendix C with a commencement date of 18th July 2025 for a duration of 3 years (expiring at midnight on 17th July 2028)

7 NOTICE OF MOTION: FOSSIL FUEL NON-PROLIFERATION TREATY

The committee considered a report which set out the proposed response from Cheshire East Council to a Notice of Motion from the Full Council Meeting of 11th December 2024 which concerned the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Councillor Sam Corcoran addressed the committee as a visiting member as proposer of the Notice of Motion. Councillor Sam Corcoran stated that the Notice of Motion was to note that the scientific consensus was clear, that fossil fuels are primarily responsible for accelerating global climate change and encouraged Members to view the NASA website which showed graphs of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere increasing from under 320 parts per million in 1970 to over 420 parts per million today. Councillor Sam Corcoran stated that it was not just the statistical evidence, but the scientific explanation that carbon dioxide acted like a blanket, keeping in the energy from the sun, so the more carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, the hotter the planet would get, as a result of burning fossil fuels. Councillor Sam Corcoran also noted that the reliance on fossil fuels posed a risk to public health.

Councillor Sam Corcoran stated that the economic opportunities of the transition to clean energy were large. Councillor Corcoran recommended Members read the Director of Public Health's 2024 annual report. Councillor Sam Corcoran stated that it was inevitable that the health well-being and livelihoods of people in Cheshire East and across the UK would continue to be put to greater risk with the continued use of fossil fuels. Councillor Corcoran stated that, as the Chair of the Warrington, Sustainable and Inclusive Growth Commission, there was an opportunity to be at the forefront of new low carbon technologies. Councillor Corcoran thanked the officers for their report, and highlighted that there were no financial implications and no risks to Cheshire East Council in signing up, that the motion was in line with an existing policy, and that supporting this motion should be a political decision taken by Members and not officers. Councillor Sam Corcoran stated that climate change was a global problem and appreciated what Cheshire East do and asked that everyone engaged and supported the motion.

The Committee questioned what the outcome of approving the motion would be, and what mechanisms Cheshire East would have to support the motion. Officers noted that the motion was aimed at central government to encourage them to address the wider issues.

The Committee debated the recommendations and felt that there was a lack of clarity. It was therefore proposed, seconded and subsequently carried unanimously that:

An amendment to recommendation 2 was proposed by Councillor Clark, seconded by Councillor Seddon and carried unanimously:

The Environment and Communities Committee is recommended to:

1. Note the Notice of Motion
2. *Endorse the motion as presented*

Members requested that the recommendations were voted on individually.

RESOLVED (by majority):

The Environment and Communities Committee is recommended to:

1. Note the Notice of Motion

RESOLVED (by majority):

The Environment and Communities Committee is recommended to:

2. Endorse the motion as presented

Councillor Hayley Whittaker left the meeting at 11.30am at the end of the Item 7 and did not return

8 BRIGHTON PLUS HELSINKI DECLARATION - A COMMITMENT TO ACHIEVE GENDER EQUALITY IN SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

The committee considered the report which sought approval for Cheshire East Council to become a signatory to the Brighton Plus Helsinki Declaration, an international treaty which signified a commitment to achieving gender equality in sport and physical activity.

The Committee noted that the report was in relation to demonstrating a commitment to achieving gender equality and any related activity would need to ensure compliance with the legal definition as set out in the report under the Equalities Act 2010. The committee noted that being a signatory of the declaration may be beneficial in securing external funding bids in the future.

The Committee were in support of the report and were interested to see how this would be beneficial to communities. It was noted that signing up to the declaration would be complementary to existing work being undertaken by the council in terms of physical activity and healthy weight, and would be complementary to the Councils ambitions.

RESOLVED (unanimously)

That The Environment and Communities Committee:

1. Agrees to Cheshire East Council signing The Brighton Plus Helsinki Declaration
2. Delegates to The Director of Public Health authority to make all necessary arrangements for the signing of the Declaration to take place

9 APPOINTMENTS TO SUB-COMMITTEES, WORKING GROUPS, JOINT COMMITTEES AND BOARDS

The committee considered the report which sought approval from the Environment and Communities Committee to appoint the bodies referred to in the report and to nominate members to them.

The annual report was presented which all Service Committees receive respective to their sub-committees and working groups. The committee were asked to make appointments as follows:

- **Local Plan Member Reference Group.** Made up of seven members: three Conservative, three Labour and one Independent. Political balance rules have been applied and received the following nominations;

Conservative nominations for Councillors Gardiner, Dean and Edgar
Labour nominations for Councillors Braithwaite, Chapman and Crane
Independent nomination for Councillor Jefferay

- **Carbon Steering Group.** Made up of representatives from each of the following committees: Environment and Communities, Children and Families, Adults and Health, Highways and Transport and Economy and Growth with the overall membership being approximately six, however no political balance rules have been applied to this group. Nominations were received as follows:

Environment and Communities rep: Councillor D Jefferay, Councillor T Dean
Adults and Health Rep : Councillor S Corcoran
Children and Families : Councillor Laura Crane
Economy and Growth : **TBC**
Highways and Transport : **TBC**

Where nominations had been put forward, the committee were asked to approve these nominations as set out, as recommendation 1 of this report, and for any positions which are yet to be filled, nominations should be submitted to the Head of Democratic Services, Brian Reed, as recommendation 2 of this report.

RESOLVED (unanimously)

That the Environment and Communities Committee

1. Appoints the sub-committees, working groups, panels, boards and joint committees for 2025-26, and the member appointments to them, as set out within this report.
2. Where appropriate, agrees to submit member nominations to the bodies below to the Head of Democratic Services.

10 WORK PROGRAMME

The committee considered the Work Programme, the following was noted:

- Members were requested to contact Officers with specific enforcement cases which they requested an update on.
- It was agreed to add a briefing on mobile waste service to the Work Programme
- It was agreed to provide an update to the Committee on the Cleaner Crewe Project
- It was agreed for Members to receive a briefing around the changes to bin collections and food waste
- It was agreed for Members to receive a briefing on the structure within the directorate as result of the ANSA and Orbitas services coming back to the Council at the next Committee meeting in September
- It was noted that Officers would provide an update on the Strategic Leisure Review as soon as possible
- It was noted that the September meeting would be a twilight meeting with a start time of 5.30pm

The meeting commenced at 10.30am and concluded at 11.54am

Councillor D Jefferay (Chair)