

## **CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL**

Minutes of a meeting of the **Cabinet Member for Environment**  
held on Tuesday, 29th October, 2013 in Committee Suite 1, Westfields,  
Middlewich Road, Sandbach CW11 1HZ

### **PRESENT**

Councillor D Topping and L Brown, L Gilbert and A Kolker.

### **Officers in attendance: -**

Genni Butler (Countryside Access Development Officer)

Mike Taylor (Greenspace Manager)

Cherry Foreman (Democratic Services)

### **15 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence.

### **16 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest at this stage but during consideration of the matter Councillor A Kolker declared a non-pecuniary interest by virtue of being a member of the Dane Meadow Project Board.

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

Councillor A Kolker spoke in support of the proposed right of way to link the parishes of Cranage and Holmes Chapel and of the link it would provide between two valuable areas of open space. In addition it would provide a safe route to school for the many children from Cranage who went to school in Holmes Chapel and for whom there was no such route at present as the A50 did not have a continuous footway and there was no formal crossing arrangement.

There were no questions from members of the public at this stage. The Chairman did however allow the public to speak during consideration of the matter.

Mr and Mrs P Wild, residents of Cranage, spoke in respect of their doubts that children would be able to use the proposed route as a safe walking route to school as it would be unlit and unsuitable in the winter months; of their concern that it would be for the mixed use of pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders which they did not consider mixed well together; and that progression was not evident at present with regard to the proposed playing field in Cranage, with which the proposed path was closely associated.

Mr Halstead, of Cranage Parish Council, spoke in respect of the amount of money spent by them over the last 8/9 years in order to reach the present position in relation to the playing fields.

## 18 CREATION OF NEW PUBLIC RIGHT OF WAY IN THE PARISH OF CRANAGE

*During discussion of this item Councillor A Kolker declared a non-pecuniary interest by virtue of being a member of the Dane Meadow Project Board.*

It was reported that for a number of years, Cheshire East Council, Holmes Chapel Parish Council and Cranage Parish Council had been discussing means to improve access between the two communities. A possible off-road route via the Cranage playing fields, over the River Dane, and then on to Holmes Chapel via the Dane Meadow public open space has now been identified.

The Council has powers to create new public rights of way. Due to the number of separate landholdings within the proposed route there were a number of different legal processes, however, which needed to be completed, some of which might be against the wishes of the landowner and therefore open the Council to adverse publicity and to the payment of compensation to those with an interest in the land. At present the financial implications could not be calculated exactly but adequate estimates with regard to compensation and for the construction of the bridge had been included in the costings.

With reference to the cost of the bridge, and the need for additional grant aid, it was explained that it was unlikely that the availability of any grant would be confirmed until such time as permission had been secured for the associated Public Right of Way and it would, therefore, be unknown until a later stage

In addition to linking the two areas the proposed Public Right of Way would have additional benefits for the health and wellbeing of residents who would be able to access the areas of open space. In addition, it might provide an available walking route to school for the children who lived in Cranage but went to school in Holmes Chapel and for whom school transport had to be provided.

Whilst he supported the many benefits the proposal would bring the Portfolio Holder was concerned at the estimated costs of the bridge crossing in particular, and on the need for additional grant assistance which could not as yet be guaranteed. He requested that further work be carried out on a cost benefit analysis, and on the position with regard to grant assistance, to further inform the business case being developed.

### **RESOLVED**

That the proposal be supported in principle but that further work be carried out to identify funding sources for the construction of the bridge, and to produce a detailed cost benefit analysis to inform the business case being developed.

The meeting commenced at 10.00 am and concluded at 10.20 am