

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a virtual meeting of the **Cabinet**
held on Tuesday, 9th March, 2021

PRESENT

Councillor S Corcoran (Chairman)
Councillor C Browne (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors L Crane, K Flavell, T Fox, L Jeuda, N Mannion, J Rhodes, A Stott
and M Warren

Councillors in attendance

Councillors Q Abel, S Akers Smith, R Bailey, J Barber, M Benson,
L Braithwaite, S Brookfield, D Brown, J Buckley, C Bulman, J Clowes,
A Critchley, T Dean, D Edwardes, B Evans, H Faddes, J P Findlow,
R Fletcher, S Gardiner, P Groves, S Holland, M Houston, M Hunter,
D Jefferay, A Kolker, A Moran, D Murphy, J Nicholas, K Parkinson, S Pochin,
B Puddicombe, J Saunders, M Simon, L Smith, J Weatherill, P Williams and
J Wray.

Officers in attendance

Lorraine O'Donnell, Chief Executive
Frank Jordan, Executive Director Place
Jane Burns, Executive Director Corporate Services
Alex Thompson, Director of Finance and Customer Services
David Brown, Director of Governance and Compliance
Ged Rowney, Interim Director of Children's Services
Jill Broomhall, Direct of Adult Social Care
Nichola Thompson, Director of Commissioning
Brian Reed, Head of Democratic Services and Governance
Paul Mountford, Executive Democratic Services Officer

90 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

91 PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME/OPEN SESSION - VIRTUAL MEETINGS

David Mayers asked about the format and timescale of the speed management strategy review and how members of the public could be involved.

The Portfolio Holder for Highways and Waste responded that the speed management strategy review was in its early stages. It was anticipated that a wide range of stakeholders would be included in the review and it was hoped that the new Strategy would be ready for implementation in the Spring of 2022.

Robert Douglas referred to an email from the Portfolio Holder for Highways and Waste, advising residents that instead of using the recycling site, they could take items to charity shops.

The Portfolio Holder apologised if her message had been misunderstood. Her intention had been to ask residents to think carefully before simply throwing away items that charity shops could put to good use. Any general waste items would continue to be accepted at all the Council's household waste recycling centres.

Richard Hamilton asked for an update on the review of the crossings on the Middlewich Road/London Road in Elworth, and an indication of when the Toucan crossing at School Lane, Sandbach could be implemented.

The Portfolio Holder for Highways and Waste undertook to provide a written response.

92 QUESTIONS TO CABINET MEMBERS - VIRTUAL MEETINGS

Councillor S Akers Smith asked if the Council would review its policy regarding paths on housing estates with a view to removing barriers to accessibility to allow both cycling and walking, and providing appropriate signage to support all travel modes.

The Deputy Leader responded that the Council's preference would be against the use of access controls unless there was a persistent and significant problem of antisocial moped or motorcycle usage or regular incursions leading to fly-tipping. Where a level of access control was required, the provision of bollards would be considered that still allowed all types of cycle and mobility scooter to gain access. He would advise against unnecessary advisory signing as it led to additional maintenance costs and had a very limited legal basis and it problematic to enforce effectively.

Councillor R Bailey referred to her Notice of Motion at the February Council meeting asking for an open letter or media release from the Mayor and group leaders thanking all those who had worked in response to the Covid pandemic.

The Leader responded that a press release would be released shortly and he took the opportunity of this meeting to praise the local vaccination programme.

Councillor M Benson referred to the Active Travel tranche 1 scheme for Sandbach and asked when a decision would be taken to abandon the scheme. He also referred to the revised 20mph speed limits proposed for Sandbach and sought an indication as to when a decision would be taken on that proposal.

The Portfolio Holder for Highways and Waste responded that the feedback from the consultation on the scheme was being reviewed and a decision would be made in the coming weeks. She added that the intention was not to abandon the scheme but to make changes.

Councillor J Buckley asked how much of the waste collected by the Council was recyclable, garden or residual waste. She asked if a task and finish group could be set up to consider how to encourage residents to reduce waste.

The Portfolio Holder for Highways and Waste provided a breakdown between garden/food, recycled and residual waste, and suggested that the question of a task and finish group be raised with the appropriate committee under the new committee system.

Councillor R Fletcher referred to the problem of flooding in Linley Lane, Alsager and asked if the Council would arrange a meeting with the five landowners to discuss the matter.

The Portfolio Holder for Highways and Waste undertook to provide a written response.

Councillor S Gardiner asked if the way in which parking contravention notices were being issued had changed in response to Covid Regulations.

The Portfolio Holder for Highways and Waste undertook to provide a written response.

Councillor P Groves referred to the need for a stimulus to attract shoppers and visitors back into town centres. He suggested that free parking be provided for the months of May, June and July this year.

The Portfolio Holder for Environment and Regeneration responded that the Council was working with town councils on a town centre recovery plan. 30th March was Cheshire Day and the Council would be using the event to mount a campaign to promote towns throughout the Borough. The Portfolio Holder for Highways and Waste added that the Council would have to consider carefully the implications of any parking proposals for the highways budget.

Councillor S Holland asked for a breakdown of the £4m cost of a replacement Household Waste Recycling Centre for Congleton.

The Portfolio Holder for Highways and Waste undertook to provide a written response.

Councillor D Murphy referred to the possible closure of the household waste recycling centre in Congleton and asked if the Council had produced an equality impact statement on the effect of the closure on residents who did not have use of a vehicle.

The Portfolio Holder for Highways and Waste responded that this issue was due to be considered by the Environment and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 15th March, and an impact statement was included with the agenda papers.

Councillor S Pochin raised a number of questions in relation to the ARG funding process, and also asked what the Council was doing to support Alderley Park in securing continuance of their Enterprise Zone status past March 2021.

The Portfolio Holder for Environment and Regeneration undertook to provide a written response, and to make it available to other members.

Councillor P Williams referred to the Council's engagement with residents through various consultations and asked what could be done to allay what seemed to him to be a lack of public confidence in the consultation process.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance, IT and Communication responded that the Council's approach to consultation and engagement had been affected recently by Covid-19 restrictions and consultations were currently undertaken predominantly online. This still enabled the Council to obtain valuable feedback from residents and other stakeholders. She assured Councillor Williams that all feedback was considered and taken into account. The Leader referred to the impact that the consultation response had made on the Corporate Plan and the Budget.

93 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 2nd February 2021 be approved as a correct record.

94 COVID-19 - UPDATE ON RESPONSE AND RECOVERY

Cabinet considered an update report on the Council's response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Leader reported that the rate of cases in Cheshire East had fallen further since the report was written and was now under 70 per 100,000. He also reported that the number of hospital admissions had fallen significantly, which he attributed to the vaccination programme. He thanked all those involved with the vaccination programme, both medical professionals and volunteers.

The Leader also reported that following the throttling back of the vaccination supply in Cheshire East by the Government to enable other areas to catch up, the supply in Cheshire East was once again increasing

and the over 55s should shortly be receiving a letter offering them a vaccination.

The Deputy Leader added that the Alderley Park mass vaccination centre was currently delivering 650 vaccinations a day, with an expectation to increase this to 1,000 vaccinations a day by the end of the month.

The Deputy Leader also reported that with regard to support grants to eligible businesses, the Council was in the top 5% of authorities for mandatory grants and the top 13% for discretionary grants in terms of both the number of payments made and their value. He thanked the officers and in particular the Business Support Team.

Councillor A Critchley asked if the Council was issuing fines for non-attendance at school. The Portfolio Holder for Children and Families responded that this had not occurred yet but that it could if the Department for Education directed that such action be taken. She undertook to provide a written response if requested.

Following a request by Councillor J Clowes, the Leader agreed to include information on the care market in future reports.

RESOLVED

That Cabinet notes the issues outlined in the report.

95 DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT MANAGEMENT PLAN 2021/22 TO 2024/25

Cabinet considered a draft Dedicated Schools Grant Management Plan 2021/22 to 2024/25 as a basis for consultation with key stakeholders.

RESOLVED

That Cabinet

1. notes the issues with the level of DSG high needs funding received by the Council and the potential impact on the Council's DSG Reserve in terms of the position before and after mitigations;
2. approves the underlying assumptions and strategies in the Draft DSG Management Plan for 2021/22 to 2024/25;
3. notes the mitigations that have been included and the necessary steps to deliver those projects;
4. agrees the Draft DSG Management Plan 2021/22 to 2024/25 as a basis for consultation with key stakeholders; and

5. agrees to an annual update of the DSG Management Plan to enable progress to be monitored leading to necessary adjustment to plans.

96 FLOWERPOT JUNCTION IMPROVEMENT SCHEME

Cabinet considered a report on proposed improvements to the Flowerpot junction to the south-west of Macclesfield town centre.

RESOLVED

That Cabinet

1. approves the delivery of the scheme shown in Appendix B to the report;
2. approves delivery of the scheme through the Highway Service Contract, subject to the Ringway Jacobs target costs for the Scheme satisfying the contract's value for money requirements;
3. approves the preparation of a Compulsory Purchase Order in respect of land and/or rights required to deliver the Scheme, where such land and/or rights cannot be acquired by agreement. If this is required a further Decision Report will be prepared and submitted seeking authority for the making of a Compulsory Purchase Order but this recommendation is not being sought at this stage;
4. approves the preparation of a Side Roads Order in respect to stopping-up and/or amendments to private means of access, and re-provision of private means of access (in the event land is acquired under a Compulsory Purchase Order);
5. authorises the Head of Estates to negotiate terms and to acquire land and/or rights required for the Scheme by agreement and to pay such reasonable and proper professional costs as are associated with those agreements and to instruct the Director of Governance & Compliance to draft, advise upon and enter into the legal agreements necessary to complete such acquisitions including but not limited to licences, leases, transfers, easements, wayleaves, deeds of release and/or variation and the making and submission of applications to HM Land Registry to affect the registration of any unregistered land within the Scheme;
6. authorises the Head of Estates to negotiate and agree terms for the necessary legal agreements required to document any apparatus diversion works required by Statutory Undertakers or other utility providers in order to deliver the Scheme and to instruct the Director of Governance & Compliance to draft, advise upon and enter into the legal agreements necessary in relation to any such diversions;
7. authorises the Head of Estates to dispose of any land currently in the ownership of the Council or to grant rights over the Council's land, as

may be necessary in respect of any element of “land swap” which may be agreed as part of the assembly of land required for the Scheme. In the event that any such land is open space the Head of Estates is authorised to commence the statutory disposal process, to consider all objections and representations to the disposal of open space and to make the final decision (after having considered all objections and representations) as to whether or not to dispose of any part of land which is open space;

8. if no objections are received to the statutory notices, authorises the Executive Director of Place to dispose of the open space;
9. notes that if objections are received the decision regarding the disposal of open space will be taken by the relevant service committee; and
10. approves the forward funding of the developer contributions in accordance with the capital programme (noting that the council is one of the potential developers that would contribute to the scheme and that the funding for this is included in the council’s capital programme).

97 LOCAL CYCLING AND WALKING INFRASTRUCTURE PLANS (LCWIP) FOR CREWE, CONGLETON, MACCLESFIELD AND WILMSLOW

Cabinet considered a report on local cycling and walking infrastructure plans for Crewe, Congleton, Macclesfield and Wilmslow.

RESOLVED

That Cabinet

1. approves the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans for Crewe, Congleton, Macclesfield and Wilmslow as the basis for future development and planning of sustainable transport infrastructure within Cheshire East; and
2. notes that the Plans will be an integral part of the Council’s local transport strategy, alongside the Cycling Strategy and the Local Transport Plan.

98 HOME REPAIRS AND ADAPTATIONS FOR VULNERABLE PEOPLE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE POLICY

Cabinet considered a report on the Home Repairs and Adaptations for Vulnerable People Financial Assistance Policy 2021-2026, the purpose of which was to enable vulnerable residents to live independently in suitable, well-maintained homes.

RESOLVED

That the Home Repairs and Adaptations for Vulnerable People Financial Assistance Policy 2021-2026 be approved.

99 CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE STRATEGY

Cabinet considered a report on the adoption of a Customer Experience Strategy, which aimed to ensure that customers' needs were central to the services the Council delivered.

RESOLVED

That the Customer Experience Strategy attached at Appendix 1 to the report be approved and adopted.

The meeting commenced at 1.00 pm and concluded at 3.30 pm

Councillor S Corcoran (Chairman)