

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **Highways and Transport Committee**
held on Thursday, 22nd September, 2022 in the The Capesthorne Room -
Town Hall, Macclesfield SK10 1EA

PRESENT

Councillor C Browne (Chair)
Councillor L Crane (Vice-Chair)

Councillors S Akers Smith, M Benson, L Braithwaite, B Burkhill, H Faddes,
A Gage, L Gilbert, M Sewart, D Stockton, P Williams and B Puddicombe (for
Cllr Naismith)

Other Members present

Councillors J Clowes, T Dean, J P Findlow and M Goldsmith

Officers in attendance

Tom Moody, Director of Highways and Infrastructure
Tom Shuttleworth, Interim Head of Highways
Chris Hindle, Head of Infrastructure
Richard Hibbert, Head of Strategic Transport and Parking
Mandy Withington, Principal Lawyer
Samantha Oakden, Principal Accountant
Paul Mountford, Democratic Services

Apologies

Councillor C Naismith

The Chair welcomed Paul Mountford who was replacing Sarah Baxter as the
Democratic Services support officer for the Committee.

20 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

In the interests of openness and transparency, Councillor P Williams
declared that he had made public comments in relation to the previous
version of the speed management strategy but that this would not
prejudice his consideration of the revised strategy on the agenda.

In the interests of openness and transparency, Councillor S Akers Smith
declared that she knew many of the speakers on the speed management
strategy as she had met them through her role as Cycling and Walking
Champion.

In the interests of openness and transparency, Councillor M Sewart
declared that he had been a member of the task and finish group on
flooding and flood risk management, whose report was to be considered
later in the meeting.

21 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 21st July 2022 be approved as a correct record.

22 PUBLIC SPEAKING/OPEN SESSION

Mrs Jan Jennings referred to the speed of traffic and heavy vehicles using the A51 in the vicinity of Peter Destapleigh Way, Nantwich and the inadequate signage and narrow pavements at this location, which was impacting the lives of local residents. She called for a reduction in the 40 mph speed limit along this length of the A51.

The Chair responded that if the proposed speed management strategy due to be considered later in the meeting was approved, Mrs Jennings' request for a speed limit reduction could be considered within the strategy criteria.

Mr Nick Cheetham asked for consideration of the proposed speed management strategy to be deferred as he felt that the logic of the report was flawed and that the report did not adequately reflect the feedback from public consultation, particularly as regards 20 mph zones.

Mr David Mayers also asked for consideration of the proposed speed management strategy to be deferred as the report did not adequately address the need for 20 mph speed limits in residential and shopping areas of towns.

Mr Frank Mathers requested consideration by the Council of a reduction in the 40 mph speed limit on the A54 Holmes Chapel Road at Brereton Heath and Somerford, between the Davenport Methodist Church and the Somerford Equestrian Centre.

The Chair advised that if the speed management policy was approved later in the meeting, Mr Mathers would be able to take forward his request for consideration against that policy.

Councillor Ruth Thompson, Macclesfield Town Council, asked that the Committee defer consideration of the speed management strategy so that further consideration could be given to 20 mph areas. She said that there was evidence to show that 20 mph areas reduced accidents and injuries whilst achieving financial savings.

23 **SPEED MANAGEMENT STRATEGY, VEHICLE RESTRAINT SYSTEM STRATEGY AND SKID RESISTANCE STRATEGY**

The Committee considered a report recommending the adoption of the Cheshire East Speed Management Strategy, the Cheshire East Vehicle Restraint System Strategy and the Cheshire East Skid Resistance Strategy.

The Chair read out the written comments of Councillor R Bailey who had been unable to attend the meeting as a visiting member. Councillor Bailey asked the Committee to seek assurance that the speed management strategy took into account the needs of rural parishes and enabled support for speed indication devices (SIDs) and a uniform approach to speed management across the Borough.

Councillor J Clowes attended as a visiting member and, at the invitation of the Chair, spoke on behalf of residents of Hough and Shavington who were seeking a reduction in the speed limit on Newcastle Road to 30 mph to ensure the safety of children and elderly residents crossing the road. Councillor Clowes submitted a petition to the Democratic Services Officer as the petitions scheme did not allow the Committee itself to accept a petition under 5,000 signatures.

Councillor M Goldsmith attended as a visiting member and, at the invitation of the Chair, spoke in support of the speed management strategy.

It was moved and seconded that the recommendations in the report be approved subject to the addition of the following words to recommendation 3.5 on the basis that this would give members oversight and greater understanding of the scheme prioritisation process within the speed management strategy:

‘The Director of Highways shall nominate a named position to have direct point of contact for member submission of speed assessment requests and authority over their subsequent prioritisation. A bi-monthly list of the current prioritisation and any scheme(s) coming forward will be circulated to all committee members.’

The Chair emphasised that the three strategies were living documents capable of being reviewed by the Committee at a future date. He welcomed the fact that the prioritisation matrix within the speed management strategy gave greater weight to local concerns.

RESOLVED (unanimously)

That the Committee

1. approves that the Cheshire East Speed Management Strategy be adopted as policy and subsequently implemented operationally;

2. approves that the Vehicle Restraint Systems: Installation, Inspection and Maintenance Strategy be adopted as policy and subsequently implemented operationally;
3. approves that the Cheshire East Skid Resistance Strategy be adopted as policy and subsequently implemented operationally;
4. delegates authority to the Director of Highways and Infrastructure to make technical amendments to the Cheshire East Speed Management Strategy, the Vehicle Restraint Systems: Installation, Inspection and Maintenance Strategy and the Cheshire East Skid Resistance Strategy as required and to update the Highways and Transport Committee on any significant changes at a future meeting;
5. delegates authority to the Director of Highways and Infrastructure to amend/further develop the scheme prioritisation process for the Speed Management Strategy as required and to consider the need for changes to future investment programmes to reflect this process, any proposed changes to investment programmes to be reported to the Committee as part of the annual investment programme cycle. In addition, the Director of Highways and Infrastructure shall nominate a named position to have direct point of contact for member submission of speed assessment requests and authority over their subsequent prioritisation. A bi-monthly list of the current prioritisation and any scheme(s) coming forward will be circulated to all members of the Committee; and
6. approves the use of Speed Indication Devices (SIDs) on the highway network in accordance with the approach as set out in the Speed Management Strategy.

24 NOTICE OF MOTION: 'SAFER SCHOOL STREETS'

The Committee considered a report in response to the Notice to Motion on Safer School Streets. The Motion was as follows:

'That Council creates a process that allows a Safer School Street to be created for all schools, where supported by those schools, which will provide a safer environment and enable children to walk and cycle to school safely.'

Councillor L Anderson attended the meeting as seconder of the Notice of Motion and spoke in its support.

Councillor S Akers Smith as proposer of the Notice of Motion, also spoke in its support.

In response to members' questions regarding school street schemes, officers clarified that:

- The reference to 'any class of traffic' within the road traffic legislation included cyclists.
- The road closures would be financed from within the Safe Travel to School budget, enhanced with developer contributions where available.
- The scheme would be enforced by trained volunteers, supported by suitable technological/engineering measures.

RESOLVED

That the Committee endorses the proposed response to the Notice of Motion as set out in the report, which will be made available on the Council's highways webpage.

25 IT'S NOT JUST WATER

The Committee considered a report highlighting the findings of the former Environment and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee's Working Group on flooding and flood risk management.

Councillor J P Findlow attended the meeting as Chair of the working group and presented the group's report, its findings and recommendations. Councillor T Dean also attended as a member of the working group and, at the Chair's invitation, spoke on the matter.

Members noted that some of the recommendations within the working group's report required additional funding which was not within the current budgetary framework. A further report to the Committee would therefore be required on which recommendations could be progressed in line with the MTFS.

RESOLVED (unanimously)

That the Committee

1. receives from the Task and Finish Group the report 'It's Not Just Water' as contained at Appendix A, relating to the important issue of effective flood risk management;
2. notes the recommendations of the report;
3. notes that some of the recommendations within the report 'It's Not Just Water' have financial implications that are not covered by the current MTFS;
4. notes that the proposals contained within the report require additional funding which is not within the current budgetary framework; and
5. invites the Executive Director Place to present a further report to a future meeting on what recommendations can be progressed in line with the MTFS.

(At this point, the meeting was adjourned for a five minute break.)

26 REVIEW OF HIGHWAYS WARD MEMBER BUDGET SCHEME

The Committee considered a report proposing a policy for a revised ward member budget scheme.

Councillor J Clowes attended as a visiting member and, at the invitation of the Chair, commented that members of single member wards were not able to pool their resources with others to provide something substantial for their local community. She sought an assurance that funding could be carried forward to future years.

The Chair confirmed that the scheme provided that funding could be carried forward within the four-year period of operation in order to fund larger projects. He went on to advise, however, that if a significant number of members carried their funding forward to the final year (year 4), this could present capacity issues and some form of prioritisation would be necessary. Members could also use the funding as match-funding for any projects that parish councils wished to bring forward.

The new administration process would specifically offer the opportunity for Members to discuss their proposals with officers at an early stage. This would prevent wasted time and effort submitting applications to the scheme which were then rejected on the basis of non-policy compliance or being unaffordable.

The Chair welcomed the uplift in funding of £6,500 per member per year which, he said, would give individual members a greater level of influence over what work could be undertaken in their wards.

RESOLVED (unanimously)

That the Committee

1. approves that the following proposals be adopted as the new policy in relation to the ward member budget scheme:
 - (a) the annual budget per member be increased to £6,500 per annum;
 - (b) the revisions to how the scheme is administered, as set out under Section 8.1 of the report, be implemented; and
 - (c) the revised scheme operate for a fixed 4 year period with delivery commencing in April 2023; and
2. approves the re-allocation of a maximum of £255k underspend from the initial 2 year allocation to the ward budget scheme to those initiatives as listed under paragraph 9.2.8 of the report.

27 WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee considered its work programme for 2022/23.

Officers reported the following changes to the work programme since its circulation with the agenda:

- The item 'Greenway Crossing of the River Dane' was to be rescheduled from November to January.
- A report on 'Bus Service Support Criteria' was now scheduled for November.
- An officer report on 'It's Not Just Water' would be scheduled for January.

Councillor L Crane highlighted that the consultation had now commenced on Idling Vehicle Engines which was due to be reported to the November meeting.

RESOLVED

That subject to the amendments and additional items reported at the meeting, the work programme be noted.

28 MINUTES OF SUB-COMMITTEES

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting of the Public Rights of Way Sub-Committee on 1st August 2022 be received.

29 REPORTING OF OFFICER DELEGATED DECISIONS

There were no officer delegated decisions to report.

The meeting commenced at 10.30 am and concluded at 12.43 pm

Councillor C Browne (Chair)