

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **Environment and Communities Committee**
held on Thursday, 30th March, 2023 in the Committee Suite 1,2 & 3,
Westfields, Middlewich Road, Sandbach CW11 1HZ

PRESENT

Councillor M Warren (Chair)
Councillor S Akers Smith (Vice-Chair)

Councillors Q Abel, M Benson, J Bratherton, J Buckley, L Crane, T Dean,
P Groves, J Parry, R Bailey, M Hunter and D Brown

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

Tom Shuttleworth – Interim Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods
Jane Gowing – Interim Director of Planning
Wendy Broadhurst – Lead Finance Partner
James Thomas – Principal Solicitor – Planning & Highways
Josie Lloyd – Democratic Services Officer

67 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Farrall, Cllr Gilbert and Cllr Leach. Cllr Hunter, Cllr Brown and Cllr Bailey attended as substitutes.

68 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Hunter declared, in relation to item 5 2023/23 Financial Update, that he was a Non-Executive Director of Ansa.

Cllr Brown declared that he was a member of Congleton Town Council and had voted on the waste recycling centre.

69 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 2 February 2023 be agreed as a correct record.

70 PUBLIC SPEAKING/OPEN SESSION

Councillor Ann Nevitt from Sandbach Town Council attended the meeting to speak in relation to item 6 – update on the Cheshire East Cemeteries Strategy Review. Cllr Nevitt outlined her concerns about the current strategy, particularly in relation to Sandbach cemetery, and stated that the consultation document in 2018 had not mentioned plans for Sandbach cemetery which had designated cemetery land in an adjacent field.

Sandbach Town Council had objected to the strategy at the time but felt that this was not given consideration. Cllr Nevitt advised that she was seeking assurance that the current review would give consideration to all residents of towns and villages throughout the borough. Cllr Nevitt agreed to listen to the verbal update under item 6 in response.

Councillor Robert Douglas from Congleton Town Council spoke in relation to item 7 – update on the Household Waste and Recycling Centres Working Group. Cllr Douglas raised concerns about fly-tipping in Congleton due to the closure of the recycling site and stated that the number of fly-tipping incidents had almost quadrupled since the site was closed. It was reported that this had resulted in increased fly-tipping costs for Congleton rate payers. Cllr Douglas referred to consultants' reports that were commissioned by Cheshire East in 2018 and identified two potential recycling sites for Congleton and asked for assurance that these reports would be considered by the working group. In response, Cllr Crane, Chair of the working group, advised that they will be reviewing as much documentation as is relevant but cannot comment on what will be found at this time.

71 **2022/23 FINANCIAL UPDATE**

The committee received the report which set out the financial update for the year 2022/23.

A request was made for future financial reports to contain more detail for individual committees instead of the overview which was received by the Finance Sub-Committee in order for Members to better understand and scrutinise the committee's budget. The committee were advised that this request would be taken back to the Finance team to look into and that consideration was being given to finance training for Members.

RESOLVED:

That the Environment and Communities Committee:

1. Notes the report of the Finance Sub-Committee:
[\(Agenda for Finance Sub-Committee on Wednesday, 8th March, 2023, 2.00 pm | Cheshire East Council\)](#) specifically the recommendations of that committee.
 - 1.1 Finance Sub-Committee recommend Service Committees to:
 - 1.1.1 note the financial update and forecast outturn relevant to their terms of reference.
 - 1.1.2 note the delegated decisions relating to supplementary revenue estimates for specific grants coded directly to services in accordance with Financial Procedure Rules as detailed in Appendix 5, Section 2, Table 2.

2. Notes Appendix 5 and the following sections specific to this Committee:

- Changes to Revenue budget 2022/23
- Corporate Grants Register
- Debt Management
- Capital Strategy
- Reserve Strategy

72 STANDING ITEM: MEMBERS ADVISORY PANEL: CHESHIRE EAST CEMETERIES STRATEGY REVIEW

Cllr Bratherton, Chair of the Cheshire East Cemeteries Strategy Review Member Advisory Panel, provided a verbal update to the committee.

The Panel had received the results from the 2022 consultation and this would be circulated to the committee.

The number of consultation responses had increased since the last consultation in 2018. It was noted that 26% of the responses were from residents of Sandbach where consideration was being given to the use of land adjacent to the cemetery which had permission to be used as a cemetery but was currently being used as public open space.

74% of respondents felt that provision should be made in all cemeteries although it would not be possible to extend every cemetery in the borough. Only 31% indicated a preference for a burial plot which suggested that the demand for burials was decreasing over time and this would be considered when determining the amount of land to be allocated.

The next steps were to finalise the consultation report, publish it and advance work on the updated strategy document. The committee to receive the updated strategy for approval, targeted for the September 2023 meeting.

Cllr Bratherton thanked the officers involved for the work that had been put into this so far.

73 STANDING ITEM: WORKING GROUP: HOUSEHOLD WASTE & RECYCLING CENTRES

The working group had been provided with a recent update before pausing due to the upcoming election. The work would be picked up again following the election. It was acknowledged that there could be a change in membership but that there was sufficient information available to assist any new members in understanding the work undertaken to date.

74 **WORK PROGRAMME**

A draft work programme for the new municipal year had been circulated to members. It was noted that this was still being worked on but would be formalised in due course.

RESOLVED:

That the work programme be noted.

The meeting commenced at 10:30 and concluded at 11:01

Councillor M Warren (Chair)