

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **Crewe Town Board**
held on Friday, 6th December, 2024 at Virtual Meeting via Microsoft Teams

PRESENT

Simon Yates (Vice-Chair, in the Chair)

Guy Kilminster, Rick Carter, Paul Colman, Jasbir Dhesi, Councillor Nick Mannion, Councillor Jill Rhodes, Connor Naismith MP, Kate Blakemore and Graham McKnight

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE

Pete Turner, Lindsay Lewis

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

Peter Skates, Acting Executive Director of Place
Charles Jarvis, Head of Economic Development
Chris Jackson, Senior Regeneration Officer
Sam Jones, Democratic Services Officer

63 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (1 MINUTE)

Apologies for absence were received from Tony Davison, Sally Hepton, Andy Butler, Doug Kinsman, Martin Wood, Elliot Grimshaw, Jez Goodman and Rhiannon Hilton.

64 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (1 MINUTE)

There were no new or updated Declarations of Interest, other than those already on file.

65 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (3 MINUTES)

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meetings held on 01.11.2024 and 13.11.2024 be approved as a correct record.

66 TOWNS FUND PERFORMANCE UPDATE (15 MINUTES)

The Board received an update on several of the Towns Fund Projects and Additional Programme Management updates from Charles Jarvis, Head of Economic Development, and individual project sponsors.

Following approval by the Crewe Town Board on 13.11.2024, and by Cheshire East Council's s151 Officer on 19.11.2024, the April - September

2024 Performance Report had been submitted to Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

Warm and Healthy Homes – Highways had developed a schedule of proposed works up to the value for £750,000 for the public space, however issues remained regarding funding sources.

Repurposing Our High Street – Several new tenants had applications pending, and 6 Repurposing Our High Street applications were at the second stage and were awaiting final evidence and approval. The number of vacant units in Crewe town centre was down from 32 to 24.

History Centre / Public Realm – The main dismantling and demolition works had now completed, and the new court entrance was in place with internal works underway. The external works were nearing completion, although hostile vehicle mitigation measures needed to be completed.

Crewe Youth Zone – Issues with BT Openreach had been partially resolved, but further work was still required. AO were announced as the latest Founder Patron of the Dome YZ. Motherwell Young Woman's research with OnSide was to be published at event on 12.12.2024.

Crewe Youth Club – The project was on target for completion in March 2025. The project had submitted funding requests to Legal and General's Health Equity Fund, with Cheshire East Council and Crewe Town Council letters of support.

***Pocket Parks** – Circular benches were to hopefully be installed as an increased safety measure.

Southern Gateway – Main works were scheduled to complete by March 2025.

Mill Street Corridor – The works were nearing completion.

*Projects not funding through the Town's Fund.

RESOLVED:

The Valley Brook team would present a project update to the Board at its meeting on 07.02.2025.

That the updates be noted.

67 STRATEGIC UPDATE FROM CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL (15 MINUTES)

The Board received an update from Peter Skates, Director of Growth and Enterprise.

Devolution – Cheshire East Council was awaiting a Government White Paper which would contain further details on devolution.

CEC financial position – A report went to the Council's Corporate Policy Committee on 28.11.24, which contained the current forecast outturn for the financial year 2024/25 based on income, expenditure and known commitments as at the end of August 2024. The latest forecasting overspend for the year was £20 million, which was reducing. It was noted that in 2025-26 the Council was forecasting a pressure of around £31 million. Local Councils were expecting the Local Government Settlement to be announced shortly, which may contain details of additional funding.

RESOLVED:

That the updates be noted.

68 MIDLANDS-NORTH WEST RAIL LINK PROJECT (15 MINUTES)

The Board received an update on the Midlands-North West Rail Link Project from Connor Naismith MP.

It was noted that there were proposals for an alternative rail link to HS2, which would retain vast majority of the benefits, but would be cheaper to construct.

It was noted that it was important to promote the benefits of Crewe being a hub on the new network, and the wider benefits which this would bring in terms of growth and connectivity for the whole country, which would also have wider socioeconomic benefits to Crewe. The importance of creating a coalition of interest in selling Crewe other than a rail connectivity hub, was noted.

Cheshire East Council had been lobbying to the Secretary of State for Transport, had held roundtable event on 06.12.2024 with Transport for The North and other stakeholders, and hoped to expand his event to include Ministers in 2025. A report had also been received at the Council's Corporate Policy Committee on 28.11.2024 stating Cheshire East Council's position on the two rail proposals impacting the borough. Connor Naismith MP had also met with the Rail Minister and was securing meeting with Transport Minister to discuss this further. Ministers would also be invited to a Cheshire East Council summit in spring 2025.

RESOLVED:

That the updates be noted.

69 AOB (5 MINUTES)

Marketing Crewe – The name of new marketing programme would be "One Crewe".

Motherwell Event – A presentation on Motherwell's *Safe Spaces for Girls* research project, in connection with Crewe Youth Zone, would be delivered at the Crewe Maret Hall on 12.12.2024.

Crewe Christmas Light Switch On – The event was noted a significant success, and good feedback had been received.

70 **DATE OF NEXT VIRTUAL MEETING**

To confirm the date of the next meeting as 03.01.2025 commencing at 09:30am.

The meeting commenced at 9.30 am and concluded at 10.53 am

Simon Yates (Vice-Chair, in the Chair)