

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Environment and Prosperity Scrutiny Committee

held on Tuesday, 13th September, 2011 at Committee Suite 1,2 & 3,
Westfields, Middlewich Road, Sandbach CW11 1HZ

PRESENT

Councillor L Gilbert (Chairman)
Councillor G M Walton (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors A Barratt, P Butterill, H Davenport, K Edwards, R Fletcher,
S Hogben, P Hoyland and A Thwaite

Apologies

Councillors G Morris

ALSO PRESENT

Caroline Simpson – Head of Regeneration
Jez Goodman – Economic Development Manager
Kevin Melling – Highways Manager
Andrew Kelly – Senior Technician, Strategic Highways and Transportation
Rob Welch – Borough Traffic Engineer
Rosemary Kidd – Spatial Planning Manager
Jamie Longmire – Planning Officer
Peter Greifenburg - Urban Mines representative
Tim Oliver – Media Relations Officer
Mark Nedderman – Senior Scrutiny Officer
James Morley – Scrutiny Officer

129 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED: That subject to the following amendments the minutes of the meeting held on 25 July 2011 be approved as a correct record.

(a) That Councillor R Fletcher's apologies for absence be recorded.

(b) That Councillor H Davenport's apologies for absence be recorded.

130 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST/WHIPPING DECLARATIONS

There were no members of the Committee present who wished to declare any interests.

131 PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME/ OPEN SESSION

There were no members of the public present who wished to address the Committee

132 **WASTE NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT**

The Committee received a presentation on the Waste Needs Assessment Report produced by Urban Mines on behalf of Cheshire East and Cheshire West & Chester.

The Planning Officer explained that the report was to be used as an evidence base in the formulation of planning policy concerning waste and determining the range of facilities needed to deal with waste arising in Cheshire East up to 2030.

Peter Greifenburg, representing Urban Mines, presented the report and answered questions. The following points were made:

- A Microsoft Access based database had been produced that gave details of waste needs and facilities and could model aspirations for the future. This could be used to produce an analysis of the waste provision needed in future and the gap in current provision.
- The Assessment did not take into account Silver Recycling Bins that had just been introduced to Cheshire East's waste and recycling collection.
- Although the data used in producing the database wasn't perfect, the data was the best available and most useful for informing planning at the time.
- 2009 figures were used to create the report in 2011 however officers would be able to update figures when required. Policy makers would use the information to plan for gaps in waste provision.
- Officers were satisfied that the report would enable them to move forward with the formulation of planning policy.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Officers be thanked and the report be noted.

The Spatial Planning Manager, Planning Officer and Urban Mines representative left the meeting.

133 **HIGHWAYS POLICY REVIEWS**

The Committee received a briefing on the proposed amendments to four highways policies that were currently being reviewed by the Council.

The Highways Manager presented a report on each policy to the Committee in turn and asked for comments on the proposed policies prior to them being

submitted to the Portfolio Holder for Environment for full approval. The Senior Technician and the Borough Traffic Engineer were also present to assist with answering the Committee's questions on each policy.

The following points were made on the Amendments to List of Streets Policy:

- Any street being considered for adoption must be up to an adoptable standard. If residents wished for a street to be adopted they had to be willing to bring it up to the standard themselves.
- The policy formally sets out the procedure for bringing streets to the attention of the Council. Requests for the adoption of streets could be received from either internal or external person or organisation.
- The Environment Portfolio Holder had authority to make decisions on adoption of streets.
- Committee Members commented that Local Councils were in a prominent position to support officers and the Portfolio Holder in the gathering of evidence and decision making due to their local expertise and connection to the residents.

The following points were made on the Mirrors on the Highway Policy:

- Sometimes a "blind exit" from a property or side road was dangerous – for both the driver emerging and those travelling along the main road. Whilst a mirror located on the main road might have helped those joining the road a mirror was legally an obstruction on the highway so could not be put up without the express permission of the Highway Authority and Department for Transport (DfT).
- The applicant would be liable for the Council's costs in dealing with the application from submission through to outcome. It was considered prudent that the Council require a deposit of £400 to cover the initial review. This was to ensure that the Council recovered its costs.
- Committee Members commented that if a mirror was needed in the wider interests of safety for the community then the Council should pay for the installation and maintenance of a mirror. The Council needed to safe guard against abortive preliminary work by putting a charge on the initial review. Requests that were not considered necessary for public safety would need to be paid for by the applicant.

The following points were made on the Pedestrian Crossing Policy:

- The policy provided a process for handling requests and the assessment procedure for determining the most appropriate form of crossing. The Council did not have a policy on the assessment of

locations for pedestrian crossings at the time of the meeting.

- The policy was flexible allowing officers to give regard to local interest and member involvement however evidence was always required for the request to meet the criteria.
- The decision as to whether to install a crossing and the model of installation depended on the following factors: number of accidents, delays, local representations, local interest groups, cost, and relative priority with other sites.

The following points were made on the Repairs to Private Streets Policy:

- The purpose of the policy was to provide guidance on how to deal with requests to repair un-adopted roads. The Council's responsibility in respect of un-adopted roads differed to that for highways that were "maintainable at the public expense".
- The Policy would set out the Council's consistent approach in dealing with requests from owners or frontagers to carry out repairs to private streets to obviate danger to traffic and or pedestrians.
- A cap of £500 was seen by officers as a reasonable limit on costs of a single request that the Council would be willing to pay towards repairs of a private street. This equated roughly to one full days work on repairs, e.g. pothole filling. There was a budget for private street repairs of £5,000 per annum. This was to try to give the Council control over where and how often repairs to private streets would be carried out.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Committee offer the following comments on the Amendments to list of Streets policy. That:
 - a. decisions to add or remove streets from the list should involve consultation with Local Members and Local Councils to get their feedback.
 - b. when Officers are seeking knowledge about streets local members should be consulted.
 - c. Parish Councils should be informed of amendments to the list of streets.
- (b) That the Committee offer the following comments on the Mirrors on the Highway policy, That:
 - a. if there is a genuine issue of safety to all road users then the Authority should cover the cost of a mirror.
 - b. if requests for mirrors come from Local Area Partnerships or Parish Councils then the cost should not be borne by the resident.

- c. the costs of putting in a mirror should be capped.
- (c) That the Committee offer the following comments on the Pedestrian Crossing policy. That:
 - a. there shouldn't need to be any previous accidents at a site before a crossing is consider necessary and the apprehension of danger should be enough to warrant serious consideration of a crossing being installed.
- (d) That the Officers be thanked for their attendance and the reports be noted.

Councillor A Thwaite left the meeting.

The Highways Manager, the Senior Technician and the Borough Traffic Engineer left the meeting.

134 **MACCLESFIELD ECONOMIC MASTER PLAN UPDATE**

The Committee received a presentation on the Macclesfield Economic Master Plan from the Head of Regeneration.

The following points were made:

- There was a master plan which was necessary to ensure a cohesive vision for Macclesfield. Projects were being implemented in relation to the master plan to ensure they contributed to the vision for Macclesfield.
- Feedback from public consultation about Macclesfield was mainly positive but some suggested the town was tired and in need of improvements to its retail and leisure provision. There was also strong support for arts and culture.
- The cultural heart of the Town should be maintained around the civic and town hall areas. Any developments should not draw focus away from the heart of the town.
- Balancing heritage and modern developments would be important to ensure that heritage was maintained but improvements were made to Macclesfield.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Head of Regeneration be thanked and the presentation be noted.
- (b) That the Committee Members be provided with a copy of the presentation.

Councillor P Hoyland left the meeting

135 **SUSTAINABLE TOWNS UPDATE**

The Committee received a presentation from the Economic Development Manager on the progress of major projects in some of Cheshire East's town centres which updated Members on the progress of projects in Cheshire East's town centres, in particular Congleton, Nantwich and Wilmslow.

The presentation also provided information on the "Love Local Life" scheme which was designed to support independent local businesses. The scheme had worked well and was being expanded across all towns in Cheshire East.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Economic Development Manager be thanked and the presentation be noted.

Councillor Fletcher left the meeting

136 **SCRUTINY MEMBER TRAINING**

The Committee was asked to give consideration to any training requirements they felt would be necessary to help them with their duties on the Scrutiny Committee.

There were no specific requirements identified by Members of the Committee.

137 **WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE**

The Committee gave consideration to the Work Programme.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Committee appoint a Task and Finish Group to conduct a review of Community Transport provision.
- (b) That the Scrutiny Officer be requested to contact Members of the Committee asking for volunteers to be part of the Task and Finish Group.

138 **FORWARD PLAN AND SERVICE PLAN - EXTRACTS**

The Committee was asked to consider the Forward Plan and Services Plans to determine whether any further examination of new issues is appropriate.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Forward Plan and Service Plans be noted.

The meeting commenced at 2.05 pm and concluded at 4.50 pm

Councillor L Gilbert (Chairman)