

# **CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL**

Minutes of a virtual meeting of the **Cabinet**  
held on Tuesday, 12th January, 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 S Akers Smith, M Beanland, J Buckley, C Bulman, J Clowes, A Critchley, T Dean, S Edgar, J P Findlow, R Fletcher, S Gardiner, M Houston, A Moran, D Murphy, J Nicholas, S Pochin, P Redstone, J Saunders, M Simon, D Stockton, L Wardlaw and P Williams

## **Officers in attendance**

Lorraine O'Donnell, Chief Executive  
Frank Jordan, Executive Director Place  
Mark Palethorpe, Executive Director People  
Jane Burns, Executive Director Corporate Services  
Alex Thompson, Director of Finance and Customer Services  
David Brown, Director of Governance and Compliance  
Brian Reed, Head of Democratic Services and Governance  
Paul Mountford, Executive Democratic Services Officer

The Leader announced that since the previous Cabinet meeting, Cheshire East had been placed in five successive restriction regimes for the coronavirus pandemic, culminating in a third national lockdown. He thanked officers for the way in which they had responded to the rapidly changing situation.

The Council was working to support schools to ensure that they remained safe, to protect vulnerable children and to enable key workers to continue to work.

The Covid vaccination programme was now underway, with a target of vaccinating the four highest priority groups by mid-February. Members of the public were asked not to attend a vaccination site until they had received an appointment, and not to contact their GP or local hospital to seek an appointment. Members of the public were also warned against vaccination scams.

The Leader placed on record his thanks to those Council staff who had provided emergency cover over the holiday period.

Finally, the Leader announced that this would be the last Cabinet meeting for

Mark Palethorpe, Executive Director of People, who would be leaving the Council shortly. The Leader thanked Mark for his work and leadership in people services over the last few years and wished him well for the future.

The Deputy Leader announced that on Boxing Day the Council had received, in principle, an allocation of £14.1m for investment in Crewe over the next three years following a bid for funding to the Government's Future High Streets Fund. The Council would now be evaluating projects from its short list and further information would be provided over the next few weeks.

The Council had also been successful in securing £1.26m from the Department for Transport's Rural Mobility Fund. The funding would be used to operate new demand-responsive bus services, initially over a three-year period, linking residents of Wrenbury, Bunbury and Audlem to Nantwich. It was anticipated that the scheme would be launched in the summer.

## **68 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

## **69 PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME/OPEN SESSION - VIRTUAL MEETINGS**

Councillor Robert Douglas, Congleton Town Council, asked about the options for a new recycling site for Congleton.

The Portfolio Holder for Highways and Waste responded that the Council had consulted on a number of options for waste recycling sites, including consideration of a replacement for Congleton. A proposal on the future shape of the service would be prepared following careful consideration of the responses from the Borough-wide consultation and a report would be submitted to a future Cabinet meeting.

Jane Smith, on behalf of Smallwood Toad Patrols, asked when the planned installation of toad crossing signs would take place.

The Portfolio Holder for Highways and Waste confirmed that toad warning signs were scheduled to be erected on Wednesday, 27<sup>th</sup> January 2021, which was before toad migration was expected to take place.

Sue Helliwell referred to the Active Travel Lodge Road Scheme in Alsager, and asked for details of the consultation with residents and the school before the trial scheme was implemented.

The Portfolio Holder for Highways and Waste responded that the Active Travel Scheme on Lodge Road, Alsager had been introduced as part of the emergency active travel measures funded by the Department for Transport. The scheme had been built on a temporary basis and, in accordance with regulations, seven days' notice of the scheme had been given in advance of the works. Regular feedback on the proposals had been sought and changes had been made when necessary. Work was

underway to develop options for permanent measures at this location, which would be consulted upon in advance of any works taking place.

## 70 QUESTIONS TO CABINET MEMBERS - VIRTUAL MEETINGS

Councillor J Buckley asked if communities in areas where gritting routes were being removed could be consulted about the placement of extra grit bins.

The Portfolio Holder for Highways and Waste responded that the provision of grit bins was assessed on a variety of factors. There was a form on the Council's website for requesting grit bins which she undertook to forward to Councillor Buckley.

Councillor J Clowes asked when the results of the winter gritting consultation would be available. She also commented that some roads in her ward which should have been gritted had not been; she asked if there were further prioritisation measures involved.

The Portfolio Holder for Highways and Waste responded that the outcome of the first review of Well-Managed Highway Infrastructure would be published by April to allow time to plan for winter 21/22. This would be communicated to members at that time. She also advised Councillor Clowes to raise the issue regarding ungritted roads in her ward through the Member Enquiries Service.

Councillor J P Findlow referred to the Greater Manchester Clean Air Zone and its impact on cross-boundary travel.

The Deputy Leader indicated that the Council had responded to the consultation on the Greater Manchester Clean Air Zone by making three specific requests, which he outlined. He undertook to share the consultation response with all members. A response to the Council's response was awaited.

Councillor S Pochin asked about the number of unemployed people in Cheshire East at the end of 2019 and the corresponding number at the end of 2020, and how coronavirus was impacting jobs in the Borough. She also sought an assurance that the Council was dealing with requests for support funding from local businesses in a timely fashion and issuing grants where justifiable.

The Portfolio Holder for Environment and Regeneration responded with details of the relevant unemployment figures. He also outlined the financial support available to local businesses and the way in which requests for support were dealt with. He undertook to provide the full details of his response to Councillor Pochin. The Deputy Leader added that the Council had held regular business forums with representatives of the local business community since the start of the pandemic to provide an

opportunity to share information, including details of the support available to businesses.

Councillor J Saunders, referring to the effect of the pandemic on schools, asked the Portfolio Holder for Children and Families if she agreed that all school staff should receive a vaccination as a priority and, if so, she would lobby the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation which advises on the priority of vaccinations.

The Portfolio Holder for Children and Families responded that she did believe that school staff should be prioritised and whilst this was a matter for the Government and the NHS, she would be looking to lend her support to any requests by the teaching unions for prioritisation. She added that testing was regularly taking place in schools which helped to identify cases which were asymptomatic. The Portfolio Holder for Public Health and Corporate Services added that the issue of prioritisation for school staff had already been discussed with the Director of Public Health who had been asked to raise it with the NHS.

Councillor C Bulman, referring to news reports about inadequate food parcels being sent to families with children eligible for free school meals, sought an assurance that quality provisions were being provided in Cheshire East. She also asked when food vouchers would become available.

The Portfolio Holder for Children and Families responded that schools could choose who supplied their food parcels, although many were approaching the Council's own catering service, which was ensuring that a range of good quality and healthy food products were being provided. The Council anticipated that the Department for Education would be introducing a food voucher scheme very soon.

Councillor S Akers Smith referred to the number of electric vehicle charging points available in the Council's car parks and asked if there were plans to provide more.

The Portfolio Holder for Environment and Regeneration undertook to provide a written response.

Councillor Akers Smith also referred to the introduction of the new committee system and asked if the use of the term 'chairman' could be replaced with the term 'chairperson' or 'chair' when the new system was introduced.

The Portfolio Holder for Public Health and Corporate Services undertook to provide a written response.

Councillor P Redstone asked for confirmation that roads in rural wards such as Odd Rode would continue to be gritted so that children could safely attend schools in Sandbach and Alsager.

The Portfolio Holder for Highways and Waste referred to her earlier response that details of the gritting routes would be published in April.

Councillor D Murphy sought an assurance that a waste recycling facility would be maintained in the Congleton area.

The Portfolio Holder for Highways and Waste referred to her response to a similar question under public questions and reiterated that proposals for the future of the recycling service would be brought forward following consideration of the responses from the Borough-wide consultation.

## **71 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

### **RESOLVED**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2020 be approved as a correct record.

## **72 CORPORATE PARENTING COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2019-20**

Cabinet considered the Corporate Parenting Committee Annual Report 2019-20 and proposed revisions to the Committee's terms of reference.

Councillor J Saunders referred to the section of the Annual Report relating to Bespoke Children's Homes and the provision of 12 places for Cheshire East children. She understood that at present, only six children were being cared for under the scheme and she sought an explanation.

The Portfolio Holder for Children and Families responded that there had been a delay in bringing a children's home in Macclesfield into use. She undertook to provide further details in writing.

### **RESOLVED**

That Cabinet

1. endorses the Corporate Parenting Committee Annual Report 2019-20 as set out at Appendix 1 to the report; and
2. endorses the Committee's revised terms of reference at Appendix 1 within the Annual Report.

## **73 VISION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN CHESHIRE EAST**

Cabinet considered a report on a vision for children and young people in Cheshire East.

### **RESOLVED**

That Cabinet agrees to

1. endorse and adopt the vision for children and young people in Cheshire East;
2. promote the vision widely; and
3. ensure that the outcomes for children are achieved and decisions are made in children and young people's best interests.

#### **74 PROCUREMENT OF FACILITIES MANAGEMENT SERVICES**

Cabinet considered a report on the options for the procurement of facilities management services.

#### **RESOLVED**

That Cabinet

1. approves the procurement of a Building Services contract (to be procured through the Facilities Management Marketplace Framework (RM3830);
2. approves the procurement of the Council's energy supply via a flexible procurement approach and to award a contract for a maximum period of 5 years;
3. notes that the Council will enter into individual Memoranda of Understanding with such Schools and Academies that indicate they wish to participate in the energy supply contract (subject to the Council's contract with the successful provider allowing such participation); and
4. delegates authority to the Executive Director Place in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Regeneration and the Director of Governance and Compliance to award contracts to providers meeting the specified requirements.

The meeting commenced at 1.00 pm and concluded at 2.12 pm

Councillor S Corcoran (Chairman)