

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Council

held on Wednesday, 19th July, 2023 in the The Assembly Room - Town Hall,
Macclesfield SK10 1EA

PRESENT

Councillor R Fletcher (Chair)

Councillor M Houston (Vice-Chair)

Councillors S Adams, L Anderson, R Bailey, J Bird, L Braithwaite, J Bratherton, M Brooks, D Brown, C Browne, L Buchanan, C Bulman, A Burton, R Chadwick, C Chapman, D Clark, J Clowes, P Coan, A Coiley, S Corcoran, L Crane, A Critchley, T Dean, B Drake, S Edgar, D Edwardes, M Edwards, H Faddes, A Farrall, A Gage, S Gardiner, M Goldsmith, M Gorman, E Hall, A Harrison, G Hayes, A Heler, C Hilliard, T Jackson, D Jefferay, R Kain, A Kolker, N Mannion, G Marshall, A Moran, R Moreton, H Moss, M Muldoon, C Naismith, C O'Leary, K Parkinson, J Pearson, J Place, B Posnett, J Pratt, B Puddicombe, P Redstone, J Saunders, H Seddon, M Sewart, M Simon, L Smetham, G Smith, J Smith, J Smith, J Snowball, R Vernon, L Wardlaw, M Warren, H Whitaker, F Wilson and J Wray

Apologies

Councillors M Beanland, S Bennett-Wake, N Cook, K Edwards, E Gilman, S Holland, J Priest, J Rhodes and L Smith

18 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors M Beanland, S Bennett-Wake, N Cook, K Edwards, E Gilman, J Priest, J Rhodes and L Smith.

19 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Mayor announced that the Monitoring Officer had confirmed, in relation to the report on the Targeted Review of Members' Allowances, that Members did not need to declare an interest in this item as a consequence of receipt of an allowance as part of the Members' Allowances Scheme.

In relation to the item on recommendations from Corporate Policy Committee: Annual Review of the Committee System - Councillor S Gardiner declared that he was a member of the Royal Town Planning Institute.

In relation to the Notice of Motion on the commission of an Independent Hydrogeology Report for the South Macclesfield Development Area, Councillor C O'Leary declared that he was an active campaigner for the 'Save Danes Moss' campaign.

20 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 24 May 2023 be approved as a correct record.

21 MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor, in summary:

1. Stated that he would be using his term in office to support the Cheshire End of Life Partnership and Nightstop charities.
2. Gave an overview of three engagements that he had attended recently which included the unveiling of a sculpture of King Canute at the Knutsford Heritage Centre, the opening of the new Congleton Leisure Centre and attendance at the Mercian Regiment Pilgrimage to the Regimental War Memorial at Crich in Derbyshire.
3. Thanked Dr Lorraine O'Donnell for her three-year service with Cheshire East Council and asked members to join him in wishing Lorraine the very best in her new role as Chief Executive at Bradford Metropolitan District Council.
4. Advised that, as the Council agenda had been published before the Chief Executive's news was announced, it was agreed that an urgent item of business should be added to the agenda in respect of the commencement of the recruitment process for a new Chief Executive. This was to ensure that there was no delay in the new appointment, which would occur if commencement of recruitment had to wait until the next meeting of Council.

Dr Lorraine O'Donnell thanked all members and officers for the warm welcome she had received and stated that it had been a privilege to serve the residents of Cheshire East.

22 PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME/OPEN SESSION

Ms Bev Hulme spoke in respect of Poynton Pool, specifically the section 10 inspection on the Spillway Proposal. Ms Hulme asked why Cheshire East Council believed that the mandatory work differed to that stated in the inspecting engineer's report and why any engineering work to upgrade the Spillway must be implemented by December 2023.

Ms Jen Hartshorne spoke in respect of Poynton Pool and stated that the data used to form the catchment area was incorrect and therefore the conclusions were flawed. Ms Hartshorne asked that automatic monitoring be implemented over a period of six months to provide a more accurate measure of the catchment area. Ms Hartshorne felt that this would be more likely to be accepted locally.

Mr Mike Ellison spoke in respect of Poynton Pool and stated that the justification for spillway improvements was flawed. Mr Ellison felt that the proposal was contrary to Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy - Policy SE 5 -Trees, Hedgerows and Woodland in terms of avoidable loss of trees where there were alternatives,

and in terms of providing a net environmental gain. Mr Ellison asked the Council to consider the proposal put forward by 'Friends of Poynton Pool' to achieve the same objective as the Jacobs scheme while saving the Council in excess of £1.3 million.

Mr David Massingham spoke in respect of Poynton Pool. Mr Massingham felt that the calculation of significant risk to life had been greatly exaggerated and asked why that was and how it had been justified.

In response to the questions raised in respect of Poynton Pool, Councillor M Goldsmith, Chair of Economy and Growth Committee stated that, under the Reservoirs Act 1975, Poynton Pool was classified as the largest type of reservoir and it was deemed a high risk because of its close proximity to the houses and businesses in Poynton. Therefore, regardless of its age, the pool must meet current safety standards which it currently did not. The Reservoir Act meant that the nature of any risk or its likelihood of happening were irrelevant. If the Council did not act then enforcement action could be taken. Following feedback from residents, the number of trees removed was reduced from 80 to 35. Poynton Town Council had recently commissioned their own independent expert review which confirmed that the option proposed appeared proportionate and had less environmental impact in terms of tree loss than potential alternatives. The next stage for the proposal was to apply for planning approval, where full public scrutiny could be given to the proposed works. The Council was due to meet with the Friends of Poynton Pool the following week, along with an expert engineer to answer any technical questions.

Ms Debbie Jamison spoke in respect of the item on the recommendations from Corporate Policy Committee: Annual Review of the Committee System. Ms Jamison asked what other options the Council had considered in arriving at the recommendation to reduce the number of planning committees from three to two and what other measures were in place to increase the timely assessment of planning applications since the number of applications would not reduce. Ms Jamison felt that there was a danger that large strategic applications would not be given the required focus and scrutiny. Ms Jamison also referred to paragraph 25 of the report that went to Corporate Policy Committee and asked how assessments of Council conflicts of interest would be dealt with via the revised committee scheme. Ms Jamison referred to appendix 2 paragraph 2.1.3 of the report in relation to the new terms of reference which suggest that reserved matters plans would not be brought back to committee. Ms Jamieson asked if that had been drafted correctly and whether that was how the workload efficiencies were going to be achieved.

In response, Councillor M Warren, Chair of Environment and Communities Committee, stated that the proposal to reduce from three planning committees to two was being progressed by Democratic Services as a budget saving under the heading of 'reducing the costs of democracy' within the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan. The reduction to two committees was supported by the Planning Service as it would bring opportunities to better manage workflow and reduce deadline congestion for report writing. When considering the proposal, colleagues had considered the alternative of retaining a strategic committee with one other larger area/sub-committee, however this was not chosen as the preferred option to be taken forward. It was not proposed to include additional meetings, rather the two remaining committees would each sit once per month, ideally resulting in one meeting every two weeks.

Councillor Warren also stated that it was for individual Members to determine whether they had any conflicts of interest in respect of any decision which was proposed to be made by a committee upon which they sat. Members had access to advice from the Monitoring Officer at any time and would take that into account when determining whether they should take part in a debate or vote upon a matter which was before their committee.

The matter was to be discussed further as part of agenda item 7.

23 LEADER'S AND DEPUTY LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Leader, in summary:

- 1 Reported that he had attended the re-opening of Crewe Lyceum Square which was one of the projects forming the regeneration programme for Crewe. Other elements of the programme included the new multi storey car park which would allow Oak Street car park to be used as a site for Crewe Youth Zone.
- 2 Reported that he had attended the reopening of the refurbished Congleton Leisure Centre.
- 3 Announced the new Member Champions which included:

Mental Health – Councillor Dawn Clark

Menopause – Councillor Judy Snowball

Diversity (EDI) – Councillor Stewart Gardiner

Heritage – Councillor Fiona Wilson / Councillor Brian Puddicombe

Food Poverty/Food Security – Councillor Anna Burton

Armed Forces - Councillor Ashley Farrall

Walking & Cycling – Councillor Chris Hilliard

Environment & Climate Change – Councillor Mary Brooks

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) – Councillor Laura

Crane

Public Transport – Councillor Lata Anderson

The Deputy Leader, in summary:

- 1 Reported that the Council had been working closely with neighbouring Councils to discuss issues of common interest. Following an invitation from the Minister for Levelling Up to explore these ideas further, a number of briefings were being arranged to help Members understand the options that were open to the Council and explain more around the decisions that Members may have to make.
- 2 Reported that the Council was working with the Department for Levelling Up and the Department for Transport on one of only two 'deep dives' nationally to explore in more detail the

opportunities that exist from leveraging transport investment to level up communities in Cheshire East.

- 3 Reported that he had attended the opening of the newly redeveloped Congleton Leisure Centre and thanked all those involved in the project which had resulted in an accessible community leisure facility for future generations.
- 4 Reported that good progress had been made on constructing an improved cycle and pedestrian link between Macclesfield and the Middlewood Way. Once the scheme was completed, a promotional campaign would be launched to make residents and visitors aware of the improved links.
- 5 Reported that Cheshire East Council had successfully secured approximately £1.3m from Active Travel England for the northern section of the Wilmslow to Handforth cycleway.
- 6 Reported that, following the announcement from Transport Focus that they were consulting on proposals by a number of train companies to remove ticket office staff from railway stations across the borough, a response would be submitted on behalf of Cheshire East Council opposing the proposals.
- 7 Reported that the Cheshire East Registration Service had been voted the best ceremony provider in the North West for the sixth year in a row.

24 URGENT ITEM OF BUSINESS - CHIEF EXECUTIVE RECRUITMENT

Following the earlier announcement, the Mayor changed the order of the agenda to deal with this matter as item 7.

Consideration was given to a report which outlined the arrangements to recruit a permanent Chief Executive for Cheshire East Council. This followed the resignation of the current Chief Executive, Dr Lorraine O'Donnell.

The role of the Appointments Committee and their responsibility to recommend a suitable candidate alongside an appropriate remuneration package and associated changes to the pay policy statement was highlighted in the report.

Members thanked the Chief Executive for her dedicated service to Cheshire East.

RESOLVED:

That Council

1. Note the resignation of the Chief Executive.
2. Note that the Appointments Committee will:
 - 2.1. Convene to undertake the recruitment and selection process for a replacement Chief Executive in accordance with the Employment Procedure Rules.
 - 2.2. Recommend appropriate changes to the Council's Pay Policy Statement that supports the appointment process.
 - 2.3. Recommend the proposed appointment to Council, alongside the recommended annual spot salary, before an offer of appointment is made to that person.
3. Note that the Appointments Committee may make recommendations to Council for interim arrangements for the role of Chief Executive if required.

**25 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM CORPORATE POLICY COMMITTEE:
ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE COMMITTEE SYSTEM**

Consideration was given to a report on the annual review of the committee system. The report made recommendations for changes to the Constitution and recommendations for Council to consider as improvements to the future functionality of the committee system.

The recommendations as set out in the report were proposed and seconded. During the debate, an amendment was proposed and seconded which sought to defer consideration of recommendation 3 in the report to allow further consultation to take place, including with the Planning Committee Chairs, to fully understand the risks and be brought forward in a further report which would address all relevant issues to the December meeting of Council. This amendment was carried and therefore became part of the substantive proposition.

RESOLVED:

That Council

1. Approve the amendments to the Constitution as attached at Appendix 1 to the report to the Corporate Policy Committee
2. Agree that the Public Rights of Way Sub-Committee functions be incorporated into the functions of the Highways and Transport Committee as shown in Appendix 2
3. Agree to defer consideration of the realignment of the Planning Committees from 3 to 2 to the December meeting of Council to

allow further consultation to take place, including with the Planning Committee Chairs, to fully understand the risks

4. Delegate to the Monitoring Officer, the power to make such consequential changes to the Council's Constitution as he deems necessary to give effect to the wishes of Council
5. Note the savings in relation to venues for meetings and printing and postage of agendas

26 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM CORPORATE POLICY COMMITTEE: TARGETED REVIEW OF MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES

In the interest of openness, Councillor S Gardiner declared that he was known to one of the members of the Independent Remuneration Panel.

The Corporate Policy Committee, at its meeting on 15 June 2023, had considered a report on the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel in respect of a targeted review of Members' Allowances undertaken in 2022 and for Council to invite the Panel to undertake a full review of allowances in 2023/2024.

The recommendations of the Committee were proposed and seconded and, following debate, a recorded vote was requested with the following results:

FOR

Councillors L Anderson, L Brathwaite, J Bratherton, M Brooks, C Browne, C Bulman, A Burton, C Chapman, D Clark, A Coiley, S Corcoran, L Crane, B Drake, D Edwardes, M Edwards, H Faddes, A Farrall, M Goldsmith, M Gorman, C Hilliard, D Jefferay, R Kain, N Mannion, G Marshall, A Moran, R Moreton, C Naismith, J Place, B Puddicombe, H Seddon, G Smith, John Smith, Julie Smith, J Snowball, R Vernon, M Warren, F Wilson.

AGAINST

Councillors S Adams, R Bailey, D Brown, L Buchanan, R Chadwick, J Clowes, P Coan, A Critchley, T Dean, S Edgar, A Gage, S Gardiner, E Hall, A Harrison, G Hayes, A Heler, T Jackson, H Moss, M Muldoon, C O'Leary, J Pearson, B Posnett, J Pratt, P Redstone, J Saunders, M Sewart, M Simon, L Smetham, L Wardlaw, H Whitaker.

NOT VOTING

Councillors J Bird, R Fletcher, M Houston, A Kolker, K Parkinson, J Wray.

The motion was declared carried with 37 votes for, 30 against and 6 not voting.

RESOLVED:

That Council approve that:

1. Civic payments should remain at their current levels (Mayor £14,000 and Deputy Mayor £5,600)
2. From 2023, civic payments should be subjected to the same uprating which may be applied to members' allowances

3. Special responsibility allowance (SRA) for the Chair of scrutiny committee should remain at £7,650
4. In respect of the draft Parental Leave Policy for Councillors, basic allowance should continue to be paid to an elected Member during any period of parental leave
5. In respect of the draft Parental Leave Policy for Councillors, special responsibility allowance payable to the elected Member during any period of parental leave should be discontinued and transferred to the Councillor who is undertaking the special responsibility in question
6. Basic allowance should be increased by a flat rate of £500 and applied retrospectively for 2022-2023
7. Special responsibility allowances (to include Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Scrutiny Chair) should be increased by 4.04% and applied retrospectively for 2022-2023
8. A full review of the Members' Scheme of Allowances should be undertaken by the new Independent Remuneration Panel, following its appointed by Council on 16 October 2023

(The meeting was adjourned at 1.20 pm and reconvened at 1.50 pm)

**27 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM CORPORATE POLICY COMMITTEE:
PARENTAL LEAVE POLICY FOR COUNCILLORS**

Consideration was given to the recommendations from the Corporate Policy Committee in respect of a proposed parental leave policy for Councillors.

The recommendations as set out in the report were proposed and seconded, subject to the following amendment being incorporated in to the policy:

That special responsibility allowance would not be paid to members whilst they were on parental leave.

RESOLVED:

That the proposed parental leave policy be adopted as set out in Appendix 1 to the report subject to the following amendment:

That special responsibility allowance would not be paid to members whilst they were on parental leave.

**28 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM CORPORATE POLICY COMMITTEE:
CHESHIRE AND MERSEYSIDE HEALTH AND CARE PARTNERSHIP**

RESOLVED:

That the matter be deferred.

**29 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM CORPORATE POLICY COMMITTEE:
CHESHIRE EAST HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD TERMS OF
REFERENCE UPDATE**

Consideration was given to the recommendations of the Corporate Policy Committee in respect of the proposed updates to the terms of reference of the Cheshire East Health and Wellbeing Board.

RESOLVED:

That the revised terms of reference of the Cheshire East Health and Wellbeing Board, as appended to the report, be adopted.

30 PROVISIONAL FINANCIAL OUTTURN 2022/23

Consideration was given to the recommendations of the Corporate Policy Committee following its consideration of a report on the Provisional Financial Outturn for 2022/23.

RESOLVED:

That Council approves:

1. The fully funded Supplementary Revenue Estimates over £1,000,000 as detailed in Appendix 2 of the report.
2. The fully funded Supplementary Capital Estimates over £1,000,000 as detailed in Appendix 3 of the report.

31 NOTICES OF MOTION

Consideration was given to the following Notices of Motion, which had been submitted in accordance with the Council's Procedural Rules.

1 Access to the National Parking Platform

Proposed by Councillor J Clowes and Seconded by Councillor M Sewart

- 1 That this Council joins the National Parking Platform (NPP) Pilot Expansion programme for Q2/Q3 2023, with immediate effect.
- 2 That this Council, on joining the NPP Pilot, incorporates current NPP evidential learning and practices into any future Car Park Charging Strategy for Cheshire East.

RESOLVED:

That the Motion be referred to the Highways and Transport Committee.

2 Commission an Independent Hydrogeology Report for the South Macclesfield Development Area

Proposed by Councillor C O'Leary and Seconded by Councillor JClowes

That this Council notes:

- that Cheshire East Council is the lead organisation and majority landowner for the *South Macclesfield Development Area* (SMDA), as identified in the 2017 Local development Plan;
- that as lead organisation and majority landowner, Cheshire East Council may prepare or commission additional information to provide assurance that proposals to develop the SMDA are sound;
- that Cheshire East Council, in its role as proposed developer of the South Macclesfield Development Area (SMDA) must submit appropriate, detailed ecological, environmental and groundworks data to support development of this extensive site and should include a full, hydrogeological assessment that investigates the impacts of any proposed development on below-surface water flows through the peat deposits of the SMDA, together with the effect this might have on synergistic water flows into or out of the adjacent Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).
- That such detailed evidence should be submitted at the appropriate time for consideration by the Local Planning Authority (LPA) to enable the LPA to make fully informed planning decisions.

Cheshire East Council therefore resolves to:

- That this Council, as landowner and developer, commissions an independent Hydrogeology Report to provide a hydrogeological assessment that investigates the impacts of any proposed development on below-surface water flows through the peat deposits of the SMDA, together with the effect this might have on synergistic water flows into or out of the adjacent Danes Moss Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and;
- That this report is published in the public interest and used to review and inform past and future development decisions on this site.

RESOLVED:

That the Motion be referred to the Economy and Growth Committee.

32 QUESTIONS

Cllr B Puddicombe asked the Vice-Chair of the Economy and Growth Committee if he had any additional thoughts on the Notice of Motion proposed by Cllr O'Leary in relation to the South Macclesfield Development Area.

Cllr N Mannion, Vice-Chair of the Economy and Growth Committee, thanked Cllr O'Leary for his interest in this proposed development and reminded Members that this development was still a live matter to be considered by a future planning committee and he therefore did not want to discuss the details of the Notice of Motion. Cllr Mannion assured Cllr O'Leary that the Council, as landowner, takes

seriously its responsibilities as a developer and will adhere to the Local Planning Authority and the environmental assessments.

Cllr Sewart asked the Chair of the Highways and Transport Committee if he would agree that proposals to make reductions in street lighting, due to be discussed by the committee, could increase the likelihood of criminal activity in residential areas.

Cllr L Crane, Vice-Chair of the Highways and Transport Committee, responded that the report went into detail on any issues arising from the presence or not of street lighting and that the time to debate the matter would be in the committee meeting.

Cllr A Coiley asked if the Vice-Chair of the Highways and Transport Committee could confirm that the Council had responded to the consultation in relation to ticket office closures at railway stations in Cheshire East and objected to the proposals.

In response, Cllr L Crane advised that the Council would be responding to the consultation and providing a more strategic response as part of the Transport for the North response to the consultation. Cllr Crane encouraged others to respond to the consultation to ensure that the voices of Cheshire East were heard.

Cllr H Whitaker referred to Poynton Pool and stated that such a large expenditure of taxpayers' money needed to be based on the latest data available. Cllr Whitaker and residents wanted to work with the Council to ensure it was not overspending.

In response, Cllr Goldsmith stated that the volume of the pool was estimated to be around 130,000 cubic metres and that residents estimated it to be around 85,000 cubic metres. However, anything over 25,000 cubic metres was considered to be large and the Council had a legal obligation to make the area safe. The Council was willing to meet with the Friends of Poynton Pool group to discuss the matter further.

Cllr J Saunders referred to correspondence sent in error to the parents of children in 10 primary schools in the Macclesfield area advising that their children were classed as overweight. Cllr Saunders asked how this error occurred and what steps were being taken to ensure that it would not happen again.

In response, Cllr C Bulman, Chair of the Children and Families Committee, advised that this task had been outsourced to an external company and that steps were being taken to address the matter.

Cllr A Harrison referred to the discounted membership for Everybody Health and Leisure facilities for the armed forces and veterans which he had been informed had been discontinued. Cllr Harrison asked for reassurance that this would be reviewed.

In response, Cllr M Warren, Chair of the Environment and Communities Committee, advised that Everybody Health and Leisure, through the strategic leisure review, now offered discounts to serving armed forces personnel through their options scheme at 25%. The only veterans in receipt of this discount were those who were awarded a disabled pension with or without motability supplement and armed forces independent payment or severe disability allowance. Cllr Warren was aware of the concern that had been caused within the

armed forces community and stated that he would discuss this with the Armed Forces Champion and officers to look at a review of the decisions that had been made. Feedback would be provided to all members.

Cllr G Smith asked why there was such a large financial override for Children's Services and how this would be managed.

In response, Cllr S Corcoran advised that the government required the Council to put spending on SEND into this negative reserve. The accounting override would last until 2026; if at that point the override was withdrawn and nothing else changed, Cheshire East would not have the general reserve to cover that amount. Cllr Corcoran stated that this was a serious problem and Cheshire East Council was not alone in this. The additional costs were largely driven by the reforms brought in in 2014 which enabled increased parental choice and set up an adversarial system which often resulted in high-cost private placements. Those costs were increasing significantly in Cheshire East and the County Councils Network had done research to show the costs were inversely proportional to deprivation.

Cllr A Gage referred to the Council's rebuild of the Royal Arcade in Crewe which included plans for a cinema as a 'main anchor' around which the rest of the rebuild would occur. Cllr Gage stated that Covid had changed habits and therefore fewer people were going to cinemas, resulting in many closing. Cllr Gage asked the Leader if, at any stage since Covid, the administration had held a review of the plan to anchor a town centre rebuild around a struggling industry, and what the current way forward was. The Leader would provide a written response to this question.

Cllr H Seddon asked if the Leader would like to comment on the use of Swift Bricks, given the recent debate in parliament and the amount of building going on in Cheshire East.

Cllr Corcoran responded that many of the houses being built in Cheshire East were granted planning permission years ago, prior to the Council having up to date planning policies and, therefore, it was too late to insert planning conditions into those. However, there were some things that could be done going forward. The local planning authority asked for Swift Bricks by condition where the Nature Conservation Officer considers that they were appropriate and would be of benefit. The Council now had up to date planning policies and a biodiversity net gain supplementary planning document which required developers to show that there was a net gain in biodiversity as a result of their plan.

Cllr C Hilliard referred to the news of facilities being provided for pupils with special educational needs at two new schools and asked how these facilities would be used and what opportunities there would be to integrate these pupils into mainstream education where possible.

Cllr Bulman responded that the policy was for integration where suitable and wanted. There was a capital programme for keeping children local, whatever their needs. If children could not access the curriculum and had a particular need, they could access the inclusion unit. Cllr Bulman acknowledged that this would not suit everyone and therefore there was a building programme for two new schools. Further information on the capital build programme would be circulated in due course.

Cllr Anderson asked if there were any updates on the results of the recently closed public consultation on library closures.

Cllr Warren responded that a paper had been published as part of the Environment and Communities Committee agenda that provided the detail of the consultation. Over 3,200 responses were received and, after consideration, the Council was now proposing to significantly revise the plans. Unlike other authorities that had undertaken similar reviews of library services, Cheshire East had never proposed any full closures of library sites. Cllr Warren stated that, although the proposals were not ideal, they were now in a more positive position. Cllr Warren thanked the officers who had worked hard to go through all responses and had been able to amend the proposals.

Cllr O'Leary referred to the number 14 bus from Macclesfield to Langley and asked whether, prior to making any cuts to this rural bus service, any consideration had been given to extending the bus route to Macclesfield Forest which would increase passenger numbers and revenue, improve accessibility and reduce car journeys and parking issues in the forest.

Cllr Crane responded that changes to the number 14 bus service were a result of Arriva Buses withdrawing their whole operation in Cheshire East at the end of April. This presented an imminent threat to the local bus network service in Macclesfield and surrounding villages as almost all of these services were operated commercially by Arriva with very little financial support from the Council. As such, the Council had only limited influence on the service patterns. Following this, D&G commenced commercial bus services in Macclesfield and assessed that service 14 was viable, albeit with a reduced timetable. There was no indication from the bus company that they considered an extension to Macclesfield Forest to be a commercial proposition at this time.

Cllr D Clark referred to two Family Hubs that had recently opened in Crewe and Wilmslow and asked when the rest of Cheshire East families would benefit from the opening of these hubs.

Cllr Bulman responded that these hubs provided a broad range of services for families and the plan was to roll out a further five hubs over the next year. This was not postcode related and there would be a virtual hub providing the same range of services.

33 REPORTING OF URGENT DECISIONS TAKEN BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Council received a schedule of urgent decisions taken by the Chief Executive on behalf of the Council, which were reported for information in accordance with the Council procedure rules.

RESOLVED:

That the schedule of urgent decisions be noted

The meeting commenced at 11.00 am and concluded at 2.59 pm

Councillor R Fletcher (Chair)
CHAIRMAN