

**Date:** Thursday, 11 February 2021  
**Venue:** Microsoft Teams Meeting  
**Time:** 6pm

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### Minutes

**Present:** Garfield Southall (Chair), Tamara Hunt (University of Chester), Steve Hughes (Sustainability Forum), Roy Newton (Cheshire & Warrington LEP), Stephen Perry (Active Travel Forum), Bernadette Bailey (NHS Cheshire CCG), David Beer (Transport Focus), Mike Hogg (Chester Residents' Association Group), Peter Bulmer (Great Boughton Parish Council), Alex Bell (Youth Senate) Andy Farrell (Chester BID), Robert Pickering (British Cycling), Tim Kenney (Chester Business Club), Anya Miller (Youth Senate) Cathy Partington (Sustainable Travel for Tourism), Nicola Said (Marketing Cheshire), David Whitehead (Huntington Parish Council),

**Officers:** Sean Traynor, Kristy Littler, Lynne McKie, Stephanie Ward

#### 1. Welcome

Garfield Southall (The Chair) welcomed everyone to this virtual meeting of the taskforce and advised that the meeting will be recorded for subsequent publication.

#### 2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Claire Roberts.

#### 3. Introductions

Members of the taskforce introduced themselves.

#### 4. Declaration of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

#### 5. Minutes of the last meeting

Minutes of the meeting were agreed as a true record.

#### 6. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising from the previous minutes.

#### 7. Feedback from the Pilot studies

##### a) SE Chester Update – David Beer

First meeting held on 4 February 2021.

Members of the pilot will explore opportunities for creating high quality, vibrant and liveable communities that support town centre economies together with general health and wellbeing through the improved delivery of ambitious inclusive walking, cycling, public transport and integrated transport projects in the Saughton Camp Section 106 area. The group have since expanded beyond the area defined to include Rowton (N.B this area will be exempt from this potential funding source).

**Approach:** The Pilot is looking to develop sustainable transport proposals:

- Giving people options to use forms of transport that encourage them to travel more sustainably
- Reducing net carbon dioxide emissions
- Reducing nitrogen dioxide and particulate emissions
- Increasing the general health and wellbeing of residents in the defined geographical areas
- Contributing to the required increase in vitality of the Chester business and retail sectors by enhancing and not restricting access to the City Centre

### **SE Chester Cycling Plan**

- The well-developed cycling plan will be prioritised
- There is a strong desire to drive forward, engage and review the plans
- It is crucial to secure funding and maintain contact with CW&C Council, Additional considerations for the project:
- Public transport connections
- Safe walking routes (*a comment was made by a meeting observer that walking is more inclusive*).

David Beer asked for expressions of interest from the group and residents (with relevant experience) to support in the public transport and safe walking routes discussions. The group needs to:

- Understand the barriers and needs of communities for connections and access and reduced reliance on the car, including innovations such as Ginger electric scooter trial
- Co-ordinate with other pilots such as city centre and active travel lanes to ensure a cohesive plan across the pilot projects
- Prepare in advance the projects to take forward to be ready and able to apply for funds.

*Sean Traynor asked David Beer to ensure that Huntington Parish are suitably represented given the geography of the pilot and David agreed to such.*

### **Next Steps**

- To agree terms of reference and arrange the next meeting
- Cycling plan is immediate priority – engage with the Council, review plans and seek to secure funding
- Identify gaps in group expertise to support progress and additional projects

### **b) Central Chester - Smart Mobility Update – Andy Farrell**

This pilot reflects on all modes of transport and people's preference, feeding into the Council's plans and reinforcing the future of the City.

- Smart Mobility: using transport modes alongside or even instead of owning a fossil fuel powered vehicle
- Growing modes: car sharing, public transport, walking, scooters, bicycles, buses, trains, taxis, autonomous vehicles, personal micro-EVs (e-bikes, e-scooters, e-mopeds), etc
- Usership: instead of ownership
- Integration: information and App-based systems – end to end journeys / customer driven approach

### **Opportunities:**

- Notion of sustainable modes has evolved
- Current methods of managing transportation predate the digital revolution
- Data from a time when City Centre was much different – now struggling badly
- Climate change
- Sharing - pooling, hire, sharing

- Electric vehicles - is Chester prepared?
- Policy context – is it current - urban living – car free residential developments
- Covid-19 has accelerated change, how does this impact on the One City plan and shift in concept.

The basic principles are Flexibility, Efficiency, Integration, Clean Technology and Safety in delivering multi modal transport, mobility hubs, link with hospitals, schools, education. With the key focus on the One City Plan and destination Chester, Chester Zoo and Cheshire Oaks. The programme will run over 3 months and feed into the One City Plan Review.

#### **c) Ellesmere Port and Helsby Update – Garfield Southall**

- Linking Ellesmere Port to Helsby and Frodsham makes sense
- Predominately industrial, Helsby Hill and Delamere needs to be seen for its beauty
- Debate projects in existence to build our framework and engage with the North West Community Rail Partnership (CRP)
- Improvements of cycling interchange which sits at the core of what we are trying to do in the task force
- The industrial area consumes 5% of UK energy output but they are changing this to be far more renewable focused. As areas develop there will be more employment.
- The success of the Rural Mobility Fund would support in this project and the outcome of the bids will be announced by the Department for Transport towards the end of March 2021.

#### **Next Steps**

First meeting will take place w/c 15 February and the terms of reference will be agreed. Councillor Parker to be kept updated.

#### **d) Upton Update – Stephen Perry**

The general agreement from the group is that the scope needs to specifically include the Zoo, Countess of Chester Hospital and Hoole and maybe include the greenway to be more inclusive. There is a lot of emphasis currently within Upton about the low transport neighbourhood concepts which is likely to be a strong focus within the body of the community going forward. A meeting will take place next week to further progress this pilot.

### **8. A51/A5116 Emergency Active Travel Lane (EATL) Project Update – Stephen Perry**

The 12 volunteers of the group represent:

- The 'for' and 'against' Facebook groups
- Local community groups in all locations directly affected
- Cycling, sustainability and business groups

The group has met 3 times including interactions between meetings and has reviewed all the available background documentation from the DfT, CW&C and other commissioned reports.

The primary purpose of the EATLs is to support safe cycling and walking and that public transport remains a viable option in the future. Phase 1 is reviewing the lanes to see if they need keeping.

#### **Findings:**

- There is insufficient data available to confirm a significant increase in 'safe cycling and walking'
- The ongoing impact of Covid-19 means data collected in the coming months is likely to not be representative and open to challenge.
- It has not been possible to provide any evidence-based approach to assess the environmental, health and social impacts of the EATLs\* nor draw any conclusions on the usage of different transport modes, or an analysis of footfall and dwell time.

- Public transport data on usage has been provided but currently very low passenger numbers given Covid-19.
- Qualitative data that represents feedback to questions raised at the initial STTF meeting and via the transport strategy email has not been made available.
- Concerns have been expressed by communities local to the EATL's and by regular users of these routes that there has been a negative impact on levels of congestion.

Safety concerns have been expressed due to cycles sharing these lanes with buses, motorbikes and taxis and the fact that these lanes are not LTN 1/20 compliant.

The group reported that evidence is not sufficiently 'hard' nor 'representative' to confirm that either EATL has met its intended purpose. The group cannot recommend a longer term 'Retain as-is' option, nor can we recommend an immediate 'Remove' option. At this time, the group is unable to provide a response as the group cannot rely on being able to gather further, relevant 'data' to support an immediate recommendation. The group feel alternative options for cycling, walking and other sustainable transport are possible, and proposals will be researched and developed that will adapt, extend or replace the EATL's routes in a safe and efficient manner.

ST noted that the availability of the Chester Transport Model and that two live reports had been undertaken on traffic flows. The schemes have also undergone Department for Transport's Active Mode Appraisal Toolkit (AMAT).

**Recommendation:** As a 'holding' response the group recommend that CW&C immediately 'Pause' the use of the current EATL's.

- 'Pause' means that the EATL's are left in place as is, but with notices indicating that they are currently not in use
- Under these 'Pause' conditions alternative adaptations to the EATL's may be trialled on a real or modelled basis, and allowance needs to be made to fund and enable such trials
- 'Pause' needs to be reviewed and reassessed on a routine basis
- 'Pause' is not a Win/Lose decision. It must be communicated and seen as a base from which we develop a Win/Win solution
- 'Pause' provides a neutral opportunity to engage more fully with the community

Pausing the EATL's will allow the Working Group to research, review, model and recommend alternative solutions with community engagement (residents and businesses).

#### **Next Steps:**

- Encourage active travel for reasons of health and well being
- Encourage use of other forms of sustainable travel; as part of the ongoing process to comprehensively review transport and accessibility.
- Address CW&C's declared Climate Emergency Targets and other declared strategies and policies and promote the economic growth and future success of the City
- Better understand why the group requested the 'pause' option
- Explore why the existing EATL's have not provided the result hoped for

Members of the EATL working group would like to work close with CW&C officers in preparing any communication that explains the thinking behind the 'pause' recommendation.

Based on the recommendation it was confirmed that the Council would make the final decision on the EATL, however clarity will be sought in respect of the submission and approval process.

It was confirmed that the EATL trial is for 18 months and the 6-month period is when objections can be raised, and these must be considered by CW&C. The Taskforce have been advised to make a

recommendation if they all agree and this will be considered along with other recommendations/objections.

It was noted that any stop start nature of the pause could cause more confusion and anxiety to the public, should the group conclude to reinstate the lanes.

**Chair explained: A consensus is required from the Taskforce to submit a recommendation to the Council. The Chair asked members of the group (listed on the terms of reference only) to vote using the 'conversation tab'.**

**Firstly**, do you support the recommendations of the working group to implement a 'Pause' to the EATL?

Recommendation 1:

- Support overall
- Object

**Outcome:** the vote was overwhelmingly to support a 'Pause' to the EATLs.

**Secondly**, do you support the group in proceeding with plans to allow the working group to research, review, model and recommend alternative solutions with community engagement?

Recommendation 2:

- Support overall
- Object

**Outcome:** the vote was overwhelmingly to support the working group in progressing alternative options.

## 9. Transport and Infrastructure update – Kristy Littler

A **Bus Review Task Group** covering Park & Ride, Home to School Transport, Local Bus, Community Transport and Rural Mobility was established following Places Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting on 9 March 2020. The Task Group has cross party representation and is chaired by Cllr Paul Roberts.

A number of underpinning themes were considered; Affordability, Climate Change, Rail Integration, Marketing (and Ticketing) and latterly Poverty Truth considerations. Each group have reviewed data, received evidence and insight from experts in undertaking this work. The work of the Task Group was endorsed by Scrutiny on 25 January 2021; 35 priorities were presented which will be distilled into deliverable tasks under 9 themes. It is recommended that the themes strongly reflect integration to maximise efficiencies, promote economic bounce back and support tackling equality, diversity and poverty.

A work programme covering the short, medium and long-term deliverables will be taken back to Scrutiny in the Summer, ahead of any future Cabinet decision making process.

Bus Task Group Scrutiny Paper:

<http://cmttpublic.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/documents/b16394/Bus%20Service%20Review%20Task%20Group%20Report%2025th-Jan-2021%2018.00%20Places%20Overview%20and%20Scrutiny%20Committee.pdf?T=9>

### **E-Scooter Hire:**

- 12-month E-scooter rental pilot launched in Chester on 21 December 2020 using provider Ginger in partnership with Cheshire West and Chester Council.
- DfT initiative to tackle the climate emergency and encourage greener travel methods for shorter journeys, whilst reducing the pressure on public transport services.
- 40 scooters introduced with an incremental approach being taken
- The scheme has clocked up over 11,000 miles from over 3,700 journeys, the equivalent of nearly 13 trips from Land's End to John o' Groats.

- Must be aged 18 or over, with a valid driving licence (full or provisional) or a motorcycle licence to hire a scooter in our scheme

#### **Active Travel Lane Tranche 2 schemes:**

- Tranche 2 schemes are more permanent in nature and require a consultation process
- Unlike Tranche 1 schemes, LTN 1/20 was published at the time of submission and therefore Tranche 2 should, so far as possible, demonstrate compliance.
- Consultation plan for the schemes was submitted to DfT on 11 December 2020
- Three schemes are currently out to consultation ending 19 February 2021
  - A559 Chester Way, Northwich
  - B5153 Northwich Road Weaverham to Hartford
  - Chester Road Frodsham to Helsby

#### **Local Growth Fund:**

##### **Sustainable Transport Schemes:**

- Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership Local Growth fund allocation: 67% overall
- Sutton Way Boulevard- 4.2km of pedestrian and cycle infrastructure. Complete.  
A5117 - New 5km pedestrian and cycle path  
<https://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/residents/transport-and-roads/highways/major-road-schemes/A5117-cycle-improvement-scheme.aspx>
- Ellesmere Port to Chester Canal Tow path - approx. 4.7km of new 3 metre shared use path-providing contiguous route. <https://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/residents/transport-and-roads/highways/major-road-schemes/chester-to-ellesmere-port-canal-towpath.aspx>

##### **A51- Tavin to Chester Improvements:**

The project seeks to deliver a series of major junction and roundabout improvements that will see:

- additional lanes at the Stamford Bridge traffic lights, the widening of the existing bridge over the River Gowy and capacity improvements at Tarvin roundabout.
- changes to the road layout, widening, lane markings, new controlled crossing-point at Hare Lane/Littleton Lane and better signage.
- new crossing points and improved facilities for pedestrians, cyclists and bus users are also planned along the corridor.  
<https://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/residents/transport-and-roads/highways/major-road-schemes/a51-tarvin-to-chester-improvement-scheme.aspx>

Cabinet Reports: 10 February 2021

–CW&C Climate Emergency Response Plan (Item 9)

–Rural Mobility Fund Bid Application (Item 15)

–Highways Delivery Model review (Item 16)

<http://cmttpublic.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/mqChooseDocPack.aspx?ID=6224>

\* The Presentation was circulated to all attendees following the meeting.

#### **10. AOB**

The Chair thanked members, officers and residents for their continued support and commitment in supporting the Sustainable Taskforce and the working groups.

#### **11. Date and Time of next meeting**

18:00 - 20:00, 11 March 2021

18:00 - 20:00, 8 April 2021

18:00 - 20:00, 13 May 2021

18:00 - 20:00, 10 June 2021

18:00 - 20:00, 8 July 2021

18:00 - 20:00, 12 August 2021



18:00 - 20:00, 9 September 2021  
18:00 - 20:00, 14 October 2021  
18:00 - 20:00, 11 November 20221  
18:00 - 20:00, 9 December 2021