

COMMUNITIES, REGENERATION AND ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING Tuesday, 12 September 2023

PRESENT: Councillor Besford (Chair); Councillors Brown, Davidson, Hodgkinson, Mohammed, Paolucci and Place

OFFICERS: Martin Taylor (Interim Assistant Director Place) and Chris Woods (Senior Highways Officer), Fabiola Fuschi (Senior Governance and Committee Officer)

23 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Nisa, West, P. Williams, D. Williams.

24 URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS

There were no items of urgent business received

25 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest received

26 ITEMS FOR EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

There were no items for exclusion of press and public.

27 MINUTES

The Committee gave consideration to the minutes of the meeting held on 1st August 2023.

Members noted that, in reference to minute 17 – Rochdale’s Safer Communities Partnership, the resolutions should include that developing a Community Safety Plan was a statutory function of the Partnership. The current plan had expired in 2022. A one year interim plan had been produced, but the partnership strategic assessment needed to be undertaken to inform a new three year plan. The Committee recommended that the assessment and the new plan be developed as soon as possible.

Resolved that, subject to the amendments requested by the Committee, the minutes of the meeting held on 1st August 2023 be approved as a correct record.

28 GREATER MANCHESTER COMBINED AUTHORITY MINUTES

- a) Greater Manchester Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Minutes 26th July 2023

Resolved that the minutes of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 26th July 2023 be noted.

29 ROCHDALE TOWN HALL REOPENING

The Committee noted that a new business plan was being produced for the reopening of the Town Hall and agreed to defer this item to its meeting in November, in order to receive the updated version of the business plan.

Resolved that agenda item Rochdale Town Hall Reopening be deferred to the meeting of the Committee on 21st November 2023.

30 COUNCIL'S ELECTRIC VEHICLE (EV) CHARGING INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

The Committee received a report of the Director of Neighbourhoods which outlined the Electric Vehicles (EV) Charging Infrastructure Strategy and how it was intended to work in conjunction with the Local Transport Plan and Rochdale Council's vision for a shift to a more sustainable transport methods.

The Senior Highways Officer attended the meeting to present the information and to address the questions and comments of the Committee.

The Officer informed that the draft strategy focused on the infrastructure elements to support the EV usage. The strategy would be rolled out in Rochdale across three years, with the consideration that EV charges technology changed rapidly and the Council needed to be able to adapt to changes and ensure flexibility in delivering the strategy through its regular review, to adapt to changes in modal choice, innovation and funding.

The Officer continued informing that the draft strategy had been produced in consultation with the EV Working Group formed by representatives of several Council's services and the relevant portfolio holders.

The Officer noted that the cost of the infrastructure was significant and grant funding had been accessed through the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA). The government expected that a relevant proportion of the demand for EV charges would be met by the private sector (e.g.: supermarkets, petrol stations, car parks, etc.). Currently, EV charges had been delivered in Heywood, Rochdale Leisure Centre and Middleton. There were some issues with the Pennines Township as where to locate the EV charges as the initial plan for Hollingworth Lake had not been successful due to the electricity grid not being able to support the new infrastructure.

Members sought and received clarification / commented on the following points:

- High number of terrace houses in Rochdale and implication for the implementation of EV charges; at present it was not legal to trail a cable across the footway;
- EV charges funding – this was based grant funding system and Councils in GM had to apply through GMCA;
- Members welcomed regular review of the strategy;
- Cost of electricity – EV Charges scheme in GM started in 2013 and Transport for Greater Manchester set up a small company to run and manage the scheme. Subsequently, the scheme had been contracted

out to a company with the clause not to increase the charges without consulting TfGM first.

- Street charging and trip hazard – mitigating the issue – work was ongoing to purchase pre-made slot drainage that allowed cables to go through. Considerations were made about legal responsibility for this project;
- Option to use Council’s land to create electric charging hubs;
- Council’s Planning department involvement in the EV Charges strategy – building control regulations had changed and new properties have to have EV charges;
- Local Transport Plan and criteria used to address future demand – Government foreseeing private sector taking over;
- Risks considered – implications of residents paying for EV charges and perceived ownership of parking spaces;
- Community car parks and scale of demand;
- Petrol stations and planning rules not to lose valuable sites;

The Officer welcomed the comments and questions of the Committee as this would be included in the report for Cabinet which would be asked to approve the EV Charges Strategy in the near future.

Resolved:

1. That it be noted that a range of chargers are currently available in the market place;
2. That the Committee endorse the principle that a combination of all charges available are used in different locations to meet the varying demand for EV charging across the borough;
3. That the Committee recommend that planning rules be put in place not to lose petrol stations as valuable sites.

31 COUNCIL'S MOTION TRACKER

The Committee would consider the motion tracker once a new version is produced, following the next Full Council’s meeting in October.

32 WORK PROGRAMME 2023/24

The Committee reviewed its work programme for 2023//24 and agreed to convene an additional meeting on 28th February 2024, in order to review items which could not be considered at its meetings in November and January, as other topics needed to be prioritised.

Resolved that the work programme for 2023/24 be amended as follows and an additional meeting be scheduled on 28th February 2024.

21st November 2023

Item
Report submission by 9 th Nov
Call-in/Member items/other referrals
Directorate Plans Performance Report

Quarter Two 2023/24
Rochdale Town Hall reopening
Places for Everyone Main Modifications
Council's Motion Tracker
GMCA scrutiny minutes
Rochdale Council's Key decision document
CRE Work Programme 2023/24

30th January 2024

Item
Report submission by 18th Jan
Call-in/Member items/other referrals
Directorate Plans Performance Report Quarter Three 2023/24
Housing Task and Finish Group Report
Safer Communities Partnership Update
Council's Motion Tracker
GMCA scrutiny minutes
Rochdale Council's Key decision document
CRE Work Programme 2023/24

28th February 2024

Item
Report submission by 15th Feb
RBH – chair and chief exec to be invited to review progress and transformation plans with RBH (Item deferred from Nov 2023, waiting for new chief exec to be in post)
Town Centre Vacancies and Regeneration Strategy
UK Share Prosperity Fund

5th March 2024

Item
Report submission by 22nd Feb
Call-in/Member items/other referrals
Growth Company Annual Update
Your Trust – Annual Update
Highways – Annual Update
Environmental Management Annual

Update
Council's Motion Tracker
GMCA scrutiny minutes
Rochdale Council's Key decision document
CRE Work Programme 2023/24

- 33 ROCHDALE COUNCIL'S KEY DECISION DOCUMENT**
Resolved that the key decisions document be noted.