

REPORT TO ALL MEMBER WORKING GROUP TOWN CENTRE MASTERPLAN



Report Reference C-20-08
Meeting Date 5th July 2021
Agenda Item 11
Prepared by Town Clerk

1.0 BACKGROUND

The Knutsford Neighbourhood Plan commits the Town Council to developing a Town Centre Masterplan:

- *The Town Council is committed to working with the Borough Council and local land and property owners to deliver a Masterplan for the future of the town centre area.*
- *The Town Council will assess options for a scheme to manage vehicle access and traffic flow to reduce vehicle dominance of the town centre, reduce pollution and improve the environment for town centre users.*
- *The Masterplan will identify and provide guidance for development sites within the town centre, including the town centre car parks, King Street and Princess Street, Canute Place, and other town centre locations.*
- *The Masterplan will seek to support town centre living, small scale independent retail and a new outdoor town centre meeting place or square.*

(Knutsford Neighbourhood Plan, p84)

The first stage of this work was the consultation on proposals to change the flow of to change the flow of traffic in the town centre, and to change vehicle parking provision and regulations. The consultation was held in February/March 2020 and the consultation report approved by the Town Council in July 2020 and submitted to Cheshire East Council in August 2020.

The submission to Cheshire East Council specifically called on it to:

1. commit to work with the Town Council to further analyse the proposals in the *From Top to Bottom Street* report and develop them into an integrated workable scheme.
2. commit to support the proposals and allocate budget and expert resource to work with the Town Council to take them further including to undertake traffic flow measurements and computer simulations for the different options for changes to the road layouts so that together we can determine a feasible, detailed plan for traffic in the Town Centre.
3. hold in abeyance any proposed changes to the Canute Place roundabout, Adam's Hill and Toft Road/Bexton Road junction until such time as they can be harmonised and integrated within these proposals
4. ensure that the proposed Knutsford Parking Review (under the Local Transport Plan) fully considers these proposals and that Cheshire East Council works with us to develop a restructuring of public parking in the town centre including studies to prepare for one or more multi-storey car parks

No response was received from Cheshire East Council, and in October 2020 the Town Clerk chased the Head of Strategic Transport. The response received stated that:

- The request would be considered as they plan the next year's work programme
- Aspects of the request require input from the regeneration team and it would be shared with colleagues working on the Town Centre Vitality Plans.
- Cheshire East Council was to imminently start a public consultation on Local Transport Delivery Plans and Parking Strategy and the outcome of these consultations were expected to inform our programmes for the next 5-year period.

The Town Council responded to the consultations on the Local Transport Town Delivery Plan and the Parking Strategy in January 2021. In its response on the Parking Strategy the Town Council stated it wished to have detailed dialogue with Cheshire East Council to assist in the development of proposals for public consultation and highlighted the support in the *From Top to Bottom Street* report for a number of parking changes. Cheshire East Council had stated it intended to review the survey results and develop proposals for consultation between January and March 2021 with a formal consultation on proposals in March 2021.

The consultation on the Local Transport Town Delivery Plan outlined a proposal to undertake a traffic and transport assessment of how the *From Top to Bottom Street* proposals could be implemented. The Town Council's response to the consultation stated this was a high priority.

2.0 UPDATE

The Town Clerk has repeatedly chased the Head of Strategic Transport and latterly the Director of Infrastructure and Highways for progress reports. A response was finally received in late June. It was confirmed that:

- a) The Highways and Transportation Committee is considering a report on 19th July relating to proposals arising from the parking review and if approved the proposals will then be published for consultation in August/September.
- b) The committee will also receive an update on the production of the Local Transport Town Delivery Plans which is taking longer than anticipated.
- c) That the improvements to the Canute Place and Adam's Hill junctions are subject to trigger points in the planning approvals and will need to be developed and delivered in accordance with these consents.

The Town Clerk reviews Cheshire East Council agendas and will brief members on the update reports when they are published (expected by 12th July). Depending on the content of the reports, the Town Council may wish to send a representative to address the committee.

Cheshire East Council's regeneration team have stated that their consultants have drafted the nine overview baseline reports and a draft toolkit report for the Town Centre Vitality Plans and that these are currently being reviewed by the highways team for consistency with the LTP Delivery Plans.