

Cheadle Engagement Review
Meeting held at 13.00 on Tuesday 7th September 2021 via MS TEAMS

MINUTES

Present

Cllr Ian Plant – chair	Sarah Porru, SMDC
Cllr S Ralphs, Leader SMDC	Neil Rodgers, SMDC
Cllr M Deaville, SCC	Gail Edwards, SCC
Cllr S Ellis, SMDC	Carolyn Sanders, SMDC
S Ball, Moorlands Home Link	Jo Bagnall, SMDC
Cllr K Martin, SMDC	Sam Holgate, Filigree Communications
Cllr R Alcock, SMDC	
Cllr S Walley, Mayor Cheadle	
Cllr P Upton, CTC	

Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from:

- Phil Brenner, CCG
- Ian Atherton, Staffordshire Clubs for Young People
- Fr Eric Kemball, Churches Together
- N Hewitt, Chamber of Commerce
- I Wozniak, Team Cheadle
- Cllr S Haines, CTC
- Cllr G Bentley, SMDC
- Cllr P Routledge, SMDC
- Cllr P Jackson, SMDC

1. Welcome

1.1 The chair welcomed all those attending.

2. Newsletter/Survey delivery issues

2.1 It was recognised that there had been a great deal of social media activity in relation to the survey. There had been a high number of messages posted in relation to distribution issues with households complaining that they had not received a copy. A number of groundless and unacceptable personal attacks had also been made on Councillors via social media. Members of the Panel had been quick to bring these concerns to the attention of the Council and a three week extension to the survey had been agreed in response.

2.2 Concerns over the initial phase of the community engagement programme in Cheadle were highlighted, including:

- Whilst the population of Cheadle is almost 12,000, around 5,000 newsletter/surveys were distributed, one to each residential address.
- Many people in Cheadle reported that they had not received a copy.
- Where logistically possible, the Council should consider involving more people in the distribution of newsletters, for example members of the Town Council.
- Consideration should be given to increasing the distribution area for the newsletter/survey, to include the rural areas around Cheadle.
- Leaflets needed to be moved to a more prominent position in the leisure centre.
- The survey did not pick up on the earlier questionnaire organised by Team Cheadle.
- Minutes of meetings were often circulated late.
- SMDC Officers were invited to attend a Cheadle Town Council meeting, but no one was available or offered to attend a subsequent meeting.
- Use of social media to spread personal insults and attacks on the Council is not acceptable.
- No specific proposals are yet on the table for people to comment on.
- Sir Bill Cash MP had raised questions about Council consultation in Cheadle and about the future of the Community Hospital.
- The Council needed to communicate better.
- Some residents were sceptical of the current engagement programme and feared that Cheadle's assets were at risk.
- Cheadle's concerns were summarised as being principally the hospital, the leisure centre and High Street parking.

2.2 It was agreed that the project team needed now to start to focus on identifying and consulting on projects for delivery.

3. Review of response rate and initial issues emerging

3.1 Filigree Communications gave a presentation setting out the initial responses received to the survey. Key points were:

- As of 9am on Friday 3rd September, the survey has been completed 625 times.
- There are approximately 5,150 households in Cheadle which shows that 12% of households had completed the survey so far.
- A 2019 population estimate gave Cheadle a population of 11,353 which shows that 5.5% of the population had completed the survey so far.

3.2 Priority One - We must welcome more people to live in Cheadle – had so far received the most comments. Common themes included:

- Cheadle not having the facilities to support more people, particular reference had been made on the pressure on schools and doctors.

- The current road system in Cheadle being insufficient and unable to support more cars which an increased population would bring.
 - The view that there is no more capacity for housing developments and more people. A common view had also been that any new housing should be affordable.
- 3.3 Priority Two - We must make it easy to shop, spend time and money in Cheadle - had so far received the second most comments. Common themes included:
- Cheadle's current shopping offer not being sufficient to both retain locals and attract tourists.
 - The need for free parking to help achieve this priority and the current cost of parking acting as a barrier.
 - More support needed for businesses.
- 3.4 Priority Three - Providing flexible parking options is a priority - had so far received the second to least amount of comments. Common themes included:
- The need for free parking with a time limit ie first two hours free, short term free parking.
 - The general need for parking to be free/ cheaper.
 - The agreement that parking options should be flexible.
- 3.5 Priority Four - Cheadle needs to retain a similar leisure offer with improved quality of facilities - had so far received the third most comments. Common themes included:
- The view that the leisure centre should be retained and improved upon on the current site.
 - That there should be more and improved leisure facilities in Cheadle.
 - The value and need of the current swimming pool
- 3.6 Priority Five - Integrated services will benefit community health and wellbeing -had so far received the least amount of comments. Common themes included:
- The view that services should be integrated into/ increased at Cheadle Hospital.
 - That this priority was too vaguely worded to respond to.
 - The need for services to be accessible to all without the need for local people to travel to access them.
- 3.7 It was agreed that the views of young people were important to understand and it would be helpful to liaise with schools and sixth form colleges over access to the survey.

3.8 It was considered that the initial findings as set out above identified the concerns of Cheadle residents and it was now important to present site specific options to review.

4. Overview of next steps in the engagement programme

4.1 Filigree Communications gave a presentation setting out next steps. These were that:

- The survey continues to run until Friday 24th September.
- The full survey results will be shared with the Stakeholder Panel at the end of September.
- Consultation materials setting out site specific options will be finalised by late October.
- The second Community Newsletter will be distributed and consultation events held in November.

4.2 Suitable venues for the consultation events were considered to be the Cricket Club, Guild Hall and Leisure Centre.

Summary of actions agreed

1. To issue a press release providing an update for the community engagement programme following the meeting.
2. To let the existing distribution arrangements ride.
3. To maintain the end date of the survey at 24th September.
4. To hold a Stakeholder Panel meeting as soon as further information was available and ideally at the end of September.