

**STAFFORDSHIRE MOORLANDS DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**Cabinet**

**29th March 2022**

<b>TITLE:</b>	<b>Cheadle – Delivery of Town Centre Projects</b>
<b>PORTFOLIO HOLDER:</b>	<b>Councillor Ralphs - Council Leader SMDC</b>
<b>CONTACT OFFICER:</b>	<b>Sarah Porru – Head of Regeneration</b>
<b>WARDS INVOLVED:</b>	<b>Cheadle West; Cheadle South East; Cheadle North East</b>

**Appendices Attached –**

**Appendix 1: Cheadle Survey Feedback Report; November 2021**

**Appendix 2: Stakeholder Panel: Community and Residents subgroup, Questionnaire Report and Results; August 2021**

**Appendix 3: High Street Task Force report; November 2021**

**Appendix 4: Draft text for second Cheadle community newsletter**

**1. Reason for the Report**

- 1.1 To thank the members of the Cheadle Stakeholder Panel for their valuable work and to approve the conclusion of the Panel's role. Also to provide the Cabinet with feedback from the Cheadle household surveys and an update on regeneration project priorities to be progressed by the Cheadle Town Centre Delivery Board.

**2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 To note the successful conclusion of the work undertaken by the Cheadle Stakeholder Panel.
- 2.2 To note progress made by the Stakeholder Panel to identify local opinion on options and plans to regenerate Cheadle Town Centre including the review of car parking strategy and the Leisure Transformation Plan, in addition to the work to identify deliverable options for identified town centre sites.
- 2.3 To note the work of the Cheadle Town Centre Task Force and proposals for the transformation of Cheadle High Street via delivery of an agreed action plan.

- 2.4 To note the text and proposed distribution arrangements for the second Cheadle community newsletter.
- 2.5 To resolve to commence the work of the Cheadle Town Centre Projects Delivery Board to deliver three emergent priorities: the new Cheadle Leisure Centre, the purchase and refurbishment of Cheadle Market and the implementation of the agreed car parking strategy for Cheadle.

### 3. **Executive Summary**

- 3.1 The Cabinet meeting of 1<sup>st</sup> December 2020 reaffirmed the Cabinet Decision made on 6<sup>th</sup> October 2020 to commission a public consultation exercise and survey, overseen by the Stakeholder Panel, to seek the views of local people, businesses and organisations of Cheadle on all the regeneration issues and opportunities for the town centre. The purpose was to inform the priorities for delivering regeneration projects for the town centre.
- 3.2 The Stakeholder Panel has met six times in 2021 to guide community engagement work and offer feedback to the Council regarding residents' priorities. The Panel has overseen a very successful household survey, providing direction for the Council's next steps. This report provides public record of the achievements of the Panel and marks the end of its successful programme of activities. The Council is grateful for the time and expertise provided by the Panel members.
- 3.4 Two surveys were undertaken in 2021, inviting those who live, work or visit Cheadle to offer their views on issues and opportunities for the town centre. The Community, Residents and Tourism Subgroup of the Cheadle Stakeholder Panel received 516 responses to the BIG Cheadle questionnaire. The Council received 841 responses to the survey distributed to households in the town as part of a Cheadle Community Newsletter.
- 3.5 Analysis of the feedback from both surveys has highlighted traffic and congestion in Cheadle as a key concern for residents. Other principal findings were that respondents considered:
  - The current infrastructure and facilities in Cheadle are insufficient to support new residential development.
  - There is a need to introduce free, short stay parking to allow visitors to 'pop in' to local shops and facilitate school drop off and pick up.
  - Contactless methods to pay for parking should be introduced.
  - The town needs more, and a greater variety of shops.
  - The condition and maintenance of street furniture and signage is a concern.
  - The current leisure centre should be improved and retained in the same location.
- 3.6 A number of these concerns are being addressed by the Council through progression of the District wide Car Parking Strategy, the Leisure Transformation Plan, the purchase of the Market Hall and also by other

partners through the the work of the High Street Task Force in Cheadle. An update on progress of these projects is provided in Section 7.

- 3.7 A second Cheadle Community Newsletter is to be distributed in order to provide Cheadle residents with feedback on the issues and opportunities raised through the survey replies, and to detail the action proposed by the Council in response. An update on the Newsletter text and proposed distribution arrangements is provided.
- 3.8 Sites considered as part of the emerging town centre masterplan included the Hospital and Newlands Care Home at Royal Walk, the Leisure Centre at Allen Street and Well Street and Tape Street car parks. More recently understanding of future options for sites have become more settled. In the light of evolving circumstances, it is considered that there is no further need for consultation events related to the emerging masterplan at this stage, and until further, more detailed proposals for sites emerge in the future.
- 3.9 The High Street Task Force report of November 2021 set out proposals to help support the recovery of Cheadle High Street. A workshop was held to consult with High Street businesses on their priorities and work is underway to develop a costed action plan. The Council has funded a number of events delivered by Cheadle Town Council using the government's Welcome Back Fund and will take forward the thoughts on an improved Markets offer via its Cheadle Town Centre Delivery Board.
- 3.3 The Cheadle Town Centre Delivery Board, as set out in the October 2020 Cabinet report, will take on the role of delivering the Councils' priorities for regeneration in Cheadle which are the delivery of a new Leisure Centre, the purchase and refurbishment of Cheadle Market and the implementation of the agreed Car Parking Strategy for Cheadle.

#### **4. How this report links to Corporate Priorities**

- 4.1 Delivery of Cheadle town centre projects will have implications for the following aims of the Corporate Plan:
- Aim One – To help create a safer and healthier environment for our communities to live and work.
  - Aim Two - To use resources effectively and provide value for money
  - Aim Three – To help create a strong economy by supporting further regeneration of towns and villages.

#### **5. Alternative Options**

- 5.1 The work of the Stakeholder Panel in engaging with the communities for Cheadle have considered all viable regeneration alternatives and this report provides an update on that work.

## 6. Implications

### 6.1 Community Safety - (Crime and Disorder Act 1998)

No implications.

### 6.2 Workforce

Officer time is required to support the High Streets Task Force work. This time is drawn from existing resources.

### 6.3 Equality and Diversity/Equality Impact Assessment

The report has been prepared in accordance with the Council's Diversity and Equality Policies.

### 6.4 Financial Considerations

Project work undertaken to support the High Street would be grant funded or assisted by contributions from the partners. The cost for the remaining community engagement programme (second newsletter) has been allocated from the Regeneration Service town centres budget. The financial implications of individual regeneration projects to be considered by the Cheadle Town Centre Delivery Board will be or are subject to separate Cabinet reports.

### 6.5 Legal

Legal advice will be sought on the delivery of regeneration projects as appropriate and will be set out in future Cabinet reports as necessary.

### 6.6 Climate Change

No implications as consequence of this report

### 6.7 Consultation

Consultation is addressed in the body of the report.

### 6.8 Risk Assessment

Risks have been addressed in the body of the report.

Neil Rodgers  
**Executive Director (Place)**

**Web Links and  
Background Papers**

Cabinet, 1<sup>st</sup> December 2020  
Service Delivery Overview and Scrutiny Panel, 18<sup>th</sup>  
November 2020  
Cabinet, 6<sup>th</sup> October 2020  
[www.staffsmoorlands.gov.uk/article/6500/Transforming-Cheadle-Town-Centre](http://www.staffsmoorlands.gov.uk/article/6500/Transforming-Cheadle-Town-Centre)

**Contact details**

Joanna Bagnall  
Senior Regeneration Officer  
[joanna.bagnall@highpeak.gov.uk](mailto:joanna.bagnall@highpeak.gov.uk)  
Sarah Porru; Head of Regeneration

## 7. Detail

7.1 This report provides an update on the following:

1. A summary of the detailed work undertaken by the Stakeholder Panel.
2. Results of the Cheadle household surveys.
3. Project Priorities for the Cheadle Town Centre Delivery Board
4. Proposed next steps for Cheadle town centre projects.
5. The second Community Newsletter.

### **Work undertaken by the Stakeholder Panel**

7.2 The Cabinet meeting of 1<sup>st</sup> December 2020 reaffirmed the Cabinet Decision made on 6<sup>th</sup> October 2020 to establish a Stakeholder Panel to oversee a public consultation exercise and survey. The purpose of this community engagement was to seek the views of local people, businesses and organisations of Cheadle on all the regeneration issues and opportunities for the town centre.

7.3 The Terms of Reference of the Panel established its role as that of overseeing community engagement, alongside coordination of Cheadle town centre initiatives and the effective delivery of individual project work programmes. In exercising this role, the Panel provided a useful forum for discussing the car parking strategy, the leisure review, and the review of town centre development site options.

7.4 The first meeting of the Panel was held in January 2021. Subsequently the Panel met a further five times over the course of the year, culminating in its final meeting in December. Throughout the year, the Panel received presentations from consultants and Officers on progress with initiatives impacting Cheadle town centre and offered valuable advice and recommendations about the shaping of the emerging work programmes.

7.5 In addition, the Panel established a number of sub-groups to ensure that its members received information from a wide range of town centre Stakeholders. The work and intelligence from these subgroups was reported to, and considered by, the full Panel - ensuring that the Council had access to a wide range of views on town centre initiatives. Minutes of the Panel meetings are available on the Council's website.

7.6 The Panel was responsible for oversight of the Cheadle community newsletter and household survey. Further detail is provided from paragraph 7.10 of this report. The feedback from the survey has helped to shape the Council's delivery of a number of key projects as set out in this report.

7.7 As well as overseeing community engagement, the Panel was tasked with a review of town centre development site options. To help inform their work, a workshop to consider new site options was held on 17<sup>th</sup> March 2021. The event was facilitated by the Consultation Institute. The workshop was considered a success, with a lively debate and discussion around each of the five sites identified in the Cushman & Wakefield report, as well as identifying

additional opportunities and uses for consideration.

- 7.8 Overall, the Cheadle Stakeholder Panel is considered to have produced a very valuable body of work that has informed and shaped the Council's emerging work programme for Cheadle town centre. The Council is grateful for the time and expertise provided by the Panel members under the leadership of the Panel Chair.

### **Public engagement in Cheadle**

- 7.9 The Cabinet meeting of 1<sup>st</sup> December 2020 reaffirmed the commitment of the Cabinet Decision made on 6<sup>th</sup> October 2020 to prepare a Cabinet Report presenting the results of the public consultation exercise and to set out the next steps in delivering the regeneration of Cheadle Town Centre. This report fulfils that commitment.

### **Results of the Cheadle household survey**

- 7.10 A community newsletter was distributed to Cheadle residents during August 2021. The newsletter included details of a survey that was open for six weeks from Monday 19<sup>th</sup> August to Friday 24<sup>th</sup> September. The purpose of the survey was to determine views on five emerging priorities for the town centre.
- 7.11 In total, 841 responses to the survey were received. A full report of the feedback received is provided as Appendix 1 to this report and a summary is provided below.
- 7.12 **We must welcome more people to live in Cheadle.** The survey sought views on whether options for the town centre should include providing more opportunity for people to live close to the centre of Cheadle, by helping to deliver new homes here. Responses were:
- Agree: 27.3%
  - Disagree: 54.3%
  - Not sure: 17.1%
  - Skipped the question: 1.1%
- 7.13 The majority of people who added more detail noted their view that Cheadle needed improvements to community infrastructure, namely investment in education, health and transport. Whilst a number of respondents considered that there was too much residential development currently, others noted that affordable housing and smaller homes were needed.
- 7.14 The BIG Cheadle questionnaire (reported from paragraph 7.31 of this report) found that Stoddard's Depot (Local Plan allocation CH015) and Well Street car park with the former Lightwood Care Home were respondents' preferred sites for any residential development in the town centre.
- 7.15 **We must make it easy to shop, spend time and money in Cheadle.** The survey sought views on whether options for the town centre should include change designed to encourage and support people to spend more time and money in the town centre. Responses were:

- Agree: 95.3%
  - Disagree: 1.1%
  - Not sure: 2.1%
  - Skipped the question: 1.3%
- 7.16 A high proportion of people who added more detail considered that Cheadle needed free or cheaper parking to support the vitality of the town centre.
- 7.17 The Council has commissioned an updated parking strategy for the District. Further feedback is provided in responses to the following survey question and a progress update on the emerging parking strategy is set out from paragraph 7.63 of this report.
- 7.18 A number of respondents felt that Cheadle needed more or a greater variety of shops. Specific support for business was mentioned by some respondents who suggested grants, lower business rates and initiatives to encourage people to shop locally. Council action to consider potential acquisition of the Cheadle market and adjoining market place to help address this is considered from paragraph 7.72 of this report.
- 7.19 The two surveys undertaken in Cheadle in 2021 have demonstrated that residents support the case for new initiatives designed to encourage people to spend time and money in the town. The High Streets Task Force report of November 2021 is included as Appendix 3 to this report and has made a number of recommendations in this regard.
- 7.20 Further recommendations of the High Streets Taskforce Report, and the development of an action plan to support delivery, are discussed from paragraph 7.61 of this report.
- 7.21 **Providing flexible parking options is a priority.** The survey sought views on whether options for the town centre should include updated parking provision that better meets local needs. Responses were:
- Agree: 84.7%
  - Disagree: 7.3%
  - Not sure: 6.5%
  - Skipped the question: 1.3%
- 7.22 The majority of respondents went on to state that free, short stay parking was needed, or cheaper parking in general. A number of respondents considered that free parking to coincide with school drop off or pick up was needed, as well as for those who work in the town centre.
- 7.23 The Council's emerging parking strategy, and the specific proposals in relation to Cheadle, are considered from paragraph 7.68 of this report.
- 7.24 **Cheadle needs to retain a similar leisure offer with improved quality of facilities.** The survey sought views on whether options for the town centre should be developed and delivered in such a way as to enable the provision of an improved quality of leisure facilities. Responses were:
- Agree: 82.9%



- Disagree: 10.0%
- Not sure: 5.4%
- Skipped the question: 1.8%

7.25 A majority of respondents went on to state their view that the current leisure centre should be retained and improved in the same location. Many respondents acknowledged that the leisure facilities needed to be improved. A number of respondents considered that it was important to keep and improve a swimming pool in Cheadle.

7.26 The Council's Leisure Transformation Plan seeks to secure investment in leisure services in Cheadle, as well as elsewhere across the District. An update on progress is provided from paragraph 7.54 of this report.

7.27 **Integrated services will benefit community health and wellbeing.** The survey sought views on whether options for the town centre should include opportunity to offer integrated health and well-being services designed to improve service delivery and provide another reason to visit and spend time here. Responses were:

- Agree: 61.5%
- Disagree: 10.3%
- Not sure: 26.4%
- Skipped the question: 1.8%

7.28 Many respondents suggested that the facilities at Cheadle Hospital should be integrated with any new health services introduced. A number of respondents stated the view that Cheadle needs a hospital and that it is an asset to the town. Some respondents considered that the statement in the survey was too vague or difficult to respond to.

7.29 The Community Hospital in Cheadle is owned by the Midlands Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (MPFT). In November 2021 a spokesperson for the Trust informed the Council that during 2021 a range of outpatient services had been provided from Cheadle Hospital, while the Trust had also run the phase 3 Novavax COVID-19 vaccine study from the hospital site, in association with the National Institute for Health Research. Beds were also being utilised at Cheadle Hospital to support timely discharge from Royal Stoke University Hospital as part of the system response to the anticipated increase in patient attendances over winter. At the time of writing, the Trust confirmed that no decision had yet been taken with regards to the future of the Cheadle Hospital site.

7.30 It is proposed that the Council should continue to work with the MPFT and the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Care Group to identify opportunities for working more closely together. This may include offering space to provide health and community care services from the Council's Leisure Centre.

### **Results of the Community, Residents and Tourism Subgroup questionnaire**

7.31 The work of the Cheadle Stakeholder Panel has been supported by a number of sub-groups, including a Community, Residents and Tourism Subgroup

coordinated by Team Cheadle. This subgroup was asked by the Panel to obtain views on potential town centre development projects. The resulting “BIG Cheadle questionnaire” covered eight topics: housing, transport, well-being, town centre, tourism, retail, community and leisure.

- 7.32 516 responses were received to the questionnaire. In analysing the responses, the sub-group has highlighted a significant level of feedback received concerning traffic/congestion and roads. A report detailing all results of the BIG Cheadle questionnaire is included as Appendix 2 to this report. A summary of its findings is provided below.
- 7.33 **Housing** - 66% of respondents did not want more houses built in Cheadle, beyond the minimum requirement of 1,136 new homes provided for in the Local Plan. However 27% agreed with building more houses. Of the sites suggested, only 2% supported house building on Tape Street car park and 3% supported building on the South Moorlands Leisure Centre site. The Stoddard’s Depot (Local Plan allocation CH015) and Well Street car park with the former Lightwood Care Home were the preferred sites for any residential development.
- 7.34 The primary additional facilities needed to support new homes were considered to be traffic improvements (18%) and a new health centre (18%). Other infrastructure improvements sought included transport, schools and facilities for young people.
- 7.35 **Town centre** - 81% of respondents considered that a wider variety of shops would provide an incentive to visit the town centre more often. 76% cited free or more flexible parking and 74% a thriving market. Respondents also considered that more bars, restaurants and events would provide encouragement to visit Cheadle town centre with family and friends.
- 7.36 The majority of respondents visited the town centre at least weekly (49%), either during the day or when it is free to park, and most reported feeling safe all the time (62%). The majority of respondents supported the High Street being pedestrianised at specific times (46%), whilst 22% reported that they would like it to be permanently pedestrianised.
- 7.37 **Tourism** - 90% of respondents agreed that tourism would benefit the town. The two most important factors considered necessary to encourage more tourism visits were free parking and more B&Bs or hotels. Other significant potential attractions were considered to be: more eating places; an arts, heritage and entertainment centre; guided tours and walks; and more community events.
- 7.38 The majority of respondents recognised “Pugin’s Gem” and the Pugin related branding, as well as Cheadle’s unique selling points of being a gateway to the Churnet Valley and the town’s creativity. However the condition and maintenance of street furniture and signage was considered a concern for 76% of respondents.

- 7.39 **Retail** - 77% of respondents considered that there are not enough shops in Cheadle. The introduction of further independent and specialist shops, shoe shops and men's and women's clothing shops were considered the most likely to encourage more shoppers. 80% of respondents reported that they would shop more in Cheadle if there was a short period of free parking in the car parks.
- 7.40 **Transport** - 93% of respondents owned a car. It was considered that local traffic congestion should be addressed through the undertaking of a traffic study; action to restrict lorries on the High Street; creation of a bypass; and discussions with JCB and Alton Towers. In terms of reducing carbon emissions, respondents could be encouraged to use public transport by increasing bus services and routes to surrounding villages; extending routes to hospitals and railway stations; and generally increasing the frequency of services.
- 7.41 **Well-being** – Respondents considered that their quality of life could be improved by action on a range of issues, with traffic congestion and state of local roads being a priority. Other issues cited included Cheadle hospital becoming a medical centre; improved public transport; better leisure facilities/activities; better pavements; and more walking/cycling routes. Ease of access to dentists and doctors was also a concern.
- 7.42 **Community** - 66% of respondents considered that the town would benefit from a new community centre for events/services/activities. There was support for more services and activities for younger and older people in the town, as well as adult education; arts and crafts; activities for pre-school children and parents; and a programme of activities for people with disabilities.
- 7.43 Whilst recognising that there are some major events held in the town already, respondents suggested more food festivals; specialist markets and music events. Other ideas included a cinema; family activity days; arts and craft events; beer festival; heritage events and art displays. 59% of respondents supported provision of more outside space for community events and preferred that these took place at the Market Place or High Street.
- 7.44 **Leisure Centre** - 87% of respondents supported the leisure centre and its outdoor facilities remaining in the current location, with a desire to retain the existing activities. Respondents considered that improvements were required to the swimming pool and changing rooms. Other issues raised included support for: fitness classes; a spa/sauna/steam room, a coffee shop/café; Yoga/Pilates/tai chi/ meditation; improved gym; better disabled access; and more activities for disabled people and for the over 50s.

### **Providing Residents with Feedback**

- 7.45 The August Community Newsletter and associated media releases stated that the Council would update people with feedback from the first stage of the consultation and confirm the arrangements for next steps. These next steps were expected to include consultation events to consider site specific options for the town centre.

- 7.46 Public feedback from the two Cheadle surveys has provided support for the retention of the Leisure Centre at its current location. At the time of writing, no decision has yet been taken by the Midlands Partnership NHS Foundation Trust regarding the future of the Community Hospital site. Development of the SCC owned Newlands Care Home site is a matter for the County Council, but was originally considered as part of any wider scheme that might be proposed for Royal Walk. In the light of these developments, site specific consultation events to help inform the town centre masterplan proposals should no longer be required.
- 7.47 As a result of these outcomes the planned consultation events specifically to progress the emerging town centre masterplan for Cheadle are no longer appropriate at this point. However there would be opportunity for public consultation events to be held to consider any emerging future development proposals for the town centre sites as they occur.
- 7.48 Despite this, it is important to provide residents with feedback from the surveys and to share the Council's proposed next steps. To achieve this, it is proposed that a second community newsletter is prepared and distributed. An overview of the proposed newsletter content is provided from paragraph 7.75 and a draft text is included as Appendix 4 to this report.

### **Project Priorities for the Cheadle Town Centre Delivery Board**

- 7.49 The Cabinet meeting of 1<sup>st</sup> December 2020 reaffirmed the Cabinet Decision made on 6<sup>th</sup> October 2020 to approve proposals for the establishment of a Cheadle Town Centre Delivery Board and Stakeholder Panel.
- 7.50 The Stakeholder Panel was established with the principal aim of overseeing a programme of public engagement on issues and options for Cheadle town centre. The Panel has overseen the preparation of two household surveys and two community newsletters. This report describes how feedback gathered by the Panel has been used to inform Council next steps in the delivery of a programme of work in Cheadle town centre. The Town Centre Delivery Board, as set out in the October 2020 Cabinet report, will remain to assist the Council to take forward any future development proposals as they arise in the future.
- 7.51 The Council is grateful to the members of the Stakeholder Panel for their work in delivering a successful community engagement programme. With the conclusion of the engagement programme and the identification of next steps as set out in this report, it is considered that the Panel has completed its role.
- 7.52 Following the completion of the Stakeholder Panel reports, the Cheadle Town Centre Delivery Board will take forward three key priorities for the town centre which are: progress with delivering the new leisure centre, purchase and refurbishment of Cheadle Market and the implementation of the Car Parking Strategy in Cheadle.

### **Cheadle town centre projects – next steps**

7.53 An update is provided below on Cheadle town centre priorities and projects:

- Leisure Transformation Plan
- High Street Task Force
- Parking Strategy
- Cheadle Market

### **Cheadle town centre project 1: Leisure Transformation Plan**

7.54 Public feedback provides support for the location of the new Leisure Centre facilities in its current location. Further work is proposed to be undertaken to explore the implications of building a new Leisure Centre at the Allen Street site.

7.55 The next steps include working up an overall design and costs for a new build centre at Allen Street, including consideration of how any project would be financed. Also to be considered are the logistics of whether it would be possible to continue to provide leisure services in the town whilst any building project was taking place.

7.56 Consideration of how a new centre may be financed is expected to include the possibility of an application for Levelling Up funding.

### **Cheadle town centre project 2: High Street taskforce**

7.57 The High Street Task Force report; November 2021 is included as Appendix 3 to this report. The report was prepared following a facilitated workshop for the town's key stakeholders held in Cheadle on 20<sup>th</sup> October 2021. The workshop explored a number of questions concerning the vitality and viability of Cheadle town centre.

7.58 The Task Force made a number of recommendations designed to achieve the transformation of Cheadle High Street via delivery of an action plan.

7.59 Recommendations for possible inclusion in a future action plan were:

- Developing a programme of events in Cheadle town centre using the existing public realm.
- Offering empty premises as pop-up space for designer-makers and artists, and collaborating with local cultural and creative groups to convert empty spaces into performance areas.
- Working to improve the Market offer, and looking at how the town centre can be re-purposed to provide a more attractive offer, including by addressing the under representation of leisure, food and evening economy.

7.60 The Cheadle Stakeholder Panel has prepared a survey for businesses in the town. At the meeting of the Panel on 15<sup>th</sup> December 2021 it was agreed that it would be useful for the Business sub-group survey to be considered by partners as part of the emerging Taskforce action plan.

7.61 The Council has funded a number of events delivered by Cheadle Town Council using the government's Welcome Back Fund. These include a summer music and Halloween event, the latter with laser show and pumpkin trail. The thoughts of the Task Force around the improvement of the Market Offer will be a a priority action taken forward by the District Councils' Town Centre Delivery Board.

### **Cheadle town centre project 3: Parking Strategy**

7.62 A report on the Council's emerging Car Parking Strategy has been considered by the Service Delivery Overview and Scrutiny Panel at their meeting of 26<sup>th</sup> January 2022.

7.63 A commitment was given as part of the 2019 - 2023 Corporate Plan to review the Council's car parks to ensure that they continue to meet need. The parking strategy is being prepared to set out the future for Council run, off-street car parks across the District to ensure that Council car parks contribute to maintaining attractive towns with a wide range of amenities.

7.64 The evidence base supporting the strategy identified key current issues as follows:

- Poor payment options and the need for capital renewal for some car parks.
- 43% of overall parking transactions are in a one-hour band and produce 39% of revenue. In Cheadle, one hour stays account for 53% of revenue.
- Only 7% of revenue is for longer stays.
- Transaction numbers have been reducing year-on-year, even prior to COVID. This is in line with national trends for declining high street footfall.

7.66 In the light of this and in response to consultation on the emerging strategy, the Council is proposing to review payment systems. A phased approach to the introduction of new technology for paying for parking is proposed, starting with implementation of Pay by Phone, followed by a review of which parking machines should be targeted for a further update to provide additional payment options.

7.67 The Council is also proposing to prepare a specific District electronic vehicle (EV) strategy. The parking strategy notes the importance of EV to the climate change agenda and the government's phasing out of petrol and diesel powered vehicles. However, a cautious approach is suggested in order to ensure the most appropriate type of chargers are installed in the right location, being mindful of both the limitation in capacity of the national grid and also the objectives of Staffordshire County Council as the authority with responsibility for Highways and Transport.

7.68 With respect to tariffs and charging periods at the Council car parks in Cheadle, a decision will be made once the emerging town centre masterplan has been further progressed. Further information on the Car Parking Strategy

can be found in the Cabinet Report presented at the February meeting of the Cabinet.

### **Tape Street and Well Street car parks**

- 7.69 As considered at paragraph 7.46 of this report, following initial work undertaken to prepare a Cheadle town centre masterplan, the plans and proposals of the Council and its public sector partners have been progressed. This has resulted in the potential short term loss of availability of some town centre sites to contribute to masterplan proposals. Of the original masterplan sites in public sector ownership, Tape Street car park and Well Street car park remain with current potential to contribute to town centre regeneration.
- 7.70 The District's emerging Parking Strategy is considered from paragraph 7.63 of this report. The Strategy includes specific proposals to improve the experience of users of the Council car parks in Cheadle town centre. It is also noted that consultants consider that there is a current over-provision of car parking spaces for the town. This means that consideration may be given to exploring all options for how the car parks can best serve the town centre, including by provision of appropriate and flexible parking capacity, alongside measures to increase footfall on the High Street.
- 7.71 The Cushman & Wakefield options appraisal report of May 2020 considered scope for a reconfiguration of existing car parking spaces at Tape Street to enable hosting of public events.

### **Market Hall**

- 7.72 A report was taken to Cabinet on 7<sup>th</sup> December 2021 to consider issues around a potential acquisition by the Council of the Cheadle market and adjoining market place. The current owner, Northern Markets, is seeking to dispose of the Market Hall and the Market Place and given the strategic importance of the site to the Council's ambitions for Cheadle, it was recommended that the Council enter formal negotiations with the current owner.
- 7.73 It is considered that working to improve the market offer in Cheadle can help to repurpose the town centre to provide a more attractive offer and help to address the under representation of leisure, food and evening economy which will contribute to an increase in dwell time, spend and footfall.

### **Proposals for the content and distribution of the second community newsletter**

- 7.74 As set out at paragraph 7.48 of this report, it will be important to provide residents with feedback from the household surveys undertaken over summer 2021 and to share the Council's proposed next steps as detailed in this report. To achieve this, it is proposed that a second community newsletter is prepared and distributed. A draft text is included as Appendix 4 to this report.
- 7.75 In summary, it is proposed that the second Cheadle community newsletter will:

- Provide feedback from the household survey;
- Share the Council response to issues raised; and
- Set out next steps.

7.76 Sufficient copies of the newsletter will be printed to enable a full distribution run from the distributor, as well as enabling copies to be made available for Members who may wish to hand deliver within the wards of Cheadle North East, Cheadle South East and Cheadle West.

7.77 Whilst local members will be provided copies for distribution, it is proposed to distribute directly to each residential address included in the postcodes in the polling districts of Cheadle North East, Cheadle South East and Cheadle West. This area covers all streets extending west to the junction with A521 and Brookhouse Road and Draycott Cross Road; those extending east to the junction with Ashbourne Road and Thorley Drive; those extending north to the junction with A521 and Hammersley Hayes Road; and those extending south to the junction with A522 and Dandillion Avenue and Eaves Lane.

7.78 Further copies of the Newsletter can be made available in Cheadle Library / One Stop Shop.