

MARPLE AREA COMMITTEE

Meeting: 29 January 2025
At: 6.00 pm

PRESENT

Councillor Geoff Abell (Chair) in the chair; Councillor Shan Alexander (Vice-Chair);
Councillors Micheala Meikle and Aron Thornley.

1. MINUTES

The Minutes (copies of which had been circulated) of the meeting held on 4 December 2024 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors and officers were invited to declare any interests which they had in any of the items on the agenda for the meeting.

No declarations of interest were made.

3. URGENT DECISIONS

No urgent decisions were reported.

4. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

(i) Chair's Announcements

The Chair on behalf of the Area Committee informed local residents of the following: -

- Councillor Surgery – would be held in the Seed Café, Methodist Church Hall on Thursday 30th January 2025 from 9am.
- 'Call for Sites' - Consultation to identify land or sites - deadline Sunday 2 February 2025. Contact the Planning Policy team on 0161 474 4395 or local.plan@stockport.gov.uk
- Design Code Project - The Stockport Design Code website has been set up and early engagement has commenced which will run until 21st February. www.stockportdesigncode.co.uk
- Coffee Morning – St Thomas' Church, High Lane, 12th February from 10am – 12pm in aid of the Mayor's Charity.
- Etherow Sailing Club – Compstall Community Council open meeting on Tuesday 18 February from 7.30pm
- Flooding – Section 19 report feedback session, can submit any photos, feedback to flood@stockport.gov.uk for it to be included in the report.

(ii) Neighbourhood Policing

The Chair reported that a representative of Greater Manchester Police had been unable to attend the meeting.

Members reported having received an update from the Neighbourhood Inspector addressing a few issues related to Marple including:

- Sgt Jason has now been promoted to an Inspector and will be replaced.
- Updates were provided regarding recent arrests and anti-social behaviour
- Off road bikes seized
- PACT Meeting – 6th February 2025

RESOLVED- That the update be noted.

(iii) Public Question Time

Members of the public were invited to submit questions to the Chair of the Area Committee on any matters within the powers and duties of the Area Committee, subject to the exclusions set out in the Code of Practice.

One public question was submitted relating to 'Windlehurst Road Traffic Calming'.

In response, the Chair read a draft response and informed the questioner that Stockport Council was committed to the Greater Manchester Vision Zero Strategy, aiming for no fatalities or serious injuries on its roads. This aligned with the Safe System Approach, which prioritises safer speeds, roads, vehicles, and road users. Reduced speeds significantly lower the likelihood and severity of collisions, directly contributing to a reduction in killed and serious injuries (KSIs). While public consultation feedback was a key consideration in designing schemes, it was balanced alongside road safety priorities, policy commitments, and compliance with national standards to develop evidence-based solutions that align with strategic safety goals. The decision to retain some speed cushions on Windlehurst Road reflects the council's commitment to ensuring safety while taking consultation feedback into account. Removing all measures would have conflicted with safety objectives and statutory responsibilities under Vision Zero. The retained measures are based on safety assessments and aim to create a safer environment for all road users. While the consultation showed a preference for removing measures, consultation responses are only one factor considered when making decisions, and the council has a duty to prioritise safety and reduce KSIs. This approach ultimately protects the most vulnerable network users, in particular pedestrian who represent 50% of those suffering with a KSI outcome in road traffic accidents.

RESOLVED – That the Director of Place Management be requested to respond with more details to the questioner in writing.

(iv) Petitions

No petitions were submitted.

(v) Open Forum

In accordance with the Code of Practice no organisation indicated that they wished to address the Area Committee as part of the Open Forum arrangements.

(vi) Ward Flexibility Funding - Stockport LGBT+ Centre CIC

A representative of the Assistant Director for Governance submitted an application received on behalf of Stockport LGBT+ Centre CIC for a grant of £94 from the Ward Flexibility Funding Budget (£47 from Marple North and £47 from Marple South & High Lane ward allocations) towards the cost of hosting the 'Fabulously Me' event at a central, accessible Stockport location.

RESOLVED – That approval be given to an application from Stockport LGBT+ Centre CIC for a grant of £94 from the Ward Flexibility Funding Budget (£47 from Marple North and £47 from Marple South & High Lane ward allocations) towards the cost of hosting the 'Fabulously Me' event at a central, accessible Stockport location.

5. DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS

There were no development applications to be considered.

6. APPEAL DECISIONS, CURRENT PLANNING APPEALS AND ENFORCEMENTS

A representative of the Assistant Director for Governance submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) summarising recent appeal decisions; listing current planning appeals and dates for local enquiries; informal hearings for planning appeals, and enforcement action within the Marple Committee area.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

7. ASSET OF COMMUNITY VALUE NOMINATIONS

A representative of the Deputy Chief Executive submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) providing members with information in relation to nominations received and to determine whether to list the following as Assets of Community Value:-

(i) Jubilee Methodist Church

A representative of the Jubilee Methodist Church addressed the meeting.

Members welcomed the nomination.

RESOLVED – That approval be given to the addition of Jubilee Methodist Church, Cotes Green Lane, Marple Bridge, Stockport, SK6 5EB to the List of Assets of Community Value in accordance with the Localism Act 2011 and The Assets of Community Value (England) Regulations 2012.

(ii) Hawk Green

A representative of the Hawk Green Recreation Ground addressed the meeting.

Members welcomed the nomination.

RESOLVED – That approval be given to the addition of Hawk Green Recreation Ground, Hawk Green Road, Marple, Stockport, SK6 7HU to the List of Assets of Community Value in accordance with the Localism Act 2011 and The Assets of Community Value (England) Regulations 2012.

(iii) Etherow Sailing Club

A representative of the Deputy Chief submitted the report (copies of which had been circulated) relating to the Etherow Country Park Sailing Club being nominated as an Asset of Community Value.

Members welcomed the nomination.

RESOLVED – That approval be given to the addition of Etherow Country Park Sailing Club, Etherow Country Park, George Street, Compstall, Stockport, SK6 5JD to the List of Assets of Community Value in accordance with the Localism Act 2011 and The Assets of Community Value (England) Regulations 2012.

8. FREE TO CHARGED CAR PARKS BUDGET 2024/25

A representative of the Director of Place Management submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) providing an overview of the rationale and criteria being applied to those car parks within the borough that were currently free of charge in terms of the viability and justification for the introduction of charges as agreed as part of the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTPF).

A representative of the Director for Place Management attended the Committee to present the report and answer questions from Members.

The following comments were made/ issues raised:-

- There was a £24m budget deficit to fill with any monies coming from Government being ring-fenced for adult social care and children with special educational needs.
- Don't want to follow in the steps of other councils, but want to balance the budget in Stockport.
- Members commented that it would make it harder for people to access the Town Centre and shop across Marple with increasing costs to families.
- Local residents were encouraged to continue to support local businesses because of the wonderful economy that existed in Marple that local residents should be proud of.
- Members expressed disappointment with national government and the decisions being taken that affect people locally.
- There was concern relating to cash payments for car parks and the maintenance of those machines, but also the installation of payment machines and the mobile internet connectivity in the area which was poor.

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- Concern was expressed regarding shop workers who have used the free parking in the past, but being on minimum wage and having to pay for full days this would impact their lives and cost of living.
- It was noted that there was still a free car park on Town Street.
- Clarification was sought regarding the free 30min bays that were being made available. In response, it was stated that a detailed briefing paper would be circulated to members explaining this arrangement.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

(i) Marple North

A representative of the Director of Place Management submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) providing an overview of the rationale and criteria being applied to those car parks within the borough that were currently free of charge in terms of the viability and justification for the introduction of charges as agreed as part of the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTPF).

A representative of the Director for Place Management attended the Committee to present the report and answer questions from Members.

The report detailed proposals in relation to Marple North - Andrew Street, Brabyns Brow (Brabyns Brow Lower), Middlers (Brabyns Brow Upper) and Brabyns Park.

- Ward Councillors expressed that they had some initial concerns about the proposals for the car parking charges, but been involved in a number of discussions trying to understand the financial position better.
- There were concerns expressed relating to people that work in the area and the impact this would have on them and their ability to park for free.
- Clarification was sought regarding residents without anywhere to park and businesses. In response, it was noted that local residents would be informed in due course, however the approach with businesses would be different going forward.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

(ii) Marple South and High Lane

A representative of the Director of Place Management submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) providing an overview of the rationale and criteria being applied to those car parks within the borough that were currently free of charge in terms of the viability and justification for the introduction of charges as agreed as part of the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTPF).

A representative of the Director for Place Management attended the Committee to present the report and answer questions from Members.

The report detailed proposals in relation to Marple South & High Lane - Brookside Lane, Buxton Road Library, Buxton Road Medical Centre, Hibbert/ Church Lane and Windlehurst Road (High Lane Park).

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- Car parks were not being maintained due to the budget and this car parking charge would be able to assist with this.
- Large caravans and trailers were parked in the car parks in Marple South & High Lane and when enquiries were made to the Council, it was said that there were no traffic regulation orders, so these vehicles were able to park for free for weeks and sometimes months and no one could do anything.
- With the car parking charges coming into effect, these vehicles would not be able to park in the car parks for long periods of time and this would allow local residents to use the car park accordingly.
- Ward Councillors having previously requested, thanked the officers for including in the proposals free parking available for 30 minutes for local residents for those visiting the doctor or the chemist.
- Members requested that the payment machine on the Chadwick Street Car park be looked at as it was not currently working and not accepting cash payments.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

9. PROGRESS ON AREA COMMITTEE DECISIONS

A representative of the Assistant Director for Governance submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) providing an update on progress since the last meeting on decisions taken by the Area Committee and detailing the current position on area flexibility funding. The report also included the current position on the highway and traffic management delegated budget.

The following comments were made/issues raised:-

- The traffic calming measures relating to St Mary's and Ludworth Primary School were ongoing and double yellow lines would also be painted in the vicinity of Lowry Drive.
- Members requested that a road sign be placed in the vicinity of Danbanks Merger Lane to indicate for cyclists and cars as there has been a few near misses reported recently by local residents.
- It was noted that the double yellow lines also Fern Close would be repainted

RESOLVED – (1) That the report be noted.

(2) That the Assistant Director for Governance be requested to look into the a road sign being placed in the vicinity of Danbanks Merger Lane to indicate for cyclists and cars as there had been a few near misses reported recently by local residents.

The meeting closed at 7.06pm.