

# *Cheshire East Council*

## Corporate Plan 2021-2025

Mid Year Review 2021/22



Open

Fair

Green

## Priority: Ensure that there is transparency in all aspects of council decision making

The council to be seen as being a fair open and transparent organisation and able to demonstrate it.

## Key actions:

- Implement a new committee system
- Demonstrate commitment to open data

- Committee System introduced in May 2021 after significant work and co-operation by Members and Officers.
- Urgent decision making and activity relating to the pandemic uninterrupted by the change in governance and decision making at all levels of the council continued in a timely manner.
- Transparency and information sharing can be evidenced by 135 reports to committee in 6 months.
- First review to November Council to take the first steps in future development of the committee system, with an emphasis on learning, reflection and continuous improvement.
- For the 2020/21 year, 97% of Freedom of Information requests were responded to within 20 working days.
- 131 proactive media releases and information bulletins were published in Q1 and Q2.

To increase local democracy.

## Key actions:

- Working with town and parish councils
- Virtual meetings

- The Council has extensively engaged with town and parish councils on a number of topics.
- Consultation on the Community Governance Review is underway. Approaching 1200 consultation responses have, so far, been received.
- Consultation responses have been invited to the revision of the Member Code of Conduct, via a range of methods, including live virtual sessions held with the assistance of the Cheshire Association of Local Councils (CHALC).
- Virtual formal decision-making meetings were quickly established and become the 'norm' whilst legislation permitted it.
- The Council rapidly rolled-out technology to enable it to engage with attendees virtually for the purposes of meetings.
- Covid-19 restrictions have limited the Council's ability to promote attendance at physical meetings since May 2021. Anecdotal feedback from remote meetings was increased attendance and interest in Council business.

## Priority: Listen, learn and respond to our residents, promoting opportunities for a two-way conversation

Our communities will be well informed about things they can do to prepare for emergencies.

## Key actions:

- Enhanced emergency preparedness in communities

- The Joint Emergencies Planning Service (JEPS) has provided essential advice and support through the enduring emergency response to Covid -19. Services have regularly reviewed their responses and their business continuity plans through various stages of COVID restrictions.
- The Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise Leaders Group are leading Covid-19 recovery for the sector and for our local communities.
- 14 volunteer coordination points are mobilised across the borough that can support communities to respond to emergency or emerging issues.
- The Winter Wellbeing Group is collating partner availability and resource to create a 'local offer' of resources to support vulnerable people during winter months.

<p>The council is seen by residents as responsive.</p> <p>Key actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultation on key plans and strategies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultation has taken place on wide range of key plans and strategies. To date we have consulted on the SEND Strategy, Neglect Strategy, Autism Strategy, Transition Strategy, Mental Health Strategy, End of Life Strategy, Day Opportunities Strategy, Sensory Impairment Strategy, Connected Communities Strategy, Live Well for Longer Strategy, Market Position Statement, Assistive Technology Charging Policy as well as the design of the recommissioned service, and the Dementia Strategy.</li> <li>• A voice of the Customer programme is under development as part of the Customer Experience workstream. This will ensure that feedback/ enquiries/ complaints from customers are analysed and that we learn from this and make improvements.</li> </ul>
<p>Customer services to offer support and guidance and be accessible to people who need them.</p> <p>Key actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review where and how technology can assist</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Digital Customer Services programme has been relaunched to enhance our on-line services for customers.</li> <li>• The numbers of on-line transactions have remained consistent.</li> <li>• Digital Accounts have increased by c.2,000 up to 96,623.</li> <li>• Numbers of telephone calls have reduced in-year in-line with targets.</li> <li>• New Contact Centre technology platform is being procured which will further enhance support to both customers and staff.</li> </ul>
<p>Receive the Ministry of Defence's (MoD) Employer Recognition Scheme Gold Award.</p> <p>Key actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to work with the Armed Forces Covenant</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Member Armed Forces Champion role established and working proactively.</li> <li>• Planning is underway to support vulnerable veterans including a residential support hub and dedicated jobs fairs.</li> <li>• The Council is on schedule to apply for the MoD Employer Recognition Silver Award in April 2022.</li> </ul>
<p>Priority: Support a sustainable financial future for the council, through service development, improvement and transformation</p>	
<p>A financially sustainable council which has increased levels of reserves.</p> <p>Key actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a 4-year MTFS</li> <li>• Develop a sustainable reserves strategy</li> <li>• Successful delivery of savings programme</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Group Outturn reported to Finance Sub-committee on 22/09/21: overall underspend and increase in reserves.</li> <li>• The 2020/21 Outturn increased General Reserves by £1.2m to £11.5m. This is in-line with the Reserves Strategy, approved by Council as part of the 2021 to 2025 Medium Term Financial Strategy. Medium term ambition is to achieve £15-£20m Corporate Plan target. Earmarked Reserves were increased by £14.7m to support management of specific activities as well as to manage prevailing risks.</li> <li>• Draft Statement of Accounts 2020/21 and Annual Governance Statement published on website 30/09/21.</li> <li>• The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy was extended to 4 years. The overall position is balanced including robust forecasts for increasing demand and compensating savings and income.</li> <li>• Travel expenses are forecast to reduce by £213K in 2021/22 across the council (Officers and Members). Proposals for permanent 30% reduction being developed for the MTFS.</li> </ul>

- Office space is currently considerably under-utilised and the Council's offices at Dean Row have been vacated. Further plans are under review as part of the Estates and IT Programme, within the Future Workplace approach to include permanent hybrid working where appropriate.

Priority: Maximise commercial opportunities for the council

Our Alternative Service Delivery Vehicles (ASDV) delivering for our residents and generating a profit (with shareholder dividend) from commercial activities, reducing financial pressures on the council.

Key actions:

- Complete programme of reviews of ASDVs

- The ASDV review programme has reported on Transport Service Solutions (TSS). A project team is working to ensure there is an effective transition to the new model, and progress is currently on track to achieve this within the timescale. Consultation and engagement is being carried out with parent carers and TSS staff to inform the transition.
- Wholly owned companies reported profits on 31 March 2021, as per draft Accounts.
- The in-year outturn for Ansa, Orbitas, TSS combined is £695k profit for 2020/21 – against which the respective companies are developing proposals for dividends set against their combined retained profits.
- Business planning for 2022/23 is underway. A working Group has been established by the Finance Sub-Committee to review Company business plans. Standardised contract and performance management templates currently being updated and will be adopted by all commissioners and contracts including ASDVs.

Priority: Support and develop our workforce to be confident, motivated, innovative, resilient and empowered

A committed and motivated workforce Cheshire East Council seen as an employer of choice.

Key actions:

- Undertake staff surveys and act on the results
- Implement B4B Unit 4 ERP

- The workforce strategy has been refreshed and aligned to the Corporate Plan, reflecting new ways of working. The strategy will be taken to Corporate Policy Committee in November 2021.
- The staff pulse survey in April 2021 reported that 82% of staff enjoy working for Cheshire East Council and 87% feel trusted to do their job. 81% also agree that communication from the Council has been effective since the pandemic began.
- The health and wellbeing of our workforce has been a high priority throughout Covid-19. Practical support and guidance have been provided from colleagues in HR, Health and Safety and Public Health through various working groups and the Corporate Health and Safety Forum.
- Progress has been made in implementing a new Contract Management System to support the Council in the management of its contracts.
- A new core financial and business system (Unit4 ERP) went live in February 2021 and has been used effectively to support closure of 2020/21 accounts. Benefits will include more efficient and effective financial management and control, transaction processing, forecasting and financial performance reporting. The implementation of the new HR and Payroll system is due to Go Live from November payroll.

<p>A workforce that can work remotely and flexibly using the latest technology.</p> <p>Key actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear guidance and support to staff and managers</li> <li>• Accelerate roll-out of mobile working</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Agile Working policy has been revised to reflect new ways of working. Toolkit conversations taking place with teams in October and November.</li> <li>• Guidance and advice have been extensively provided to support staff to work flexibly and remotely. This includes virtual support calls, golden practices and e-learning.</li> <li>• Windows 10 and Microsoft 365 have been deployed to the workforce to improve the flexible working experience.</li> <li>• Culture change continues to be supported, including training, regular communications, workshops, roadshows and drop-ins.</li> <li>• We have enabled active engagement with Bright Spark change champions and a series of pilots are underway for new Meeting Room technology to support a Hybrid workforce.</li> </ul>
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Priority: Promote and develop the services of the council through regular communication and engagement with all residents

<p>Residents and staff to be aware of the council and the services we provide.</p> <p>Key actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review communications plans and style</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Corporate website redesign to make it easier for customers to utilise on-line services and to access information.</li> <li>• <i>My Account</i> has been relaunched with additional services added. We are developing communication channels and products aligned to <i>My Account</i> to improve the customer experience</li> <li>• Fix My Street has been launched for the reporting of Highways issue and improved information on planned works.</li> <li>• A Corporate Customer Charter has been drafted to provide clarity on the standards that customers can expect from the Council.</li> <li>• 95.85% of proactive media releases and information bulletins have been published at least once in third party media (online, newspapers, broadcast.)</li> </ul>
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<p>Resident satisfaction with the council to be in line with similar councils.</p> <p>Key actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Undertake regular communication with residents</li> <li>• Develop new Customer Experience Strategy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Customer Experience Strategy was approved in March 2021.</li> <li>• Procurement is concluding for improved Contact Centre Technology.</li> <li>• Highways Service is being reviewed against the Customer Experience Strategy and improvements being made in a number of areas.</li> <li>• Improved training on customer experience is now being rolled out across the Council.</li> <li>• Real time customer satisfaction surveys introduced to monitor performance.</li> <li>• Comprehensive programme of proactive communications activity supporting council services, programmes and priorities, across all directorates. There are currently c40 comms projects and campaigns live and/or in plan.</li> </ul>
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<p>The council to be regarded as a good partner.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Positive feedback on Covid-19 response, through Strategic Recovery Co-ordination Group.</li> <li>• Review of strategic partnership working is planned to be undertaken in quarter 4 - 21/22.</li> </ul>
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## Measures of progress

Measure	Previous Q	Latest Q	Target	Comment
% variance between forecast outturn and total net budget	N/A		0%	See final text in MYR FINANCE report
% variance between outturn and budget for capital schemes	N/A	-16%	15%	Q2 The current capital programme has slipped since approved at the MTFS stage due. Full details are in the MYR FINANCE report
% of waivers compared to contracts awarded	6.6%	13.1%	N/A	Three of the approved waivers are as a result of COVID and the issues within the care market.
Number of non-adherence to Contract Procedure Rules (Cumulative data)	0	0	0	N/A
% of complaints resolved within timescales - Stage 1	85%	83%	90%	Q2 - The Council issued 610 stage 1 complaint responses in Q2 of which 103 were issued late. Total number of stage 1 complaints received in Q2: Cheshire East - 761, Corporate – 100, People – 107, Place - 558  There has been an increase of 8% in complaints received compared to Q1. The majority of complaints received continue to be for the Place Directorate. Waste and Recycling, Highways and Planning continue to be the top three areas receiving complaints during Q2
% of complaints resolved within timescales - Stage 2	78%	74%	90%	Q2 - The Council issued 54 Stage 2 responses in Q2 of which 14 were issued late.
% of Freedom of Information requests completed within timescales	98%	97%	90%	Q2 - The Council issued 341 request responses in Q2, of which 12 were issued late. The Council exceeds the 90% response rate expected by the Information Commissioner's Office.
Number of Freedom of Information requests received	333	371	N/A	Q2 - There has been an 11% increase in the number of cases received from Q1, but fluctuations in the number of requests throughout the year are usual.
% of Agreed Internal Audit Recommended Actions implemented within agreed timescales	100%	-	80%	It should be noted that only a small number of actions from report issued in 2021/22 have become due for implementation. However, it is pleasing to report that all of these have been completed within timescales.

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(of reports issued in year)				
Total Comensura agency spend (£) (Cumulative data)	£2,348,251	£2,823,410	<£9, 053,016	Increases in assignments due to 'COVID19'
Number of Comensura agency staff	209	239	<157	Covid is also having an impact on the number of agency staff. Numbers and needs are reviewed on a regular basis. There are challenges in securing agency staff in some areas due to the prevailing labour market conditions.
% of PDRs in progress this year	N/A	N/A	80%	HR are using a manual process this year due to the move to a new system for 2022/2023. Comprehensive data across the Directorates is not available for Q1/Q2. However, it will be available at year end.
Number of apprenticeships (Cumulative data)	61	9	168	Update - some of the increase in numbers has been due to the incentive payments the Government introduced for new apprentices employed between 1st April and 30th September 2021.
% Staff Turnover Rate	9.7%	10.5%	<12%	Q2 - Staff turnover (%) has increased in Corporate, Children's and Place during 2021/22 Q2 whilst it has decreased slightly in Adult's (0.2%). Staff turnover In Place Directorate increased the most significantly from 9.1% to 10.7%. Turnover will be a key indicator to track for longer-term impacts when national and organisational approaches to working practices change.

# A council which empowers and cares about people

By 2025 we want:	Mid Year Position
<p>Priority: Work together with our residents and our partners to support people and communities to be strong and resilient</p>	
<p>All services to be developed together with our residents and communities, so they are based on what works for people in Cheshire East.</p> <p>Key actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Embed our vision for children and young people, and working together</li> <li>• Work with residents to understand the continuing impact of Covid</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our expectation is that all services should work <b>together</b> with families and residents as this is how we will achieve the best outcomes. We are continuing to embed a culture of co-production.</li> <li>• To date we have consulted on the SEND Strategy, Neglect Strategy, Autism Strategy, Transition Strategy, Mental Health Strategy, End of Life Strategy, Day Opportunities Strategy, Connected Communities Strategy, Live Well for Longer Strategy, Market Position Statement, Sensory Impairment Strategy, Assistive Technology Charging Policy as well as the design of the recommissioned service, and the Dementia Strategy.</li> <li>• We have provided over 10,000 food vouchers to vulnerable children and young people since April 2021 under the Covid Support Grant Scheme.</li> <li>• In response to the numbers of residents losing work through the impact of the pandemic, the Council swiftly mobilised a job matching project via the Supported Employment team. Throughout the height of the pandemic the team have supported 170 residents back into work and 40% of these have been in key-worker roles.</li> </ul>
<p>Families and communities are strong and resilient.</p> <p>Key actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a strong local social impact structure</li> <li>• Develop a locality model of working</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Cheshire East Social Action Partnership (CESAP) has established a local Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise (VCFSE) Leaders Group, who lead on local issues for the VCFSE sector. This group is co-producing a local Social Action Charter which will build connections across sectors: VCFSE, Local Government, Health, and Business and Industry.</li> <li>• CESAP are also working with Business and Industry to help develop new volunteering opportunities, including volunteering days and to help in fulfilling corporate social responsibility and social value commitments.</li> <li>• We have developed a Cheshire East <a href="#">volunteer website</a> which provides a unique place for residents to find out about volunteering opportunities.</li> <li>• A new voluntary Family Support Service will be put in place following a procurement exercise. This service will support families who no longer need support from existing early help and prevention services to help families to continue to build strength and long-term resilience.</li> <li>• We have worked with the NHS to deliver child health hubs within some of our Children's Centres. This has enabled families to access support in their local communities and has prevented children and young people from needing to attend hospital.</li> <li>• VCFSE supplier training event held to support the sectors in bidding for Council contracts and data security.</li> </ul>

<p>Cheshire East is a welcoming and supportive place, where equality, freedom, fairness and opportunities are available to all.</p> <p>Key actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify a suitable location within the borough and develop a Traveller transit site</li> <li>• Increase collaboration with marginalised groups</li> <li>• Secure social value benefits</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A suitable location for a Traveller transit site has been identified and agreed and planning permission has been granted.</li> <li>• A single point of contact has been created for requests from migrant families/individuals, and tools have been created to translate key information.</li> <li>• Regular engagement sessions with BAME, and Gypsy, Roma and Traveller and veteran communities take place to ensure these groups inform our service development. New links have been created with the veterans and armed forces community to set up support groups and one stop support hubs signposting them to various grants and funds.</li> <li>• The Council has a dedicated Home Office funded post supporting refugees into work.</li> <li>• A project group has been established across the Council to embed our Social Value Policy and to maximise Social Value opportunities to reduce avoidable health inequalities.</li> <li>• Cheshire East Council has led the development of the Social Value Award (quality mark).</li> <li>• Cheshire East Council are a finalist with the HSJ Award (Social Value) within the Health and Local Government Partnership category with the Cheshire &amp; Merseyside ICS.</li> <li>• A comprehensive recruitment, apprenticeship and work experience programme is promoted internally and externally and available to all and focusses upon attracting our cared for children into new roles within the Council.</li> </ul>
<p>Work with partners for the benefit of our communities inspiring confidence in public services developing community cohesion and community resilience.</p> <p>Key actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver evidence based early intervention and prevention services</li> <li>• Reduce loneliness and isolation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We have established a migrant peer to peer support group within schools, and developed tool kits to create a support offer between schools who have high levels of migrant students.</li> <li>• We are providing wrap-around support for over 110 people as part of the Afghan Relocation and Assistance Policy (ARAP) scheme.</li> <li>• To ensure local community facilities are 'go-to' places to find out about services, to volunteer or to start up a new project, we have coproduced a new social franchise offer we which we will be launching later in the year.</li> <li>• We have launched a <a href="#">Crowdfunding platform</a> that will allow residents to create projects and be backed by local people and local funders.</li> <li>• We are coproducing a Live Well for Longer Strategy which will include addressing issues such as loneliness and isolation.</li> </ul>
<p>Priority: Reduce health inequalities across the borough</p>	
<p>Work with partners to address the issues of poor housing, poverty, employment and education</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Cheshire East Health and Care Place Partnership and Health and Wellbeing Board continue to work to prepare for the changes to health and care that the new legislation will bring. A review of the Five-Year Plan is a part of this.</li> </ul>

opportunities across urban and rural areas.

Key actions:

- Implement the Cheshire East Partnership Five Year Plan
- Promote regular screening and take up of preventative health opportunities
- Improve the Mental Health of all people working and living in Cheshire East
- To continue to support the zero-suicide approach

- The Tartan Rug has been updated and work is in hand to refresh the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment.
- The One You Cheshire East service delivers Healthier Lifestyle programmes across the borough that support residents to be more active, lose weight and to stop smoking. In comparison to last year and as we move out of Covid-19 restrictions there has been an increase in residents taking up this offer; Physical Activity up 43%, Weight Management up 70% and Smoking Cessation 190%. The annual targets for weight management and smoking cessation have already been exceeded.
- Work is currently underway to put additional falls prevention capacity in place (from 900 to 1200 places per annum).
- The four integrated care partnership working groups (Cardio-vascular health, respiratory health, mental health and social prescribing and Children's health), are working to deliver improved frontline community services.
- A mental health peer support tool kit is being co-produced with a number of residents. The aim is to keep residents connected and supported through peer-to-peer support.
- Additional investment has been agreed from the Public Health grant to provide extra capacity in the substance misuse provider and for children and young people's mental health services to fund additional capacity to meet the Covid-19 related increased demand.
- Cheshire and Merseyside have been awarded Suicide-Safer Community status by Living Works, the world's leading suicide prevention training company. This award is symbolic of the hard work of colleagues and partners from across Cheshire and Merseyside over the last five years, implementing the NO MORE Suicide Strategy.
- A behavioural insights study has commenced with up to 300 male residents in an attempt to understand why males do not engage with services with the aim to reduce suicide rates in young men. The results will shape service delivery and our communication methods for the future.
- The Increasing Equality Commission is focused upon Crewe and working to bring partners together to identify opportunities to reduce inequality. A strategy will be published in summer 2022.
- A network of food poverty providers has been developed who will aim to support the sustainability and coordination of activity that is preventing food poverty from escalating.
- We are offering our care leavers in receipt of universal credit £20 per week for a further 6 months to support them as corporate parents through this challenging time.

Priority: Protect and support our communities and safeguard children, adults at risk and families from abuse, neglect and exploitation

Children receive the right support, by the right people, at the right time, so they are effectively protected from harm, and are supported to stay within their families and communities.

- Early help offer is improving outcomes for over 200 additional children. The percentage of early help work led by partners has increased from 39% in March 2021 to 42% in June 2021.
- We are continuing to focus on achieving excellence in social work practice and embedding Signs of Safety. We are delivering a training programme for social work practitioners and managers, and we have recruited to a team of four lead practitioners who

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Key actions:

- Continued investment in Early Help and Prevention services
- Work with our partnerships to ensure there is a joined-up approach to safeguarding children

are delivering training and targeted support to newly qualified practitioners. Audits are demonstrating that the quality of practice is improving.

- We are continuing to work with our partnerships around safeguarding, and we launched a new Neglect Strategy in July 2021 which was produced in consultation with children, young people and partners.
- We have started to work differently and commission from a broader range of providers to support children to remain or return home. This positive work will form the basis of a redesigned and re-commissioned Children's Care at Home Purchasing system in 2022.

People and organisations to work together to prevent and stop the risk and experience of abuse and neglect, whilst promoting the well-being of Adults with Care and Support Needs.

Key actions:

- Prevent harm and reduce the risk of abuse and neglect to adults with care and support needs
- Safeguard Adults at Risk
- To address what has caused the abuse, neglect or exploitation
- To ensure that officers are adhering to legislation and promoting best practice

• We are continuing to work to prevent harm and reduce the risk of abuse to adults at risk, and to raise awareness about Adult Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation.

• We have produced tools for frontline practitioners to support recognition of unintentional Domestic Abuse and are contributing to a revised Risk Indicator Checklist for Older People. During Carers Week, Adult Social Care raised the issue of Predatory Marriage.

• A Multi Agency Complex Safeguarding Forum has been established to discuss cases of Exploitation and risk management.

• Chanel Panel continues to meet monthly to support and divert vulnerable children and adults from being drawn into terrorism or being groomed into radicalisation.

• Preparatory work has commenced to create a Pan Cheshire Strategy for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Communities – which will include information regarding domestic abuse, mental ill health and exploitation.

• My CWA (previously My Cheshire Without Abuse), our commissioned domestic abuse service, are working in partnership with strategic housing colleagues and existing forums to enhance housing provision in Cheshire East, raise awareness, and review the approach to domestic abuse victims.

• The Whole Housing approach will enable earlier identification and intervention, reduce the number of people rendered homeless due to domestic abuse, and will enable survivors to remain safely in their own homes where they choose to do so, or keep their tenancy status if they relocate.

• A working group is in place which is planning for the implementation of the Liberty Protection Safeguards. The Draft Code of Practice was not published by the Government in the spring of 2021 as expected – therefore the national consultation has not commenced. Cheshire East will continue to prepare for implementation as information and guidance is issued.

• Quarterly Safeguarding performance reports evidence that Adults are being asked about their outcomes.

• Elected Members have access to Safeguarding Training.

Priority: Be the best corporate parents to the children in our care

Always deliver on our pledges to care for children and young people, and those who are cared experienced, that we will:

- Be a good corporate parent
- Improve education, training and employment outcomes
- Work to achieve permanence and keep children safe
- Improve health and wellbeing outcomes
- Prepare young people for adulthood

- We have carried out a participation and engagement survey with cared for children and care leavers, which has been shared with frontline teams and partners and is informing the development of our services. The survey asked cared for children and young people to rate the support that they have received from their social worker – 43% said this was 10 out of 10 (10 being fantastic) and a further 39% rated this between 6 and 9.
- We are consulting with cared for children and care leavers on the refresh of the Corporate Parenting Strategy for 2022 onwards, so that it is based on what is most important to them.
- Support from the Post 16 Learning Mentor and Advisor has meant that Year 11 pupils moving into post 16 have been able to access the courses they identified. There has been a reduction in the number of cared for young people and care leavers aged 16-18 who are not in education, employment or training at the start of the new academic year. This year we have also established a Governing Body for the Virtual School. This includes representatives across all key stakeholders and is ensuring there is governance and scrutiny of the work of the Virtual School.
- Part of our local offer for care leavers includes support to apply for apprenticeships, training funding and a range of other opportunities. In September 2021 the Council created a new post to coordinate the employment support for Care Leavers.
- We are delivering our strategy to ensure only the right children come into care, and we have significantly reduced the number of children who are in care, particularly those who are living at home but are subject to a Care Order. Compared to the same time last year (June) the number of cared for children has reduced from 544 to 527.
- We are continuing to develop a range of options to increase the number of local homes available for children and young people. This includes our Bespoke children's homes and Mockingbird foster carer support hubs.
- We have created five new and vibrant self-contained units of accommodation for cared for children, with their own entrance and staff space, through the Crewe YMCA commission of supported accommodation for those aged 16 / 17.
- All our fostering working groups include foster carers to ensure that we are working together to develop our services. We are continuing to develop our fostering marketing recruitment campaign, and we have attended events such as the Royal Cheshire Show and the Geronimo Festival which has generated 24 new enquiries about becoming a foster carer. This year we have recruited 6 new foster carers which has created an additional 10 homes for children and young people.

Priority: Support all children to have the best start in life

All children enjoy access to high quality childcare and support programmes that maximises their development in terms of speech and language, resilience and ability to learn and play.

Key actions:

- The take up of the 2-, 3- and 4-year-old offer remains consistently high ensuring that children are receiving support at the earliest opportunity (71% take up for 2 year old offer and 93% take up for 3 and 4 year old offer).
- Eligible 2-year-old children are supported in high quality practice and provision. Over the last 2 years, 91% of providers have been judged good or better in their Ofsted Inspection.

- Maintain high numbers of children placed in high quality childcare settings
- Promote and improve access to the parenting journey support with additional support offered to the most vulnerable families
- Families of eligible 2-year-old children are supported to access a provision or additional interventions through a targeted approach via our Family Service Workers.
- A universal and targeted offer of training is available for all providers to enable children to be supported by a highly skilled, confident and competent workforce. Since January 2021, The Early Start Service have delivered 116 training courses (mainly online) with a total of 1,871 delegates attending.
- We have launched Child Health Hubs in partnership with the NHS which are enabling children to access health care within their communities rather than needing to attend hospital. A total of 236 children and adults have accessed the Clinics through the Child Health Hubs since January 2021. These consist of Prolonged Jaundice and Unsettled Infants. 380 children have accessed the blood clinic.
- Since January 2021, a total of 10,547 children and 15,417 adults have accessed an Early Start Service across our Cheshire East Children's Centres. There has been a total of 1,787 new Children's Centre registrations since January 2021.

Priority: Increase opportunities for children, young adults and adults with additional needs

Great services and provision across the partnership for children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) which means children's needs are met effectively and efficiently.

Key actions:

- Ensure all recommendations from the last Ofsted inspection have been addressed and improvements are embedded in practice
- Focus on further improving communication across the SEND partnership
- Review the pathways for transition to adulthood ensuring effective outcomes are achieved for young people through their preparing for adulthood plans

- We are consulting with children, young people, parents, carers and professionals on our new SEND Strategy from September 2021 onwards. The Strategy will drive the work of the partnership to develop the quality of our services for children and young people with SEND.
- The SEND Revisit in May 2021, conducted by Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission, found that sufficient progress had been made in addressing the two areas of significant weakness identified in our previous inspection in 2018. Inspectors found that the timeliness, process and quality of Education, Health and Care Plans had been "transformed."
- We are continuing to embed a culture of co-production and improving communication across the SEND partnership. In the 2021 SEND Revisit, inspectors found that "co-production is at the heart of every EHC needs assessment." SEND newsletters are sent to parents, carers and partners on a regular basis so they are kept up to date, and communication will be a key focus of the new strategy.
- We are continuing to focus on the quality and timeliness of annual reviews and a comprehensive action plan is in place in this area.
- We have established a Preparing for Adulthood Implementation Group to deliver our priorities in the Preparing for Adulthood Strategy. As part of this work, we are reviewing the information on our Local Offer that we provide on the pathways to transition. There is a detailed action plan in place to develop the training and process for preparing for adulthood plans to ensure we have strong plans that result in good outcomes for young people.
- Our Supported Internship offer goes from strength to strength. The Council's Supported Internship Coordinator has supported the development of 5 new providers across the Borough. From a starting point of below 10 places, there are now over 40 Supported Internship places available in Cheshire East helping young people with SEND into work.
- We are delivering our SEND Sufficiency Strategy to increase SEND provision across all localities. 7 new specialist provisions are currently being progressed which will be phased into operation following formal consultation and capital investment. In addition,

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expand the local provision of SEND places to enable more children to attend a school</li> </ul>	<p>we have initiated a new type of SEND provision 'Enhanced Mainstream' which aims to support pupils with increased needs within a mainstream setting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cheshire East is the lead authority establishing a new North West SEND Purchasing System. All 23 North West authorities have signed up to utilise the new Purchasing System which puts structure, contract, quality assurance, value for money and most importantly improved outcomes at the heart of our use of the independent non maintained special schools / colleges. Early feedback from authorities (including Cheshire East itself) is that improved choice and best use of resources is already evident.</li> </ul>
<p>Provision for young adults to live independently within in the community.</p> <p>Key actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leisure, life and meaningful employment opportunities are developed to improve life chances for young adults</li> <li>Promote citizen engagement and participation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In the last 12 months, 6 supported living schemes became operational, providing 55 units of accommodation. Of these, 30 units of accommodation are for people with mental health problems and 25 are for people with a learning disability. All schemes provide potential support for young people, but one scheme is exclusively for young people with a learning disability in transition. A further scheme in Sandbach is due to open in October providing 17 beds for both people with either mental health and or a learning disability. A respite scheme is to open in November providing short breaks for adults with a learning disability. All these schemes mean that adults are supported to live independently within their local communities.</li> <li>Making good use of remaining sub-regional EU funds has significantly increased employment support for people with complex needs (the Council's Journey First project). 10 new Work Placement Officers were embedded into frontline teams in 2021.</li> <li>The Cheshire East Council led Welfare to Work partnership continues to coordinate employment support to vulnerable groups, including joint working on employer engagement, transition support, mapping exercises, the promotion and roll out of Kick Start and the creation of a directory of all available services.</li> <li>We have strong performance in terms of the number of people with learning disabilities known to the Council in paid work, compared to the total known to the Council. This performance has been steadily increasing over the past 5 years and is significantly higher than most other Local Authorities.</li> <li>During the pandemic, activity and support groups across the borough moved online and we created innovative ways of supporting vulnerable young people and adults. Activity and support groups are now moving back into face-to-face support and approximately 70% of all groups are being delivered face to face.</li> <li>New social prescribers and existing volunteer networks are signposting and supporting people to access activity and support opportunities.</li> </ul>
<p>Priority: Ensure all children have a high quality, enjoyable education that enables them to achieve to their full potential</p>	
<p>All children enjoy the best education which prepares them to thrive in adulthood.</p> <p>Key actions:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Over the last 2 years, 345 additional primary school places, and 650 additional secondary school places, have been generated as part of our sufficiency work. In addition, a further 1,050 places are expected as capital investment progresses in the targeted planning area.</li> <li>Key projects recently completed or in progress currently include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expansions in Sandbach for additional primary places at Elworth CofE and Sandbach St Johns schools.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

- Provide sufficient school places and respond to our growing population
- Support and challenge all education settings to deliver our key priorities with a focus on addressing inequalities
- Provide support and challenge where children are not attending school or receiving an appropriate education.
- Support children to catch up on the learning they lost during Covid
- Support children and young people's mental health and wellbeing to resolve problems as early as possible
- Expansion of Park Lane Special school well underway for 40 additional places.
- Expansion of Tytherington High School with a phase 1 expansion of 6 additional classrooms.
- The pandemic has impacted on educational attainment with pupils being impacted differently, which is contributing to increased attainment gaps between some pupils and their peers.
- We have supported schools to identify gaps in learning and adjust the curriculum to compensate. Our primary dataset for 2021 shows that writing has seen the biggest challenges whereas reading has seen some improvements. Disadvantaged boys have also struggled more during periods of lockdown/ remote learning.
- Curriculum recovery programmes of work continue to be delivered – key events include:
  - 80 schools currently involved in Maths mastery programmes through our Maths Hub.
  - Over 140 schools attended training recently on the Geography and Science curriculums using evidence from Ofsted relating to how best to plan and deliver high quality classroom practice.
  - Over 170 attendees on SEN and school improvement briefings for schools which generated rich feedback on shaping support for our schools.
- Attendance at Cheshire East schools has been good and higher than national levels. A range of support is in place to ensure all children and young people receive an appropriate education. Education Family Support workers continue to offer transition support plans for vulnerable children to transition back to education following prolonged periods out.
- Mental health support teams are in place working directly with a number of selected schools where there are higher levels of deprivation and more vulnerable children. A directory of all local mental health services has been developed to assist schools and services to appropriately signpost families, so children and young people receive the right support as early as possible.
- Wellbeing for Education Recovery continues to provide information and support to schools and colleges to enhance and develop a sustainable whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing.
- The self-harm notification pathway has increased timely information sharing between schools and health; where notifications have been received schools have been able to effectively support the child and their family at a point of extreme vulnerability.
- Cheshire East Youth Council hosted their first mental health conference, Taboo, last year, and are planning to hold another conference in November this year. During the conference young people discussed the mental health issues that affect them and told multi-agency professionals how they can best support them.

Priority: Reduce the reliance on long-term care by improving services closer to home and providing more extra care facilities, including dementia services

Vulnerable and older people live safely and maintain independence within community settings.

- A steering group has been set up to provide oversight to the development of appropriate accommodation for vulnerable and older people.

<p>Key actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with partners to develop appropriate accommodation and extra care housing models</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A market engagement exercise is underway to promote the Council's ambition to work with providers to develop Extra Care Housing models.</li> <li>• The development of Extra Care Housing is promoted in conversations with organisations who approach the Council about potential developments.</li> </ul>
<p>People are cared for and valued by a professional and caring workforce</p> <p>Care4CE to become an exemplar high quality trading company.</p> <p>Key actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a quality trading company</li> <li>• Recruit and train a skilled and motivated workforce</li> <li>• Provide a professional pathway for progression</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A revised business model has been created that enables Care4CE to trade and is sustainable longer term.</li> <li>• Care4CE, along with many Health and Social Care providers, is experiencing difficulty with the recruitment and retention of frontline care staff. Care4CE continues to liaise with Skills for care, DWP and local colleges to promote Adult Social Care as a career choice and is exploring options to recruit within Cheshire East and outside of the Borough.</li> <li>• The Supported Employment team has worked with Media Four to create a short film titled "Why work in Adult Social Care?" to promote the sector and Cheshire East Council as an employer. A press release is imminent, and the video will be placed on the Council's Adult Social Care Jobs page. The film will also be shared at online Jobs Fairs hosted on the Jobs Live channel. The virtual jobs fairs regularly have in excess of 16,000 views (live and on demand).</li> <li>• The percentage of community support reablement completed with no ongoing package of care (75% in Q1) continues to demonstrate the success of early support in preventing the need for long term care and support.</li> </ul>
<p>To prioritise Home First for patients discharged from hospital. Where possible patients are discharged to a home of their choice.</p> <p>Key actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand and develop the Home First service to support people to stay at home longer</li> <li>• Work to develop integrated health and social care teams</li> <li>• Carers Strategy to be implemented</li> <li>• Develop the Shared Lives service</li> <li>• Increased use of technology</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We have continued to work closely with health colleagues in the implementation of the revised Governmental hospital discharge guidance. The ongoing impact of the pandemic and workforce capacity issues have impacted on the Home First approach and our ability to support more people to get home from hospital.</li> <li>• Adult Social Care locality teams are linked with Primary Care networks. Teams work well virtually, and multi-disciplinary team meetings take place and learning is shared. Colocation options are being considered. Work is underway to develop a joint commissioning hub with Cheshire Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) colleagues.</li> <li>• Consultation is currently taking place on our new Carers Strategy for 2021-2025 which is for carers of all ages. The coproduction of the Carers Strategy is being led by the Cheshire East Carers Forum.</li> <li>• The joint commissioning of the Carers Hub is currently under development with the NHS Cheshire CCG. The Carers Hub provides a central point for support and advice for carers which includes short breaks. The recommission will be underpinned by the coproduced Carers Strategy.</li> <li>• Work is underway to review best practice from other areas in relation to the development of the Shared Lives service.</li> <li>• Our new Telecare service is in the process of being recommissioned with our partners including NHS Cheshire CCG. The recommission will explore using additional technology such as apps, tablets and mobile phones to help to digitally enable people and help them to remain safe in their own homes and their communities.</li> </ul>

Adults receive quality assessments of need and support planning and good quality services to keep them safe and maintain their physical and mental wellbeing.

Key actions:

- Fully implement social work practice within adult social care
- Maintain and improve the quality of care and support services

- We are continuing to develop the Adult Safeguarding Board and the Board has continued to meet during the pandemic to ensure the right partnership support is in place to meet needs during the changing circumstances.
- We continue to seek to ensure that adults receive quality assessments of need, support planning and good quality services to keep them as safe as they want to be in accordance with making safeguarding personal principles and to support their physical and emotional wellbeing. People are actively involved in all aspects of assessment and care planning.
- Adult Social Care locality teams are linked with Primary Care networks. Teams work well virtually, and multi-disciplinary team meetings take place and learning is shared. Colocation options are being considered.
- Work is taking place within the Health and Social Care Transformation Group to share activity data based on Care Communities.

## Measures of progress

Measure	Previous Q	Latest Q	Comment
Children's Social care – Number of referrals	467	601	Compared to quarter 4 (Q4) there has been a significant increase in referrals to social care, which is also higher than the numbers seen in Q1 of last year 2020/21 at 539.
Percentage of repeat referrals	17%	18%	Although the re-referral rate increased slightly in Q1, it still remains at much more acceptable levels and lower than the latest published North West position of 22%.
% of assessments completed within 45 days	74%	79%	Q1 showed a continued improvement in the timeliness of assessments, ensuring that risks are being quickly identified and plans put in place for individuals in a timely fashion.
Percentage of children with a second or subsequent child protection plan	28%	27%	The rate of repeat child protection plans continues to be a focus for audit and reflective learning, considering reasons for the need for repeat intervention and what interventions may lead to more permanent solutions for the future.
Number of cared for children	517	527	There has been a small increase in the number of children in care from year end albeit numbers remain lower than at the same time last year where we had 544 individuals in the care of the local authority. Positively the numbers in external foster care are lower meaning that more individuals are being supported within a mix of family arrangements.
Average caseload of social workers	19	20	Due to the increased number of referrals the average caseloads for social workers has seen a small increase. This will continue to be monitored closely alongside local variations in specific team and area workloads.
Percentage attendance for primary pupils year to date	96%	97%	Q1 saw an improvement in the attendance at both primary schools and special schools. Additional support has been provided in schools to aid individuals in returning and settling back into the daily routine together with identified educational needs.
Percentage attendance for secondary pupils year to date	93%	93%	
Number of permanent exclusions from Cheshire East Schools (latest half term available)	5	6	The latest exclusions data reported relates to the term ending in July. All exclusions relate to secondary school exclusions. All schools considering a permanent exclusion liaise directly with education access officer to discuss exclusion and she explores alternatives with the school.
Current Number of pupils educated at home	457	509	We have experienced an increase in children being educated at home (electively home educated – EHE) however this has been seen across the whole of the North West with some LA's seeing a twofold increase.

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Current number of children missing from education.	62	58	The number of individuals missing from education continues to reduce with ongoing work to resolve the remaining individuals' circumstances. The team is working closely with the families and schools concerned to establish where individuals have enrolled.
Percentage of requests for Educational Psychologists (EP) advice completed within 6 weeks	87%	98%	The last two quarters' performance demonstrate the success of the work that has been ongoing to increase the availability of Educational Psychologists (EPs). This ongoing partnership approach will continue to vastly improve outcomes for individuals with robust education plans in place much quicker.
Special Educational Needs – Education, Health and Care Plans completion within 20 weeks including exceptions	85%	86%	Q1 performance reflects the position from January – June 2021. The average time for completion remains constant at around 19 weeks for new plans
Percentage EHCP annual review completed in timescales	67%	58%	Timely reviews of EHC plans remains a priority however the increasing numbers of plans together with new requests means that the service is under constant pressure to meet all requirements.
Current number of open Early Help Assessments/ plans	1237	1243	Despite the difficulties services are facing, compared to the same point last year, we are supporting more families and young people with an early help assessment. Longer term this will hopefully contribute to reduced numbers of individuals requiring specialist interventions and services.
Percentage of all open Early Help Assessments led by Cheshire East Prevention service staff	61%	58%	The number of early help assessments that are led by Cheshire East staff continues to reduce as partners are increasingly able to undertake the lead where they are the most appropriate agency.
Percentage eligible children taking up 2 year old offer (termly figure only)	68%	71%	The take up of the 2-, 3- and 4- year old offer remains consistently high ensuring that children are receiving support at the earliest opportunity and crucially enabling their individual progress despite the COVID-19 restrictions.
Percentage children taking up 3 and 4 year old offer (termly figure only)	94%	93%	
Number of Families meeting the Supporting People (previously family focus) criteria where outcomes have been successfully concluded	74	87	The Supporting People Programme (formally Family Focus Programme) has continued following a further 12-month extension to the programme with a 2021/22 target of 332 payment by results.
Number of young people accessing the youth support service	872	1634	Q1 has seen a significant increase in the number of individuals receiving support from the Youth Service. This is primarily due to being able to open up more of the group sessions within the revised guidelines.

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Number of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) individuals [yr. 12-13]	174	172	Although there are still some difficulties in identifying available employment opportunities, the number of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) remains low.
Percentage of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) individuals [yr. 12-13]	2.3%	2.3%	
Residential Admissions for 65+ age band (Total Admissions YTD)	443	136	The 2020/21 figure was largely impacted by the restrictions linked to COVID -19 with a focus on supporting individuals in their own home wherever possible. 2021/22 (136 in Q1) suggests that we are now seeing an increase in individuals placed in permanent residential/nursing placements (though still below pre-pandemic levels). We are also aware that there may be significant issues in parts of the authority with community care delivery. This measure may see a further increase in Q2.
Residential Admissions for 18-64 age band (Total Admissions YTD)	13	7	Whilst this is clearly being impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic in terms of supporting individuals wherever possible at home, we are not seeing a rise in individuals remaining in short term placements.

# A thriving and sustainable place

By 2025 we want:	Mid Year Position
Priority: A great place for people to live, work and visit	
<p>Enable access to well designed, affordable and safe homes for all our residents.</p> <p>Key actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Deliver housing to meet the needs of all residents</li><li>• Review and evaluate the need for a private rented sector licensing scheme</li><li>• Ensure affordable homes are 'tenure blind' and focused on quality</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• We have delivered 199 new homes in quarter 1, against an annual target of 355 new affordable homes.</li><li>• Ongoing monitoring of a range of interventions implemented by local authority departments. Reviewing on quarterly basis.</li><li>• Implemented a revised structure to enhance capacity within the Housing Standards and Adaptations service.</li><li>• Put in place a communications campaign to increase landlords, agents, HMO managers and tenant's awareness of their rights and responsibilities for a good quality and well managed private rented sector.</li><li>• Social media campaigns delivered for Gas Safety Week and Fire Door Safety Week</li><li>• The revised Housing Enforcement Policy is scheduled for Economy and Growth Committee in October 2021 for approval and the revised Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy was adopted by Economy and Growth Committee in September 2021.</li></ul>
<p>A high-quality accessible library service, that remains relevant to the changing needs of Cheshire East residents and delivers value for money.</p> <p>Key actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Improve and adapt our libraries to meet any changing needs which offer value for money</li><li>• Update and refresh the Library Strategy</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Libraries re-opened from 19 April and Covid secure measures remain in place to protect customers and staff. Visitor numbers and participation in activities are encouraging with most customers reassured around the safety of our library premises.</li><li>• The uptake in E-resources has been considerable, Usage for April to September showed that Find my Past was up 33%, British Newspaper Archive up 91%, Newsbank up 34% and there have been 16,506 e-magazine checkouts to date by 1,369 new users.</li><li>• Libraries have introduced a new way of letting people know about what's on in their local library with new style bulletins sent to 17,000 subscribers on a wide range of topics. The aim is to showcase the wealth of services that the library offers and share information about a wide range of support and help available locally and nationally.</li></ul>

High quality leisure and sports provision across the borough that delivers good value for money.

Key actions:

- Improve our leisure centres
- Provide walking and cycling recreational routes and outdoor recreational space

- Leisure Centres were able to fully re-open from 19 July. Everybody Sport and Recreation are reporting an encouraging position in terms of attendances with more 'pay as you go' swimming and an earlier than anticipated return of school swimming as well as an increase in outdoor bookings.

- Since April work has started on the refurbishment of Nantwich swimming pool which is due for completion later in the year and will be renamed 'Nantwich Leisure Centre' to reflect the enhanced offer.

- Work has also started on the refurbishment and new pool at Congleton Leisure Centre, which is due for completion late 2022. In addition, a planning application had been submitted to extend and enhance the leisure and sports provision at Sutton lane in Middlewich.

To reduce the number of long-term empty dwellings

Key actions:

- Establish baseline and review current strategy and policies

- Empty Homes activity incorporated into new Assistant Housing Standards Role to increase resources. Strategic approach to be developed in 2022.

New development to be appropriately controlled to protect and support our borough.

Key actions:

- To keep the Local Plan Strategy under review
- Provide an effective Planning Service with capacity to efficiently determine planning applications
- Robust and effective planning enforcement
- Implementation and maintenance of additional supplementary policy documents
- Effective and competitive Building Control Service

- The revised Publication Draft Site Allocations and Development Policies Document (SADPD), part 2 of the Local Plan, was approved for submission for examination at full council on 19 April 2021. The examination by a Planning Inspector commenced in mid-October running until early November. It is hoped that the Plan will be adopted in late Spring/early Summer 2022.

- Work continues on the Minerals and Waste Development Plan Document (MWDPD), part 3 of the Local Plan. The initial draft should be ready for consultation early in the New Year.

- A number of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) are progressing to adoption. Consultation has been undertaken or is under way for the Sustainable Drainage SPD, Recovery of Forward Funded Infrastructure SPD, and Environmental Protection SPD. The Houses in Multiple Occupation SPD was approved for adoption by the Environment and Communities Committee on 9<sup>th</sup> September.

- The Planning Service has faced significant challenges over the first half of the year caused by ongoing Covid impacts coupled with a 15% increase in the volume of applications, in particular increases in of smaller householder and prior approval applications.

- This has led to a reduction in the % of applications determined within the agreed time – 87% for major applications and 80% for non-major applications.

- The service is continuing to recruit to fill vacancies. However, to address the current increase in applications an external provider has been procured to provide additional resource capacity for a 9–12 month period.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continued application of CEC Design Guide principles and focus on Place</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of Planning Services to be undertaken to inform production of Service Improvement Plan</li> <li>Planning Appeal performance has slightly decreased with 43% of appeals allowed during the period, but there are no particular adverse trends identified.</li> <li>Enforcement complaints have also increased with more people working at home and having greater awareness of the environment around them. There have been some notable successes with 5 Enforcement Notices, 5 Planning Contravention Notices and 1 Breach of Condition served during the reporting period.</li> <li>Performance in Building Control remains high despite challenges with resources similar to the planning service. The number of fee earning applications dealt with during the first half of the year is 895 with 94% of full plans assessed within 15 days. Officers have also responded to 29 dangerous structures.</li> <li>The five-year housing supply figure remains at a robust level of 6.4 years with 2,376 net completions during the 20/21 monitoring year.</li> </ul>
<p>To make best use of our surplus buildings and assets to support the borough and our partners.</p> <p>Key actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review the community asset transfer policy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Housing Development Framework established with the procurement of 7 organisations. Work has now commenced on the mini competition stage which will take forward identified surplus Council owned assets for housing development.</li> <li>CEC estate running costs are reviewed annually. However, materials and energy costs are rising significantly.</li> <li>The Asset Transfer Policy has been drafted and considered by Economy &amp; Growth Committee and following consultation will be confirmed for implementation.</li> <li>Produce draft Strategic Asset Management Plan (SAMP)</li> </ul>
<p>Continue to grow the Cheshire East visitor economy.</p> <p>Key actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deliver Cultural Strategy and Place Marketing Action Plan</li> <li>Deliver Tatton Park business plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The visitor economy will take time to recover its position due to the impacts of the pandemic. Support measures for tourism and hospitality businesses have been in place (e.g. ARG grants and 'Welcome back' fund), together with targeted promotions and addressing recruitment/retention issues.</li> <li>Value of visitor economy reduced in 2020 as a result of the pandemic, lockdowns and associated regulations. The economic value reduced to £548m in 2020 from £994m in 2019 (STEAM data). A Tourism Recovery Plan was approved September 2021 to support sector recovery to the benefit of the wider economy.</li> <li>The Tatton Park business plan is being delivered but has been adjusted to take account of the impacts of the pandemic and assist in the recovery phase. Despite the impacts on visits, Tatton Park was identified as the 5<sup>th</sup> most visited paid-for attraction in England in 2020. Tatton Park received its 9<sup>th</sup> consecutive 'Sandford Award' for excellence in heritage education in 2021.</li> <li>Capital projects that support cultural development are being progressed including, for example, the History Centre and Lyceum Square in Crewe and commissions in Macclesfield.</li> </ul>

Priority: Welcoming, safe and clean neighbourhoods

Crime and anti-social activity and anti-social behaviour to be reduced.

Key actions:

- Use our full range of education, engagement and enforcement tools to protect our communities.
- Take formal enforcement action as appropriate
- Clear and integrated enforcement approach with relevant fit for purpose policies
- Investment in technology to enhance CCTV delivery

- The Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) team has seen a considerable increase in reported incidents of ASB since the lifting of restrictions earlier in the year. The team continues to work closely with the police in responding to reports. The Multi-Agency Action Group (MAAG) has continued to meet bi-monthly basis and proposals to tackle ASB in Macclesfield will be presented over the coming months.

- The CCTV service continues to provide 24 hour a day visual oversight to our Cheshire East Towns working closely with Cheshire Police Team to share information, review specific areas on request and provide recorded evidence as appropriate. Work is ongoing to replace our ageing analogue system to a wireless infrastructure.

- Service specific enforcement policies for Antisocial Behaviour and Community Enforcement have been approved by Committee and published.

Victims of crime and exploitation to be supported effectively by the council and partners through collaboration.

Key actions:

- Work with the police and partners to share intelligence and problem solve local issues
- Refresh the Safer Cheshire East Partnership Plan for 2020-23
- Raise awareness around safeguarding

- In the first half of the year, the Banking Protocol project has produced a saving of over £500K to bank customers within the borough where requests to withdraw unusual amounts of money have been challenged and referred to the police due to suspected criminality.

- The Older Person's Scams Awareness and Aftercare Project (a joint partnership between Age UK and Cheshire East) provides aftercare, support and advice to individuals who have been the victim of doorstep crime or scam activity.

- The Cheshire East Strategic Intelligence Assessment has been updated.

- The Safer Cheshire East Partnership has a dedicated subgroup focussed on Cyber Crime – working in partnership with Trading Standards.

- Support for victims of SCAMs is now in place via Age UK.

- The SWAN campaign has been launched to raise awareness about Women's safety at night in response to the Sarah Everard case and a Cheshire East Council survey.

To protect residents and improve our environment.

Key actions:

- Review local air quality through our Annual Status Reports, taking

- Community Enforcement Officers continue to educate and engage with members of the public. 26 fixed penalty notices have been issued for dog fouling, Fly-tipping and abandoned vehicles.

- The Cleaner Crewe pilot started early in the year and has seen 6 alleyways cleaned and further enhanced with plants, artwork, and new signs. The pilot has seen collaborative working between various departments within the council, the local MP, Crewe

action to respond to areas of poorer air quality

- Air Quality Management Areas have an action plan outlining planned measures to improve air quality
- A regulatory service that balances advice and education
- Provide a robust licensing regime for alcohol, gambling and hackney carriage private hire vehicles
- Proactive inspection and surveillance programmes

Town Council, and residents. The Town Council have agreed to fund an extra Community Enforcement Officer to further support the pilot.

- The draft Air Quality Annual Status Report has been submitted to Defra for approval. Projects within the Air Quality Action Plan are ongoing in conjunction with a range of internal and external partners and progress is reported to the Air Quality Steering Group on a quarterly basis.
- The Licensing team is preparing a public consultation on a comprehensive review of the Cheshire East Taxi Licensing Policy in response to the Department of Transport's 'National Minimum Standards' document.
- Proactive inspection work across Regulatory Services is ongoing focussing on high-risk activities and in line with national requirements.
- Regulatory Services continue to respond to complaints and requests for advice from individuals and business. This includes ongoing support and guidance in relation to Covid-19 controls and outbreak situations.

Improved green spaces for all. Enabling people to exercise and socialise in our parks and open spaces.

Key actions

- Review and improve our play areas and parks
- Work with partners to provide a more welcoming environment
- Secure funding for additional recreation provision along with improvements to the current provision
- Increase the number of rewilded areas within our parks and open spaces

• Visitor numbers in our parks grew significantly during the pandemic and they remain high demonstrating their value to our diverse communities.

- Seven of our parks across the borough have retained their Green Flag Awards this year. There are 10 park improvement projects that are in progress or recently completed.
- Access issues reported on the Public Rights of Way network team resolved to maintain accessibility.
- We are in the process of providing recycling bins in key parks across the borough alongside existing litter provision.

Priority: To reduce our impact on our environment

To have minimised overall waste generated in the borough and maximised our levels of recycling.

Key actions:

- Introduction of the Municipal Waste Strategy
- To Review and Consult on Household Waste Recycling Centre Provision

- The pandemic has placed great strain on the waste collection system but despite the numerous pressures Ansa have been able to continue to empty all three bins with only short-term disruption to some collection rounds.
- A clear result of the lockdowns has been an increase in the tonnage of all waste streams. As a consequence, we have not succeeded in minimising overall waste generation in the borough, but our recycling levels remain encouragingly high.
- The waste prevention team have succeeded in retaining an enthusiastic band of 100 volunteers who are actively involved in waste prevention activities. The pandemic has limited community engagement but has not prevented the team reaching out digitally. The lifting of restrictions has enabled engagement in the market in Macclesfield, talks to secondary schools, WIs, Brownies and Cubs and Tatton Foodies Festival.

To improve biodiversity and natural habitats in the borough.

Key actions:

- Increased rewilding
- Embed bio-diversity, including off-setting, across Cheshire East Council estate
- Deliver the tree planting programme

- 15,000 trees planted in 20/21 planting season are now in establishment period. A pipeline of schemes for 21/22 planting season is being progressed for parks, open spaces, and countryside sites along with tree planting at Leighton Grange to supplement the solar PV scheme. We are working in partnership with Mersey Forest and Cheshire Wildlife Trust to improve tree planting and biodiversity on other land.
- As part of our Carbon inset and biodiversity commitment, in partnership with Cheshire Wildlife Trust, we have been working to restore peatland at Pastures Wood in Rodeheath.
- We have trialled 'no mow' areas within some parks which has had a positive public response.

Priority: A transport network that is safe and promotes active travel

Improvements in the strategic infrastructure that support sustainable and inclusive growth across the borough.

Key actions:

- Delivery of major infrastructure programmes

- The Council continues to work collaboratively with Network Rail and Government to seek necessary investments in Crewe and Macclesfield stations to support HS2. Looking at funding opportunities to accelerate elements of the HS2 programme ahead of the arrival of HS2 services. Awaiting Government and HS2 Ltd response to the 2020 HS2 Phase 2b design refinements consultation which included proposals for a Crewe North Connection
- In April the Congleton Link Road was opened. This was delivered whilst working through the period impacted by Covid and 3 separate periods of severe rainfall. The road was been delivered on budget, with only minimal delays due to the mitigation put in place to minimise the disruptive impacts.
- Poynton Relief Road is progressing well on site and remains on programme for an opening in 2022.
- Progress towards construction contract awards for both Middlewich Eastern Bypass and A500 Dualling continues.

- The North West Crewe highways package is on the point of contract award pending the final planning decision notice being issued for the associated housing development.

Safer and well-maintained roads.

Key actions:

- Deliver planned investment to maintain the highway network
- Review of appropriate strategies, such as speed management

- The Highway Service, in conjunction with the Brighter Future Together Programme’s Customer Experience Workstream has developed a “Customer Satisfaction Improvement Action Plan” Progress on this was reported to the September Highways and Transport Committee – identified “quick wins” have started to be implemented.

- The focus of the Customer Experience workstream is on the quality of responses in terms of useful information in responses to the significant number of highway queries. For example, the highway team has recently gone live with “Fix My Street” public reporting app which, as it develops, will greatly enhance the quality of service in this area and enable improved tracking of defect reports

- Current capital and revenue funding levels are not sufficient to achieve an overall improvement in highway network condition, despite additional capital funds being made available in the MTFS. Regular reporting on a series of condition indicators with appropriate targets to the Highways and Transport Committee members has commenced so that the issue can be tracked. The reporting includes all other indicators used to monitor and manage the performance of the service

- The first Annual Road Safety Report was taken to the Highways and Transport Committee in September which included details of the reducing 5-year trend in the annual number of killed and seriously injured collisions on Cheshire East’s roads.

Investment in electric vehicle infrastructure in our key service centres

- EV Charging Infrastructure Strategy was approved at Highways Committee in July 2021. Work to identify a partner to supply and install infrastructure will follow.

To increase parking provision close to local transport hubs

Key actions:

- Complete Local Transport Plan parking reviews

- Local Transport Delivery Plans are being developed for all Principal Towns and Key Service Centres. These will be reported to Highways Committee in Spring 2022.

- A borough-wide review of parking provision has been undertaken, which will be used to inform town-by-town assessments.

- Business case work for Broadway Meadow MSCP has been undertaken. In the short term, the case for investment has been impacted by a significant reduction in parking as a result of the pandemic.

To promote uptake of cycling in our local service centres

Key actions:

- Installation of cycle storage facilities in Cheshire East car parks
- Invest in new cycle routes and improve existing ones

- New cycle facilities have been trialled through deployment of Covid Emergency Active Travel funding in 8 locations. Community views have been mixed and these schemes are being evaluated and reviewed. 1 scheme in Alsager has concluded its review and was withdrawn.

- Cycling infrastructure schemes are being implemented in accordance with the Council’s adopted Local Cycling & Walking Improvement Plans. The Wilmslow Station – Royal London scheme was completed and is now open. Work continues on the Crewe – Leighton – Nantwich Greenway scheme.

- Government announced additional funding through the Active Travel Programme which is being used to develop schemes at Manchester Rd, Wilmslow and Manchester Road, Tytherington.

- Sustrans awarded funding to support improvement of the Middlewood Way scheme at Black Lane, Macclesfield.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prohibit parking in existing cycle lanes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Council has been selected by Government to bid into a Social Prescribing initiative with Public Health to promote cycling in Crewe.</li> <li>A bid to Active Travel GP social prescribing scheme is being developed to support people to take up cycling/walking. An invitation to the second stage of the application process has been received.</li> </ul>
<p>To improve the speed and efficiency of public transport and encourage more residents to make fewer car journeys</p> <p>Key actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Feasibility studies into the creation of rapid transit routes connecting existing infrastructure with key employment site</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The pandemic has significantly reduced the use of local public transport and this has affected the ability to develop plans for rapid transit initiatives in the short term.</li> <li>Work programmes have been incorporated in the Councils preparation of its first Bus Improvement Plan, which is a requirement of the new National Bus Strategy.</li> <li>Our first Bus Improvement Plan has been produced in consultation with operators and stakeholders.</li> <li>The BSIP will be submitted to Department for Transport on 31 October 2021.</li> </ul>
<p>To reduce areas of the borough not served by public transport</p> <p>Key actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Submit proposals to Rural Transport Fund</li> <li>Develop quality bus partnerships with operators and town councils</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The new Rural Mobility Fund service “Go Too” commenced operations on 4 October, serving the rural areas to the south and west of Nantwich.</li> <li>Our first Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) has been produced and will address parts of the borough for future investment in bus services and supporting infrastructure. The BSIP will be submitted to Department for Transport on 31 October 2021 and will be kept under review as bus usage recovers from the pandemic and new service opportunities arise.</li> </ul>
<p>To encourage an increase in the use of public transport (especially buses)</p> <p>Key actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Operators work together to share real time information</li> <li>Bus routes planned to provide multi-modal connectivity</li> <li>Cheshire East bus app developed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work has been incorporated in the Council’s preparation of its first BSIP, which is a requirement of the new National Bus Strategy.</li> <li>Our BSIP seek to address both customer satisfaction through involvement of passenger representative bodies and better integration with other modes of public transport.</li> </ul>
<p>More residents to use walking routes</p> <p>Key actions:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Walking infrastructure schemes are being implemented in accordance with the Council’s adopted Local Cycling &amp; Walking Improvement Plans. The Wilmslow Station – Royal London scheme was completed and is now open. Work continues on the Crewe – Leighton – Nantwich Greenway scheme.</li> </ul>

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote existing routes and nature trails</li> <li>• Create new walking routes between service centres</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council has engaged and promoted Bike and Walk to School Days, through liaison with local schools.</li> <li>• Promotion of existing routes and trails continuing along with messages to encourage responsible access to the countryside.</li> </ul> |
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Priority: Thriving urban and rural economies with opportunities for all

Delivery of a strategic regeneration plan for Crewe

Key actions:

- Successful delivery of the regeneration programmes

- The Economic Development Service's Development and Regeneration team has successfully obtained two significant awards of Funding from Government: Future High Streets Fund (£14.1m), and Town Investment Fund (£22.9m) to revitalise the Town Centre.
- Ten projects under the High Street fund have already been mobilised while the ten projects under the Towns fund have addressed funding conditions to advance to the next key gateway in October. An Accelerated Towns Fund utilising £0.75m Govt grant has been used to develop designs and costings for Ly<sup>2</sup> project and a planning application has been submitted.
- The Royal Arcade Development, with a new Bus Station and Multi Storey Car Park has developed RIBA Stage 4 designs and costings and secured planning consent.
- The newly refurbished Crewe Market Hall successfully opened in May and the data shows that it is becoming an anchor retail, leisure and entertainment venue in the town. This is supported by footfall data which shows that between April 2021 and August 2021 there were 17% more people in Crewe, to a figure of 983,108.
- Further, the Business Support team have appointed Buttress Ltd to undertake a feasibility study and options appraisal for the Tech & Digital Innovation Hub in Crewe; and they have drafted the service specification to appoint consultants to develop a new Inward Investment Strategy that will develop the targeting and positioning proposition for key investment sites and schemes in Crewe. Account management support was given to Likewize (formerly Brightstar) who are seeking to invest in Crewe.
- Funding has also been secured by the Projects team for a Crewe heat network, subject to delivery timescales, and procurement is under way.

Delivery of a strategic regeneration plan for Macclesfield

Key actions:

- Successful delivery of the regeneration programme for Macclesfield

- Data shows that between April 2021 and August 2021 foot fall in Macclesfield increased 8% to 1,429,170 people.
- A Levelling Up Fund bid was submitted by the Economic Development service in June 2021 for £14.5m government funding to redevelop the market hall, upgrade the public realm to enable and encourage outdoor hospitality and to improve the Old Sunday School a grade 2\* listed building to enable greater and community and commercial use. The bid has been unsuccessful under this first round. Officers are liaising with government officials to secure feedback to help inform future bids.
- The £1.6m public realm investment on Castle St has started and is expected to be completed in early October 2021, stimulating private investment in vacant units with new commercial and residential floorspace.
- An expert team have been appointed to develop an Options and Feasibility Study for the Station Gateway/campus and Churchill Way Corridor. A baseline report has been produced, with final report due to be completed by January 2022.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A brief has also been drafted for the Town Hall Study and shared with external stakeholders, whilst the Market Hall Options and Feasibility Study is ready for procurement of an external team to deliver.</li> <li>• The service through its Business Support team is also in the process of appointing consultants to develop a new Inward Investment Strategy that will develop the targeting and positioning proposition for key investment sites and schemes in Macclesfield. The team provided account management to SebSpace (Tech Co-Working Hub) looking to invest in Macclesfield.</li> </ul>																		
<p>Successful town centres in our other key towns</p> <p>Key actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with our partners and key stakeholders to understand what is important to our towns</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The council's Economic Development service continues its targeted recovery support. Town Vitality Plans, baseline reports produced for all nine key service centres, bringing together for each centre an analysis of the town centres as they currently exist. Draft tool kit reports have also been produced, and shared with Town Councils and other stakeholders, showing examples of initiative supporting town centres aligned to Institute of Place Management top 25 factors. Next steps, stakeholder engagement meetings are scheduled October - December 2021, to identify key projects.</li> <li>• It has also used the Welcome back to the high street fund, to launch the Say Hi to the High St campaign with 11 mini videos on social media, adverts in local press and mailshot to 187,000 residential and business premises to advertise safe reopening of local high streets. This and other activities have allowed us to successfully submit a first claim to the Welcome Back Fund for £230,000.</li> <li>• The service aims to increase footfall with this package of support as in line with national trends, data shows that between April 2021 and August 2021 all but one of our key service towns saw a decrease in footfall as people favoured trips to their immediate and smaller centres: <table data-bbox="627 798 1153 1085"> <tr> <td>Alsager</td> <td>decrease of 8.9% to 330,540</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Congleton</td> <td>decrease of 7.4% to 855,291</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Handforth</td> <td>decrease of 6.1% to 362,882</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Knutsford</td> <td>decrease of 2.4% to 792,021</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Middlewich</td> <td>decrease of 11.2% to 323,273</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Nantwich</td> <td>increase of 5.6% to 486,840</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Poynton</td> <td>decrease of 11.5% to 430,176</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sandbach</td> <td>decrease of 8.2% to 602,497</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Wilmslow</td> <td>decrease of 8.4% to 861,905</td> </tr> </table> </li> <li>• Carpark patronage data shows hopeful signs that footfall is increasing again from late summer.</li> <li>• In terms of facilitating sustainable science parks, the Economic Development service, through position on the Enterprise Zone Board, approved investment of £7million in Glasshouse at Alderley Park and £4million in Blocks 22-24. It offered account management to this and other businesses looking to invest.</li> </ul>	Alsager	decrease of 8.9% to 330,540	Congleton	decrease of 7.4% to 855,291	Handforth	decrease of 6.1% to 362,882	Knutsford	decrease of 2.4% to 792,021	Middlewich	decrease of 11.2% to 323,273	Nantwich	increase of 5.6% to 486,840	Poynton	decrease of 11.5% to 430,176	Sandbach	decrease of 8.2% to 602,497	Wilmslow	decrease of 8.4% to 861,905
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<p>Maximise the commercial and regeneration opportunities associated with HS2 for the whole borough</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council is represented by the Economic Development service's Business Support team on the Local Enterprise Partnership Growth Corridors Board, providing oversight of the development of the 'High Speed Corridor' and associated programmes.</li> </ul>																		

## Thriving and active rural communities

### Key actions:

- Deliver the Rural action plan

- The Economic Development service's work continues the delivery of three strategic housing schemes aimed not only at shaping new neighbourhoods but also delivering new (including affordable) homes and capital receipts to the council for future investment.
- At Leighton Green, NW Crewe package negotiations are ongoing with other landowners to crystallize s106 and deliver granting of planning permission. This will unlock land parcels and delivery strategy to be agreed.
- At Handforth Garden Village, the hybrid planning application has been progressed to its final form, targeted at Committee Date in late 2021. The vegetation clearance procurement is underway and S106/Roof tax mechanism are being refined. Dialogue with stakeholders and other landowners continues.
- Still at the Garden Village, the service's Business Support team has provided account management to Manchester Medical Campus seeking to invest there whilst a business case has been drawn up, by the Projects team, for the development of a sustainable heat network at the scheme, although delivery is subject to funding.
- The third strategic housing scheme, the South Macclesfield Development Area, has completed its gateway review to progress into Pre-Construction with the Reserved Matters application and land assembly workstreams progressing.
- The Digital Cheshire programme, which aims to improve broadband connectivity, is also in its delivery phase by the Economic Development service. On the digital infrastructure element, Contractor Airband has commenced mobilization centred on the Malpas area but with coverage of nearby Cheshire East premises included.
- Digital Cheshire has delivered 8 virtual masterclasses on subject areas ranging from driving digital sales, content marketing and implementation of digital operations. Following positive feedback from beneficiaries a further 15 masterclasses have been confirmed and planned until the end of 2021 covering aspects such as cyber security, SEO, online paid marketing, Google analytics and digital future proofing.
- There is ongoing exploration of new Digital initiatives and potential projects, regular discussions are held with Connecting Cheshire partners to get agreement on future project pipeline; and the project team has provided policy sections for inclusion in the council's Digital Strategy to ensure alignment.
- The service's Business and Support team has been at the forefront of the borough's Covid-19 pandemic business recovery response, not just in rural communities but across Cheshire East's town network too.
- It has set up and delivered: -
  - the Local Discretionary Grant Scheme – assessing 751 applications and paid out £4.37million in grant to 540 businesses; and
  - the Additional Restrictions Grant Scheme – Assessed 2,133 applications and paid out £11.1million in grants to 1,102 businesses.

### Delivery is still ongoing for: -

- the Extended Restrictions Grant Scheme – to date paid out £322k to 143 businesses.
- the Business Interruption Fund – to date approved 73 applications: and

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- the newly launched Recovery & Growth Grant.
- It has also drafted the service specification for a provider to deliver a 'Recovery & Growth Programme' that will include provision of an online hub of information and 1-2-1 support to help businesses develop a recovery plan.
- The team also promote key science and technology sectors/clusters, located across the borough, by facilitating investment in R&D and innovation infrastructure. It continues attendance at the Investment Advisory Panel to provide oversight of the GM&Cheshire Life Science Investment Fund. The fund has invested £23.4m into 42 companies in the portfolio (£12m in Alderley Park based companies, £11.4m in GM and C&W companies).
- Also, at Alderley Park, the team has supported a review and ratification of Business Rate Discount applications for businesses taking additional space and supported the decarbonisation of its campus delivered through a £12m investment in an optimized heat network.
- The Business support team have also secured £300k of InnovateUK grant funding to test different delivery methods to help businesses adopt digital practices. They have also set up the ADAPT 'knowledge portal' and provided free access to 200 x SMEs. 100 of these were invited to attend online webinars delivered in partnership with Barclays Bank. 76 businesses either attended a live webinar or watched a recorded webinar.
- Other activity includes a key role in the Partner in The Pledge partnership - funded by ESF - to facilitate relationships between education and business, and the team also employs an Enterprise Coordinator to recruit a network of Enterprise Advisors from businesses to help schools to improve their careers and enterprise activities.
- In terms of their activity targeted specifically at rural businesses, it has progressed development of the Rural Action Plan, and continues to attend the Rural Strategy Board. It has provided advice to over 25 rural businesses to access funding for growth.
- The Rural action Plan was considered by Economy and Growth Committee in September 2021 and agreed a work programme to review and update the Plan in 2022.

Priority: To be carbon neutral by 2025

To have delivered the milestones in becoming a carbon neutral council

Key actions:

- Deliver actions in the Cheshire East Council Carbon Action Plan

- Work to reduce the Council's own carbon footprint:
  - A program of works is under way to council buildings to install LED lighting, Solar PV, air source heat pumps and improvements to building fabric. We are also progressing a heat network connecting to Council buildings in Crewe. These works will reduce emissions from heating and powering our buildings.
  - Reducing emissions for the Council's vehicles through the completion of a fleet assessment and charging requirements and through the introduction of electric vehicles and two hydrogen dual fuel refuse collection vehicles.
  - By working to embed the carbon commitment across the Council through Carbon Literacy Training, embedding carbon assessments into the council's business planning process and developing team resources as part of staff wide development plans.
- Work to inset the Council's Carbon footprint:

- Through sustainable electricity generation progressing the Council's first solar farm and assessing the potential for future generation opportunities. We have also converted to sustainable electricity powering our streetlights and buildings.
- As part of our natural carbon inset 15,000 trees planted in 20/21 planting season are now in establishment period. A pipeline of schemes for 21/22 planting season is being progressed working in partnership with Mersey Forest and Cheshire Wildlife Trust to improve tree planting and biodiversity on other land.
- Work to promote carbon neutrality and carbon zero development across Cheshire East: -
  - We are working together with key partners and sectors across Cheshire East including Industry and business, education NHS, voluntary sector and Town and Parish Councils to reduce carbon. We have provided resources and media including a Town and Parish Council tool kit. Introduced guidelines and training in procurement and a crowd fund focused on community and environmental projects. We have also recently undertaken a schools' competition to raise carbon awareness and name our new Hydrogen refuse vehicles.
  - We have Green Homes Grants programmes in progress; Sustainable Warmth bid submitted for future resources; developing bid with Registered Providers for Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund; planning procurement for household engagement and housing retrofits.
- We are also embedding carbon reduction measures in a number of our Council led schemes including Handforth Garden Village and its proposed heat network. At the Royal Arcade Crewe, proposals for a scheme to incorporate increased electric vehicle charging capacity and photovoltaic cells in the bus station and multi-storey car park development have been adopted.

## Measures of progress

Measure	Previous Q	Latest Q	Target	Comment
Residual household waste collected per household (kgs)	239kg	250kg	<510kg	The pandemic has placed great strain on the waste collection system but despite the numerous pressures Ansa have been able to continue to empty all three bins with only short-term disruption to some collection rounds. Many local authorities across the country have ceased one of their collections to cope with the pressure.
Increase the % of all waste collected sent for recycling, reuse and (to achieve 65% by 2035)	60.5%	59%	>50%	A clear result of the lockdowns has been to increase the tonnage of all waste streams – residents are at home and therefore carrying out more gardening/DIY, eating at home and not disposing of items at their workplace. Consequently, we have not succeeded in minimising overall waste generation in the borough, but our recycling levels remain encouragingly high.
Maintain volunteers in waste awareness	Approx. 100	Approx. 100	25	The waste prevention team have succeeded in retaining an enthusiastic band of volunteers who are actively involved in waste prevention activities. The pandemic has limited community engagement, but this has not prevented the team reaching out digitally. The lifting of restrictions has, amongst other things, enabled engagement at a stall in the indoor market in Macclesfield, talks to secondary schools, WIs, Brownies and Cubs and Tatton Foodies Festival.
Number of major applications registered	64	61	N/A	The Planning Service has faced significant challenges over the first half of the year initially caused by ongoing Covid impacts but now coupled with significant increases in the volume of applications. Total applications have increased by over 15% for the period Jan-Sep 2021 compared to the previous year (5085 applications over 4300), with increases in submissions of smaller householder and prior approval applications.
Number of non-major applications registered	1,539	1,869	N/A	To help address the backlog of applications an external provider, Capita, have been procured to provide additional capacity of 4-5 officers to assist with the backlog of householder applications. The contract covers up to 1,000 applications over a 9-12 month period.
Major applications determined within 13 weeks or agreed time	96%	95%	>90%	
Non-major applications determined within 8 weeks or agreed time	88%	83%	>90%	
% Planning appeals allowed	42%	36%	30%	Enforcement complaints have also increased (592 in comparison with 548 for Apr-Sep last year) with more people 'working at home' and having greater

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				awareness of the environment around them. However, there have been some significant successes with 5 Enforcement Notices, 5 Planning Contravention Notices and 1 Breach of Condition during the reporting period. Recruitment continues to fill a current vacancy with the enforcement team.
Supply of deliverable housing land	N/A	6.4 years	5 years	The five-year housing supply figure remains at a robust level of 6.4 years with 2,376 net completions during the 20/21 monitoring year.
Number of visitors to libraries	160,347	272,477	800,000	The Library service is still dealing with capacity issues due to COVID-19, which despite the best endeavours of the staff have resulted in a reduced offer at some of the libraries at times. Despite this, visitor numbers and participation in activities is getting back to close to pre-pandemic levels. The majority of customers have been reassured around the safety of our library premises.
Number of visitors to leisure centres	169,249	910,111	2,000,000	All Leisure Centres re-opened in July following the easing of Covid-19 restrictions, and Everybody Sport and Recreation are reporting an encouraging position in terms of recovery of memberships and participation. They have seen more 'pay as you go' swimming and an earlier than anticipated return of school swimming as well as an increase in outdoor bookings.
Home adaptations for older and/or disabled residents	214	128	500	The ability to enter homes and carry out improvements and adaptations was also hindered by the pandemic, however Housing Standards and Adaptations staff found new innovative ways in which to engage with residents and deal with emergency issues, ensuring we could continue to enforce against poor housing conditions.
Increase the supply of new affordable housing	207	303	355	The ability to enter homes and carry out improvements and adaptations was also hindered by the pandemic, however Housing Standards and Adaptations staff found new innovative ways in which to engage with residents and deal with emergency issues, ensuring we could continue to enforce against poor housing conditions.
Maintain the number of long-term empty homes in Cheshire East to less than 1%	1.10%	End of year target	<1%	N/A
Increase number of preventative and relief actions taken in order to reduce levels of homelessness in Cheshire East	492	499	1000	During the pandemic Housing staff continued to work hard to provide effective, customer focused frontline services to ensure that our residents were prevented from becoming homeless or were relieved from homelessness. We responded quickly to the call from Government for "Everyone in" and worked hard to provide those in temporary accommodation with a long-term housing solution
Households helped to achieve affordable warmth	30	188	500	Improving the energy efficiency of our homes and reducing fuel poverty is a priority within the Housing Strategy and we have successfully applied for and

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				been awarded Green Homes Grant funding to improve the energy efficiency of some of our older housing stock. A further bid has been submitted for Sustainable Warmth funding to enable us to improve more homes and we are working with our Registered Housing Providers to submit a bid for the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund.
Capital receipts across assets and farms disposals	£1,117,000	£870,000	£1,000,000	The impact of the pandemic and at the time of reporting to a lesser extent, EU Transition, has generated significant uncertainties in the property market and supply chains. In addition to this the Council as a public body has also had to respond to the pandemic, and the Council's property has been a significant factor in its response. The Estates team has been able to progress its work despite these uncertainties and additional activities.
Income across non-operational assets and farms estates (98% of rent demanded)	£2,610,000		£1,749,000	
Total carbon emissions from the Council's operations	Met carbon commitment	*	In line with carbon commitment	In addition to the ongoing £3.5m land and property maintenance programme and line with the Council's Carbon Neutral by 2025 policy, the Estates Team has also progressed works on decarbonising its operational estate in year, utilising grant funding, including an LED lighting replacement programme, additional solar PV and air source heat pumps into its estate, both in offices and front-line buildings.
Total cost of corporate buildings	(Target a 5% reduction)	*	£1,581,000	The Council's operational estate has provided a high assurance covid safe environment for its employees and its residents. This has enabled users of the Council's buildings to be able to continue using them with confidence. The team has also ensured that routine assurance and testing is progressed, in line with the expected target outcomes. Worthy of particular note are the Soft FM team, who have supported other officers to work from the Council's buildings (both front line and offices) – keeping them safe as well as supporting them with print and post services whilst working remotely.
Ease of use of Public Rights of Way network (due to effect of Covid, a proxy source of data has been used which calls upon a greater percentage survey than the previous method although not random in geography across the borough)	93%	N/A	80%	The Public Rights of Way (PROW) team has once again delivered a very high standard of service to the public despite the high demands and some capacity issues. The Public Rights of Way Sub-Committee has oversight of this statutory service and the annual report is available online having been presented its meeting on 13th September 2021.
Audience figures for Lyceum Theatre	0	4,390	66,700	The Lyceum Theatre, which is owned by the Council but managed by HQ Theatres, reopened in September following a 17-month closure due to COVID restrictions. Cheshire Rural Touring Arts (CRTA) delivered a Cultural Recovery

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				programme with arts Council funding, including outdoor performances and audience engagement for home-based activities. The Autumn season is now being delivered as normal indoor in rural locations.
Tatton Park visitor numbers	240,000	380,000	750,000	Despite the impacts on visits, Tatton Park was identified as the 5th most visited paid-for attraction in England in 2020. Visitor numbers to the Park, Garden and Farm attractions have buoyant although some areas of activity continued to be impacted by Government restrictions until the end of June 2021.
Tatton Park net budget	£683,374	£743,914	£793,904	
% Carbon emissions being offset by the Council	28%	N/A	38%	
Connecting Cheshire - homes receiving high speed Wi-Fi (speeds higher than 24mbps) – cumulative	13,046		13,734	
Delivery of capital programmes and projects on time and to budget	New Measure		100%	
Town Centre Vacancy Rates	Various across town centres as reported in CEC annual Monitoring Report		Below national and NW average for year	
Highways Safety Inspections	N/A	20/21 Cumulative result 5,506 km	11,213km	In September 100% of the 836.81 km of network were inspected. Year to date, a total of 5,506.72km of the network has been inspected, 49.16% of the annual target. This measure is currently on track. It must be noted that the end of years figures for the overall length of network to be inspected may fluctuate this year. This is due to the transition of the current inspection frequencies to be in line with the new risk-based approach code of practice for safety inspections.
Highways Category 'Emergency' Defects	N/A	20/21 Cumulative 96%	100%	In September there were 102 non-traffic-signal-emergency calls, of which 96 were attended and made safe within the timeframe. So far within year, a total of 659 non-traffic-signal emergencies were reported of which 633 (96.1%) were attended and made safe within timeframe.
Highways Number of annual sample inspections of utility works successfully completed	N/A	20/21 Cumulative 1,390	2236	In year a total of 1,390 utility work inspections have been completed. By the end of September, 1,201 inspections were due to be completed so this activity is ahead of schedule (57.9% complete).

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