

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **Cheshire East Health and Wellbeing Board**
held on Tuesday, 4th November, 2025 in the Committee Suite 1, 2 and 3,
Delamere House, Delamere Street, Crewe, CW1 2JZ

PRESENT

BOARD MEMBERS

Louise Barry (Vice Chair), Healthwatch Cheshire
Helen Charlesworth-May, Executive Director Adults, Health and
Integration
Councillor Stewart Gardiner, Cheshire East Council
Phil Cresswell, Executive Director of Place, Cheshire East Council
Councillor Laura Crane, Chair of Children and Families Committee, Cheshire
East Council
Councillor Jill Rhodes, Chair of Adults and Health Committee, Cheshire
East Council
Isla Wilson, Chair, Cheshire East Health and Care Place Partnership (via
teams)
Kate Little, CEO CVS Cheshire East
Richard Burgess, Interim Director NHS Cheshire and Merseyside
Integrated Care Board Cheshire East
Dawn Godfrey, Executive Director of Children's Services, Cheshire East
Council
Professor Rod Thomson, Interim Director of Public Health

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

Guy Kilminster, Corporate Manager, Health Improvement
Joel Hammond-Gant (Via Microsoft Teams), Health Protection Officer
Alex Jones, BCF Programme Lead
Elizabeth Hopper (Via Microsoft Teams), Head of Service (Integrated Urgent
Care)
Frances Handley, Democratic Services Officer

19 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from;

Councillor Sam Corcoran
Dr Paul Bishop
Superintendent Andrew Blizzard

20 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

21 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 16 September 2025 were approved as a correct record.

22 PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME/OPEN SESSION

There were no public speakers.

23 WINTER PLAN 2025-2026

The board received an update highlighting the pressures on the health and care system, financial constraints, and operational escalation measures. It was noted that there was no new winter funding and thus the Winter Plan was based on reliance on existing capacity. Escalation protocols had been strengthened with daily system calls and live communication channels.

The board were updated that there had been improvements in ambulance response times, though challenges remain with A&E flow and length of stay in hospitals. Mental health flow improvements were noted (81% reduction in delayed bed days). Primary care extended hours and electronic triage initiatives were highlighted.

The plan had been endorsed by provider partners and subject to the NHS England assurance processes.

The board queried how the winter significantly impacts mental health. It was noted that there appears to be an increase in depression and stress related conditions in the darker months. However it was noted that with regard to A&E attendances it may be that mental health was not the primary reason for the patient being in A&E but that it was recorded in that way. There was a review ongoing as to how recording was undertaken, but the main focus was ensuring the correct care for the patient.

The Interim Director NHS Cheshire and Merseyside Integrated Care Board Cheshire East agreed to Feedback to the GP Confederation regarding inappropriate advice to attend A&E for mental health crises and to ensure GP messaging aligns with crisis line and alternative support services.

The Health and Care Partnership are to review IT system issues impacting patient access and report back to the board.

RESOLVED:

That the Cheshire East Winter Plan 2025/26 be endorsed.

24 COMMERCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH UPDATE

The board noted a progress report on the Commercial Determinants of Health Update previously presented to the board in January. Progress includes developing a Cheshire East position statement, exploring Health in All Policies, and enhancing planning/licensing controls to reduce health-harming industries.

The Executive Director of Place Cheshire East Council agreed to review whether there are any planning strategies or planning enforcement options for where unhealthy food advertising or fast food outlets can be operated, in relation to schools and other vulnerable groups and to confirm if there are any regulations or could be any regulations. It was suggested that planning and licencing should operate together where appropriate.

Officers committed to circulate to the board clarification on the current hot food takeaway policy in Crewe.

The board suggested that an update on the Health in All Policy work is brought to a future meeting when appropriate as the work progresses.

RESOLVED:

That the board note the update.

25 BETTER CARE FUND 2025-2026 QUARTER ONE REPORT

The board received a report on the Better Care Fund 2025-2026 Quarter One performance, noting that metrics were on track and the financial overview as expected. Risks include uncertainty around funding for 2026/27 and reliance on Better Care Funding for staffing.

The board queried the implications of funding on the authority for staffing and our ability to provide the services.

The Executive Director of Adult Health and Integration advised that they are continuing to monitor national announcements on Better Care Funding and will report implications for staffing and service delivery.

RESOLVED:

That the board note the update.

26 TOR REVIEW

The board received an update that the Terms of Reference Review be postponed due to ongoing uncertainties around NHS structure and forthcoming guidance and noting that Cheshire East Council had voted to move to a Cabinet System in 2026 which may also have an impact. It was suggested that the Terms of Reference be reviewed in 2026.

RESOLVED:

That the board note the update.

The meeting commenced at 2.00pm and concluded at 3.11pm

Louise Barry, CEO Healthwatch