Cabinet

Agenda

Date:	**Monday, 18th October, 2010**
Time:	**2.00 pm**
Venue:	**Committee Suite 1,2 & 3, Westfields, Middlewich Road, Sandbach CW11 1HZ**

The agenda is divided into 2 parts. Part 1 is taken in the presence of the public and press. Part 2 items will be considered in the absence of the public and press for the reasons indicated on the agenda and at the foot of each report.

PART 1 – MATTERS TO BE CONSIDERED WITH THE PUBLIC AND PRESS PRESENT

1.   **Apologies for Absence**

2.   **Declarations of Interest**

        To provide an opportunity for Members and Officers to declare any personal and/or prejudicial interests in any item on the agenda.

3.   **Public Speaking Time/Open Session**

        In accordance with Procedure Rules Nos.11 and 35 a total period of 10 minutes is allocated for members of the public to address the Committee on any matter relevant to the work of the Committee.

        Individual members of the public may speak for up to 5 minutes but the Chairman will decide how the period of time allocated for public speaking will be apportioned where there are a number of speakers.

        In order for an informed answer to be given, where a member of the public wishes to ask a question of a Cabinet Member three clear working days notice must be given and the question must be submitted in writing. It is not required to give notice of the intention to make use of public speaking provision but, as a matter of courtesy, a period of 24 hours notice is encouraged.

4.   **Minutes of Previous meeting**

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 14 October 2010.

The minutes will be circulated as soon as they are available.

5.   **Key Decision CE10/11-51 Corporate Asset Management Plan 2011/2014** (Pages 1 - 50)

To approve the Corporate Asset Management Plan for 2011/2014.

6.   **Key Decision CE10/11-56 Single Equality and Inclusion Scheme and Action Plan 2010/2013** (Pages 51 - 106)

To approve the Single Equality and Inclusion Scheme and Action Plan 2010/2013, and the Equality Impact Assessment Guidance.

7.   **Annual Unannounced Inspection of Children's Services** (Pages 107 - 120)

To note the report, and to approve the receipt of regular progress updates.

8.   **Draft Local Transport Plan Strategy** (Pages 121 - 284)

To note the thematic priorities for the Local Transport Plan Strategy, and to approve the Draft Strategy for consultation.

9.   **Future Housing Provision in Cheshire East** (Pages 285 - 300)

To consider the requirement for the Council to maintain a five year supply of deliverable housing land, the appropriate figure for the housing requirement, and to approve the Interim Planning Policy on the Release of Housing Land for consultation.

10.   **Local Development Framework Core Strategy Issues and Options** (Pages 301 - 390)

To approve the Issues and Options report for the Local Development Framework Core Strategy for consultation purposes.

The minute from the Strategic Planning Board meeting held on 6 October 2010 will be circulated as soon as it is available.

11.   **Rationalisation and Temporary Closure of Buildings in Adult Services** (Pages 391 - 404)

To consider the report of the Director of Adults, Community, Health and Wellbeing on the closure of some buildings in Adult Services.

12.   **Exclusion of the Press and Public**

The reports relating to the remaining items on the agenda have been withheld from public circulation and deposit pursuant to Section 100(B)(2) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that the matters may be determined with the press and public excluded.

The Committee may decide that the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items pursuant to Section 100(A)4 of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1 and 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 and public interest would not be served in publishing the information.

PART 2 – MATTERS TO BE CONSIDERED WITHOUT THE PUBLIC AND PRESS PRESENT

13.   **Managing Workforce Change** (Pages 405 - 410)

To consider the report of the Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development.

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Agenda Item 5

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

REPORT TO: CABINET

Date of Meeting: 18th October 2010
Report of: Borough Treasurer & Head of Assets and Head of Policy & Performance
Subject/Title: Corporate Asset Management Plan 2011/2014
Portfolio Holder: Councillor Mason

1 Report Summary

1.1 The Corporate Asset Management Plan sets out Cheshire East's approach to capital investment and disposals and how it makes decisions in respect of all types of capital assets. This document links closely with the Council's Capital Strategy (approved 20th September) and shows how the Council is prioritising, targeting and measuring the performance of its limited capital resources so that it maximises the value of its property assets to support the achievement of its key cross-cutting activities, initiatives and local and national priorities.

2 Decision Requested

2.1 To approve the Corporate Asset Management Plan for 2011/2014.

3 Reasons for Recommendations

3.1 The Council is required to produce a Corporate Asset Management Plan and a Capital Strategy.

4 Wards Affected

4.1 Not applicable

5 Local Ward Members

5.1 Not applicable

6 Policy Implications – Climate Change
                                    – Health

6.1 The report contains policy proposals which will impact on service delivery.

7 Financial Implications (Authorised by the Borough Treasurer)

8.1 The report includes details of policy proposals which will affect service budgets from 2011/2012 onwards.

8   **Legal Implications (Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)**

8.1   There are no specific legal implications associated with the general principles of the report. Individual transactions may raise issues however.

9   **Risk Management**

9.1   Failure to adopt and maintain sound arrangements for the management of the   Council's property assets could lead to poor decision making and financial loss to the Council.

10   **Background and Options**

10.1   The Council owns a substantial portfolio of over 600 major property assets, with a combined asset value of £480m, which will assist in the delivery of a wide range of services to the people of Cheshire East. The Corporate Asset Management Plan links to key corporate documents, in particular the Corporate Plan, Sustainable Community Strategy, Economic Development Strategy, Local Transport Plant, ICT Strategy and the Capital Strategy.

10.2   The Corporate Asset Management Plan is intended to ensure that the property portfolio contributes to the achievement of the authority's key objectives and priorities that are detailed in their community plans and strategies. It sets out how the Council looks to optimise the use of assets to support the delivery of front line services and the regeneration of neighbourhoods.

11   **Access to Information**

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer:

Name: Andrew Voss
Designation: Head of Property Strategy
Tel No: 01270 686112
Email: Andrew.voss@cheshireeast.gov.uk

Corporate Asset Management Plan

2011 - 2014

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Foreword

I am very pleased to introduce Cheshire East Council's Corporate Asset Management Plan for 2011-14. The Plan sets out the Council's approach to the management of its land and buildings for the next three years.

Property will continue to be high on the Council's agenda .We know that the appropriate use of assets in the right location makes all the difference to service delivery. As a relatively new Authority, we aspire towards top performance, looking for every opportunity to make the best use of resources, including property, to support the delivery of our ambitions and priorities.

Our Corporate Asset Management Plan sets out how we look to optimise the use of land and property assets to support the delivery of front line services, the regeneration of our neighbourhoods and to meet our corporate objectives.

To achieve these aims and objectives, we recognise that the effective and efficient utilisation of capital and property resources will be key. This document demonstrates the Council's progressive efforts to meet the challenge of providing facilities that will contribute to the delivery of good quality services to the community and other stakeholders in the Cheshire East region.

Asset management is a major service stream for us in the drive for improvement, efficiency and business transformation.

The current economic downturn means that more than ever it is essential for us to work closely with our partnership organisations to develop modern, joined-up service delivery opportunities that will improve services and customer experience.

The potential devolution of services to Town and Parish Councils, the transfer of Schools to Academy status and the cross service Asset Challenge transformation programme will all lead to a smaller more efficient future estate for Cheshire East.

The development of this Plan will enable the Council to continue to develop towards improvement in the strategic management and use of its assets, ensuring that the front line Council and other related public services are provided and supported via accessible and well maintained facilities.

This Plan has a strong link to the Capital Strategy. The two documents provide the structure for the use of available financial resources to deliver practically wider Council objectives and individual Service's property aspirations. The Plan sets out some of the high level principles guiding future asset policy.

This framework will assist the Council in pursuing it aims for continuous improvement through sound asset management.

Councillor Peter Mason
Procurement, Assets and Shared Services Portfolio

Executive Summary

The merging of county and district Councils has brought together a large property portfolio. As a new unitary Council, land and property is its largest physical resource with a consequent requirement to provide effective and efficient management of the estate. This document provides the basis for how this will be delivered.
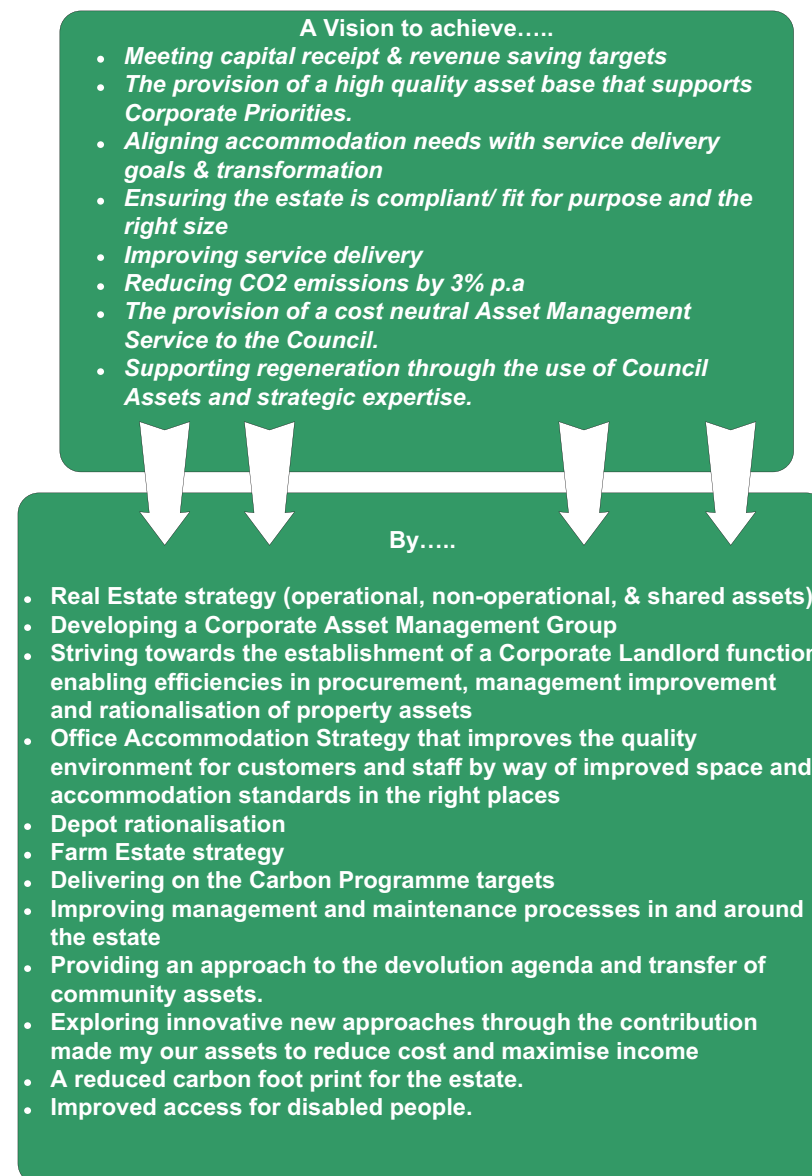
This document is closely aligned to the Capital Strategy and provides links to ICT, Highways, Economic Strategy and the Local Development Framework. It also provides an iterative framework for the strategies being delivered by the Asset Management Service.

The Asset Management Service itself provides expert and impartial advice to the Council. This is done in line with the corporate values of Cheshire East Council, "the Council" and provides the basis of a blueprint for the future of the Councils assets:

A number of challenges need to be met by the Asset Management Service and the Council's Asset Base. To deliver this a series of Asset Strategies have been developed.

The Asset Challenge Process provides a review of the current property portfolio, developing a response to the need to provide quality services and value for money.

Both the local and national environments will continue to pose challenges in the short, medium and long term, however there will also be opportunities for council's who develop a commercially viable outlook. The Asset Management Service has established a structure to address these 'unknowns' and manage them efficiently.

A Vision to achieve…..
- *Meeting capital receipt & revenue saving targets*
- *The provision of a high quality asset base that supports Corporate Priorities.*
- *Aligning accommodation needs with service delivery goals & transformation*
- *Ensuring the estate is compliant/ fit for purpose and the right size*
- *Improving service delivery*
- *Reducing CO2 emissions by 3% p.a*
- *The provision of a cost neutral Asset Management Service to the Council.*
- *Supporting regeneration through the use of Council Assets and strategic expertise.*

By…..

- **Real Estate strategy (operational, non-operational, & shared assets)**
- **Developing a Corporate Asset Management Group**
- **Striving towards the establishment of a Corporate Landlord function enabling efficiencies in procurement, management improvement and rationalisation of property assets**
- **Office Accommodation Strategy that improves the quality environment for customers and staff by way of improved space and accommodation standards in the right places**
- **Depot rationalisation**
- **Farm Estate strategy**
- **Delivering on the Carbon Programme targets**
- **Improving management and maintenance processes in and around the estate**
- **Providing an approach to the devolution agenda and transfer of community assets.**
- **Exploring innovative new approaches through the contribution made my our assets to reduce cost and maximise income**
- **A reduced carbon foot print for the estate.**
- **Improved access for disabled people.**

Document Purpose

Property is the largest physical resource and is fundamental in providing support to all services.

The effective and efficient use of property, land and buildings to meet the changing service delivery requirements is a constant challenge.

The core principles of Corporate Asset Management are an integral element in that process, delivering high quality service planning to achieve an optimal mix of land and buildings in support of service delivery.

The provision, management and maintenance of property assets is a corporate function although consultation with senior stakeholders and operational services who occupy the estate is a key factor in ascertaining its effective use.

This document provides clarity and direction as to how the Council is directly managing those assets to meet both local priorities and national initiatives through a raft of strategies.

Document Methodology

The document methodology is set out in the following diagram. The process, mirrored in this document, provides the framework for demonstrating how Asset Management is both supporting Corporate and Service Priorities, and also improving the strategic management of assets within Cheshire East Council.

1	• Corporate and Asset Management Key Priorities	Cheshire East Context
2	• Key Challenges and Vision for Strategic Asset Management	The Management Challenge
3	• Key Challenges for Operational and Non Operational Asset	The Asset Base
4	• Key Challenges and Requirements for Service Delivery	Service Priorities
5	• How Asset Management are meeting the Challenge	Asset Strategies
6	• Implementation Planning	Implementation Planning and Responsibilities

Cheshire East Context

Background- Cheshire East

Cheshire East Council contains a population of around 359,000, located within an area of 116,600 hectares, and is the third largest unitary authority in the North West. Local government review (LGR) led to the amalgamation of three district councils and half of the County Council to form a single new unitary authority.

Property represents the Councils largest physical resource in financial terms, and is needed to support all our service activities. The portfolio includes over 600 major property assets with a current valuation of £480million. The portfolio includes schools, libraries, day centres, depots, car parks, business generation centres, industrial units, farms, parks, leisure centres and plots of land. Strategic management of land buildings will deliver optimal use of property by:

- Long term planning, focused on business, corporate and organisational objectives

- Accounting for financial and non-financial issues

- Having a unified and joined up approach

- Providing a mechanism for making property increasingly recognised as a significant contributor to business strategies

- Ensuring that property is seen as an enabler and not an inhibiter

- Using the built estate as a strategic resource in an organisation

It is important to note that there are a large number of properties to assess and integrate within Corporate and Service requirements. This document sets out how the Asset Management Service will deliver on its objectives, including a process of identifying what is required for service delivery, investment, disposal and transfer to the Community Sector. This programme, known as "Asset Challenge", is the key to delivering Cheshire East's key aims and objectives.

Map of Cheshire East

Corporate Priorities

The Council has a number of key corporate priorities, which the Asset Management Plan supports. The diagram sets out all strategies, enablers and the interdependencies between them. Corporate Priorities include:

- The sustainable communities' strategy

- The Corporate Plan

- Dealing with Financial Constraints

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The Sustainable Community Strategy – Ambition for All

The Council has worked with partners over recent months to prepare Cheshire East's first Sustainable Community Strategy, "Ambition for All". This strategy sets out a 15 year vision for Cheshire East, for its people and its places. It also identifies immediate priorities for action which partners need to deliver together if we are to achieve our ambition.

The vision set out in Ambition for All is that, in 2015:

"Cheshire East is a prosperous place where all people can achieve their potential, regardless of where they live. We have beautiful, productive countryside, unique towns with individual character and a wealth of history and culture. The people of Cheshire East live active and healthy lives and get involved in making their communities safe and sustainable places to live".

There are 7 priorities for action set out in the strategy, and these are:

1. Nurture strong communities

2. Create conditions for business growth

3. Unlock the potential of our towns

4. Support our children and young people

5. Ensure a sustainable future

6. Prepare for an increasingly older population

7. Drive out the causes of poor health

Many of these priorities have implications for how the Council, together with other service providers and local communities, use our capital and our assets. For example, increasing physical exercise is a major contributor to good health and is effected by the quality and location of leisure and recreational facilities. Similarly, good quality, accessible community facilities are a significant factor in the life of many voluntary and community groups.

At a larger scale, our ambitions for economic growth, for affordable, and appropriate housing which reflect the long-term needs of our ageing population, and for good transport accessibility, all impact our decisions on capital and assets.

It is important that we work with our partners to be clear on the longer-term capital and asset needs within Cheshire East, and to invest wisely in the short-term to realise these longer-term aims. This Capital Strategy provides the lead in ensuring we adopt a long-term, planned approach to our capital investment and use of assets.

The Corporate Plan

In order to deliver the vision and priorities set out in "Ambition for All", partner organisations must identify the contributions they will make and reflect this in their individual business plans. For the Council this is our Corporate Plan where we have set out 5 corporate objectives:

1. To give the people of Cheshire East more choice and control about services and resources

2. To grow and develop a sustainable Cheshire East

3. To improve life opportunities and health for everybody in Cheshire East

4. To enhance the Cheshire East environment

5. Being an excellent Council and working with others – to deliver for Cheshire East

The overarching criterion for assessing capital investment bids is the extent to which they will deliver on these corporate objectives.

Medium Term Financial Strategy

The Capital Strategy forms an integral part of the Councils Medium Term Financial Strategy which provides the financial interpretation of the Councils Corporate Plan. Once a project has been approved and included in the Capital Programme the revenue implications of the capital expenditure need to be built into the revenue budgets included in the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

Bollington Recreation Ground, Bollington

Enabling Strategies

Operational and corporate priorities including service plans are supported by a series of interlinking enabling strategies as shown in the diagram, these include:

- The Capital Strategy

- Draft Economic Strategy

- ICT Strategy

- Highways & Local Transport Plan

- Local Development Framework

- Housing Strategy

The Capital Strategy sets out the approach adopted by the Council to manage its capital assets and the decision making process undertaken when determining capital investments, acquisitions and disposals.

The strategy is implemented by the Capital Asset Group (CAG) to inform the capital programme and considers business planning cases for all Services. The Group consists of the Borough Treasurer and Head of Assets, Head of Corporate Improvement, Partnerships Manager, Heads of Services and Representation from the Corporate Asset Management Group (CAMG). **Terms of reference for the Capital Asset Group include:**

- Reviewing available resources and considering value for money implications

- Considering bids from service departments

- Prioritising them against corporate objectives

- Preparing and reviewing the Capital Strategy itself

- Overseeing the preparation and monitoring of Capital Programme Delivery.

- Updating and reviewing the Asset Disposal Plan

The prioritisation of schemes is delivered on the basis of alignment with the following criteria:

- Transformation- does the scheme contribute towards transformation goals.

- Infrastructure- does the scheme support ICT infrastructure and asset base.

- Compliance- does the scheme contribute towards compliance with statutory legislative and health and safety requirements.

Within a total Capital Programme of £105million for 2010-2011, the Asset Management Service was involved in the procurement and management of various Capital Projects to the value of £76million, approximately 75% of the overall capital programme. £23.7m of which were directly managed projects within the Asset Management Service.

The Draft Economic Strategy is in development in conjunction with other stakeholders in the public, private and voluntary sector. New legislation places a duty on local authorities to lead in analysing the local economy and develop policies and actions that respond accordingly in promoting the local economic well being of their areas.

Clear objectives include:

- Ensuring Cheshire East maintains and enhances its role as a knowledge economy through innovation into business skills and development in its workforce.

- Providing a better connected economy through enhancing existing transport connections to other areas

- Raising the profile of Cheshire East and sell the undoubted assets and opportunities of the area, particularly to external investors and decision makers

- Facilitating economic growth through progressing schemes that will create jobs and improve attractiveness of the area

- Enable a first class quality of life for all our communities

The key thematic priorities for economic development in the Cheshire East area include:

- Quality Image perception & Leadership

- Unlocking Development Opportunities

- A knowledge economy & a knowledgeable workforce

- Liveability- local transport & aspiration

New regional arrangements have been put in place to allow for a common approach within Cheshire and Warrington on a range of policy issues. A new decision making structure, an Enterprise Commission has replaced the Cheshire and Warrington Economic Alliance to coordinate the delivery of a package of sub regional priorities including within priorities areas of Crewe, Macclesfield and its market towns. The Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) are engaging local authorities in a single conversation covering housing, infrastructure, regeneration and community activities, to connect local ambition and priorities with national targets.

The Economic Development Strategy is supplemented through more detailed work in Crewe Vision and Macclesfield Regeneration, with links to Planning and Policy and the strategic approaches to Housing.

Both the Capital and Draft Economic Strategy are supported by the following Strategies and Frameworks.

ICT Strategy requires the development of systems and infrastructure, in conjunction with other organisations and agencies, including partners in police, fire and rescue and (currently) the PCT. Initial development work is procured through capital funding and staff costs recharged through the capital programme.

Highways & Local Transport Plan priorities are based on guidance from the Department of Transport. Current priority indicators include accessibility improvements, public transport initiatives, reducing pollution, improving road safety and conditions through effective asset management.

Housing Strategy: The vision of the Cheshire Housing Alliance is to provide a housing offer that supports the creation of balanced, sustainable communities and the regeneration of the sub-region's most deprived neighbourhoods, through effective lobbying, partnership working and community engagement, to create a sub-region where all residents can achieve independent living in good quality, affordable homes that are appropriate to their needs.

The four priorities listed below have been identified as the key issues for the sub-region. More information on these priorities can be found in the Cheshire Sub-Regional Housing Strategy 2009-2012 document.

- PRIORITY ONE: To increase the supply of affordable housing to support economic growth and development.

- PRIORITY TWO: To make best use of the sub-region's existing housing stock.

- PRIORITY THREE: To meet the housing and accommodation-related support needs of the sub-region's most vulnerable residents.

- PRIORITY FOUR: To increase the supply of market housing to support economic growth and regeneration and to meet local housing needs.

Tatton Park, knutsford

Enabling Frameworks

The Local Development Framework (LDF) is being developed in tandem with the Economic Development Strategy, Local Transport Plan, and Housing Strategy (see policy and planning). The LDF contributes to the overall housing vision by providing the detail for future development and growth, complementing the Economic Development objectives outlined above. It is intended that the LDF is completed by 2013 and it is currently at the stage of option appraisal.

Draft Visitor Economy Strategic Framework: The visitor economy contributes to businesses and communities in Cheshire East generating over £600million per annum. In order to build on this success and generate further wealth the Council will:

- Support the development of tourism infrastructure

- Ensure that the Visitor Economy needs and opportunities are taken into account as part of regeneration projects and decisions relating to planning, transport, public realm, events, culture and countryside.

- Work with partners to encourage and facilitate business sector developments in areas such as food, accommodation, attractions development, skills training and visitor welcome.

This document, the **Corporate Asset Management Plan (CAMP), demonstrates** clear links with the Capital Strategy, Local Transport Plan and Draft Economic strategy with the recent completion of capital projects and asset disposals.

Enabling Activity

The Council works to deliver its key strategies through the following activities:

Consultation & Engagement: Through residents and key stakeholders on a whole range of issues. The aim being to become more accountable to our customers and to make our decision making processes more transparent. Communication on the challenges both in terms of policy and service delivery and finance is something that the Council is striving to deliver.

Key Partnerships & Partners: The Council is committed to working in a co-ordinated manner with its service partners. These include the Local Strategic Partnership Executive Board with representation from a variety of third party agencies.

Delivery is organised through five thematic partnerships:

- The safer Cheshire East Partnership

- Children's Trust

- Health and Well Being Partnership

- Economic Development, Learning and Skills Partnership

- Environment and Sustainability Partnership

The LSP has established seven local area partnerships (LAPs) covering areas of Congleton, Crewe, Knutsford, Macclesfield, Nantwich, Poynton and Wilmslow. Their role is to improve services, ensure local people influence decision making and actively engage their respective communities.
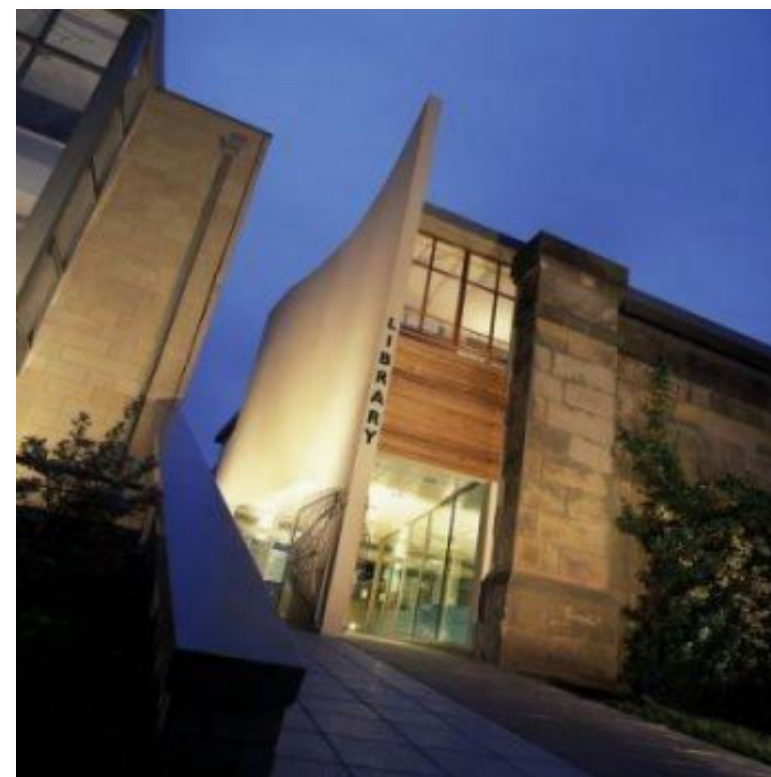
Knutsford Library, knutsford

The Asset Management Challenge

Property Background

Effective asset management planning is a corporate activity undertaken by Asset Management Service to deliver the Councils corporate aims and objectives. The Council has adopted elements of the Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) as best practice although they are no longer a formal requirement.

The effective management of assets can transform an organisation and provide a focus for change around service delivery and value for money objectives. The CAMP sets out how the Council will deliver on these targets.

Service Success

Given the challenge of integrating the asset base from the legacy estate, the Asset Management Service has continued to deliver "business as usual" services whilst integrating legacy services into one unit which has been a substantial undertaking. The new team has delivered the following over the last 18 months:

- Successfully created the new Asset Management Service team through the amalgamation of staff from previous property teams and the recruitment of new staff to fill vacant posts

- Developed and implemented new working practices and procedures for the new service

- Understood the new estate including what it contains, who resides in it, what condition it is in and it's value

- Development of property data and management information needed for open and transparent reporting to the Council, its residents and businesses

- Developed the strategy and actions required for the assets we share with the Cheshire West and Chester Council

- Developed and implemented a new procurement strategy for sourcing of all our property related services including property consultants, contractors and a new repairs & maintenance service

- Consolidated our reactive and planned maintenance services into one

- Develop new working relationships external partners

- Development of a Property Handbook for all building occupiers

- The development of key property strategy documents for the new Council

- The development and definition of budgets required to maintain the operational estate so that Council services can continue to be delivered

- The development and definition of budgets required to maintain the operational estate.

Key Challenges for Managing Assets

A number of challenges in the development of Asset Management have been identified, these are:

- Addressing the legacy estate owned jointly by the Council and Cheshire West & Cheshire Council.

- The requirement for an integrated and strategic approach to the management of the Council's property resources. Such an approach would unify property management across the Council, reducing duplication.

- Appraisal of the Council's current property portfolio, to ensure the continued alignment with Service delivery requirements. These include:

- Provision of a cost neutral Asset Management Service

- Increased pressures on Local Authorities to transfer assets and ownership responsibilities to schools.

- Potential outsource/joint venture opportunities with external private sector partners for optimising assets, such as the use of Local Asset Backed Vehicles.

- Greater emphasis on rationalisation, refurbishment and re-use of the portfolio to deliver efficiency savings.

- Re-alignment of public sector assets to consider joint services review and delivery through a "Total Place" model to achieve consolidation and efficiency of assets.

- An assessment of the implications of locality based budgeting by the government.

- The Asset Management Service acting as lead enabler on business transformation.

- Providing processes to maximise revenue opportunities.

The key challenges for both Operational and Non-operational Property are set out below.

- There is a requirement to consolidate all asset information - Key milestones for the migration of data onto the Atrium system have already been outlined in this document.

- The condition, sufficiency and suitability of the estate, and the associated performance measures are essential in enabling strategic decision making. This is a continual assessment process, and will inform budget setting facilitating improved service delivery, energy efficiency, and compliance with statutory requirements.

- Consideration must be given to under utilised and unsuitable operational assets to determine opportunities for re-use, investment, regeneration or disposal. For example, the Council currently owns a number of small and outdated depots across the borough and consideration is being given to their future development.

- There is a requirement to review all non-operational assets. Disposal of non or low income generating properties could deliver substantial capital receipts for reinvestment in the Capital programme.

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- Energy Management is a core function of the Asset Management Service. The key challenge being to balance the generation of capital receipts against the long term opportunities for shaping the estate to meet carbon reduction targets and alternative sustainable uses. For example, changes in legislation have created the opportunity for councils to produce and sell electricity back to the National Grid. Consideration of energy performance/management must be given as part of any disposal or acquisition strategy.

- The Council owns a substantial farms estate, comprising of 19 separate estates made up of 5123 acres and 72 farms respectively. Given the pressure on Corporate finances, and the requirement to generate capital receipts, consideration must be given to the future management and approach to this estate. An assessment must also be made of the non economic benefits of maintaining a farm estate, including a potential contribution towards Carbon targets.

Market Hall, Nantwich

Westfields, Sandbach

Operating Model

The Asset Management Service resides within the Treasury and Assets Department, which has delegated authority from Council to act within approved policy and budget framework.

Procurement, Assets and Shared Services Portfolio Holder

The Procurement, Assets and Shared Services Portfolio holder is the elected member with the responsibility for assets. He represents the Procurement, Assets and Shared Services Portfolio on the Council's Cabinet. The current holder is a Councillor Peter Mason and he has prepared the foreword for this CAMP.

The Corporate Property Officer

The Asset Manager is the Corporate Property Officer. He reports to The Borough Treasurer and Head of Assets and is responsible for developing the Councils strategies and policies for consideration by members and the day to day running of the Asset Management Services

Corporate Asset Management Group (CAMG)

To further enhance strategic direction, there is a requirement for a core group for strategic asset management. The Corporate Asset Management Group (CAMG) is a corporate cross-service team with representatives from each Directorate. The CAMG will meet every three months and be chaired by the Asset Manager.

The purpose of the CAMG would be to act as a corporate steering group, ensuring that the Council reviews all land and property holdings continue to support the aims and objectives as set out in the Corporate Plan.

The CAMG will provide the forum for development and discussion around:

- Corporate Property Strategy

- Environmental/Energy Strategy

- Business Transformation

- Maintenance/Condition budgets

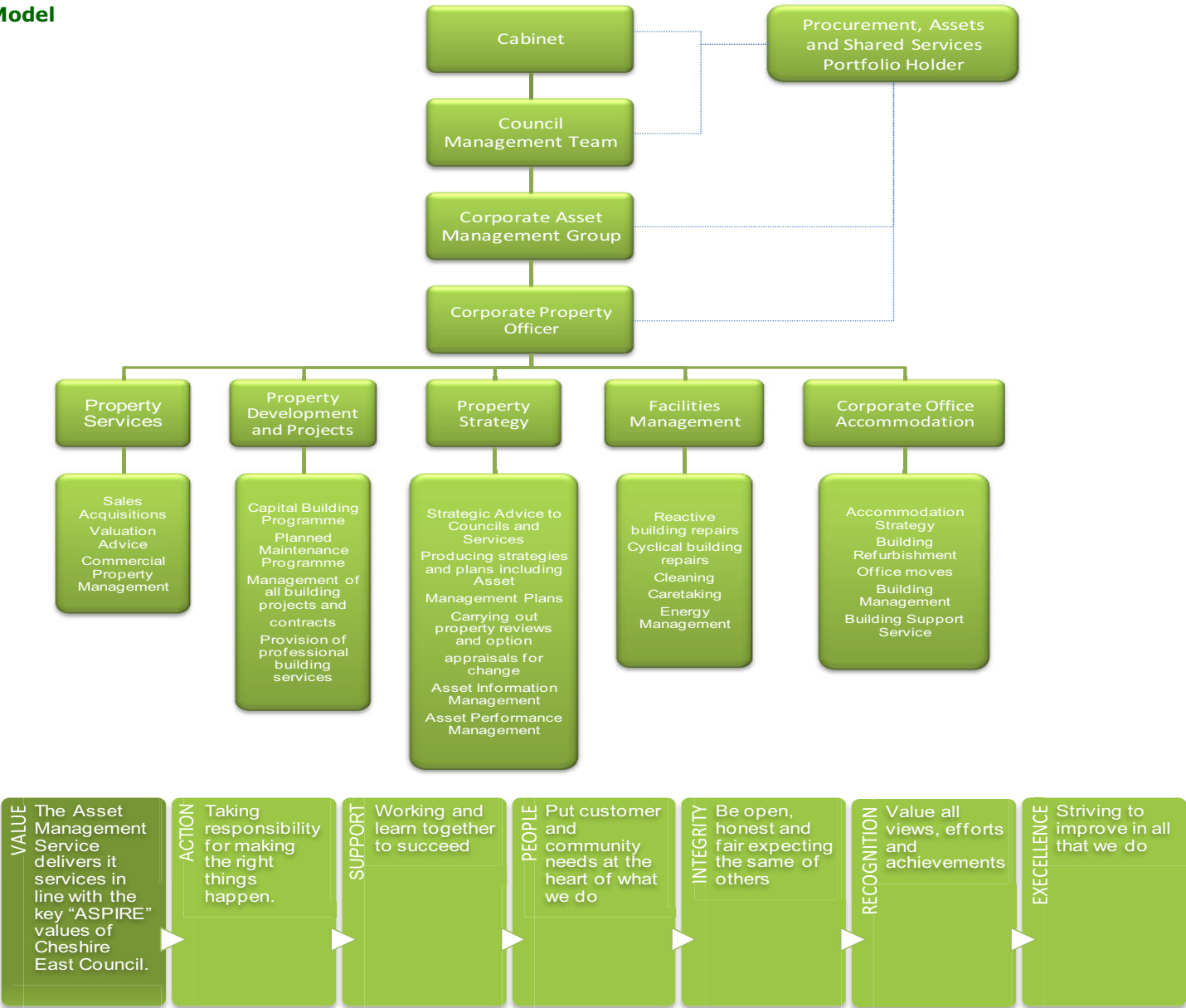The initial terms of reference and core membership have been agreed.

The Asset Management Service

The Asset Management Service provides expert and impartial advice, as well as support to enable the Council in turn to manage, develop and improve its property portfolio to the benefit of the Cheshire East community.

The Asset Manager is responsible for the delivery of the Corporate Asset Management Plan, and has responsibility to report on all strategic property matters.

The operating model for the asset management function comprises:

Operating Model

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                    │   Cabinet    │ ············ │ Procurement, Assets │
                    └──────────────┘              │ and Shared Services │
                          │                       │   Portfolio Holder  │
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Property Services	Property Development and Projects	Property Strategy	Facilities Management	Corporate Office Accommodation
Sales Acquisitions Valuation Advice Commercial Property Management	Capital Building Programme Planned Maintenance Programme Management of all building projects and contracts Provision of professional building services	Strategic Advice to Councils and Services Producing strategies and plans including Asset Management Plans Carrying out property reviews and option appraisals for change Asset Information Management Asset Performance Management	Reactive building repairs Cyclical building repairs Cleaning Caretaking Energy Management	Accommodation Strategy Building Refurbishment Office moves Building Management Building Support Service

VALUE	ACTION	SUPPORT	PEOPLE	INTEGRITY	RECOGNITION	EXCELLENCE
The Asset Management Service delivers it services in line with the key "ASPIRE" values of Cheshire East Council.	Taking responsibility for making the right things happen.	Working and learn together to succeed	Put customer and community needs at the heart of what we do	Be open, honest and fair expecting the same of others	Value all views, efforts and achievements	Striving to improve in all that we do

The Asset Base

The Performance Framework

To ensure continued delivery and demonstrate improved property performance, the Asset Management Service are developing a series of performance measures, that will enhance strategic decision making

It is envisaged the performance measures will provide real time management information. The Asset Management Service will provide comprehensive information covering both national and local performance indicators, following the National Property Performance Management Initiative (NaPPMI).

Management Information will include:

- Assessment of Condition and Maintenance of properties

- Environmental Property Issues

- Accessibility (DDA)

- Sufficiency of building space

- Total Property Costs

- Time & Cost Predictability of construction and maintenance

- Procurement costs

A full list of national indicators is provided in Appendix A.

Performance Indicators regarding Suitability of the portfolio will also include the following areas:

- Location

- Working Environment

- Health & Safety

- Security

- Space Requirements

- ICT & Fixtures/Fittings

- Service Image

It is envisaged that these will be ready for implementation in the 2012-13 reporting period.

The Atrium System

The Asset Management Service recognises the need for timely and easy to read data to support a strategic approach. This is demonstrated by the development of the Atrium system, which maintains a complete record of Cheshire East's Land and Property in accordance with Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) and Audit requirements, and is maintained centrally by the Property Information Team.

Data held on Atrium includes:

- Terrier data encompassing, information on acquisitions

- disposals and ownership

- Condition assessment surveys to inform planned maintenance priorities and the management of backlog maintenance.

- Ownerships, leases, acquisitions and disposals records are all stored spatially using GIS.

- Capital and revenue contract management information including ordering invoicing and payment details

The capabilities of the system:

- Accurate financial management and monitoring of capital and revenue projects

- Intranet functionality that provide all viewers with a comprehensive range of information on all Council premises (including floor plans)

Key milestones in the development of the Atrium system in the next 2 years include:

- Amalgamation of condition data allowing a comprehensive technical approach to determine planned maintenance

- Education suitability and sufficiency data to migrate to Atrium by April 2011

- Requests, ordering, management and monitoring of response and cyclical maintenance

By 2015, it envisaged that Atrium will become a fully integrated corporate solution, accessed by all Services

Major Operational Asset

The major operational asset base is set out in the table:

Major Operational Assets	
Administration Buildings	18
Schools	161
Libraries	18
Civic/Community Halls	13
Children's Centres	19
Day Centres	11
Leisure Facilities	17
Museums	2
Depots	20
Household Waste Recycling Centres	9
Markets	6
Car Parks	124
Farms/Agricultural Land	91
Business Generation Centres	4
Parks and Open Spaces	43
Cemeteries	11
Public Conveniences	34
Allotments	39

Service Priorities

The Asset Management Service is increasingly responsive to meeting Service delivery needs. This section sets out key Service requirements and highlights strategic responses and challenges within each service area. The Corporate Asset Management Plan is both responsive and influential in determining Service priorities.

1.   People

Children & Families

Requirement

Following the change of Government a fundamental review of priorities for delivery of existing Children and Families programmes has been undertaken in response to the proposed reduction in central government capital funding.   Despite this review the Service remains committed to rebuilding, refurbishing and upgrading the fabric of our schools. The Service will continue to deliver projects that respond to local priorities including. Continued support for extended schools/community use projects

- Delivery of extended services.

- The Primary Capital Programme.

- Raising standards in the primary and secondary sectors.

- Diversity (e.g. expanding popular and successful schools).

- Inclusion (e.g. providing efficient and accessible high quality provision for

- pupils with special education needs and disabilities)

- Schools workforce reform.

- The 14 –19 Agenda.

- National Curriculum requirements.

- Addressing pupil behaviour and attendance.

- E-learning.

- School security

- Other ministerial priorities e.g. sustainable development and school transport

Special Educational Needs

A further review of Special Educational Needs (SEN) provision will be undertaken in an effort to realise more efficient and accessible high quality learning for pupils with specialist educational needs and severest disabilities.

Secondary School Provision

A review of secondary school provision within the Macclesfield area is currently being undertaken in support with a view to removing surplus places and improving the quality of secondary education provision.

Academies

In line with current Government policy to extend Academy status, three applications have been approved to date. These are Fallibroome High School which became an Academy on 1st September, Brine Leas High School which became an Academy on 2nd September and Sandbach High School & Sixth Form College which on receipt of confirmation letter from the Secretary of State will become an Academy on 1st November 2010. Although a number of other primary and high schools have expressed interest in converting there have been no formal applications submitted at this stage. The extent of Council involvement for each school converting may vary according to whether schools are community, voluntary controlled, voluntary aided or foundation schools.

Social Care Sites

There are a small number of children's residential care homes which are no longer fit for purpose and have been replaced by new locality based group homes. Examples include Redsands, a former care home in Crewe which is now vacant and is to be leased to a Registered Social Landlord (RSL) pending approval. Priors Hill Children's Home, no longer provides residential occupation, with only a small section of the building providing day care services. Subject to re-provision of this facility, it is anticipated the site will be considered for redevelopment or disposal.

Adult Services

Learning Disabilities

Many day centres are outdated, with some now deemed to have both incorrect specifications and situated in the wrong location. End-users can be defined as either those who benefit from a range of integrated community facilities with support, or those who are far more dependent and challenging, who require substantial support in a safe environment. It is anticipated that the existing long-standing provision of day centres will need to change and reduce over time, as people have access to other buildings within their local area such as Leisure Centres, Community Centres and Libraries. This will require a fundamental review and rationalisation of the current day centre property portfolio, as building based services would need to continue to be provided for high dependency users.

The provision of a new residential facility for high dependency adults with learning disabilities is currently being planned in partnership with a Residential Social Landlord (RSL), involving the redevelopment of a site at Willaston Crewe. This development will enable users, who are currently in placements outside of Cheshire East, to return to live in their local area and also provide significant savings in revenue from the reduction in costly out of Borough placements.

Adults with Physical and Sensory Disabilities

Existing day centres provide not only limited facilities for individuals with a visual disability, but they also fail to meet many of the needs of young people, and are not necessarily suitable for future service delivery. The current traditional buildings based service is being developed into a Resource Centre model, which will provide a range of services from one central location with multi-agency involvement. It is also the desire of service users and their respective carers to have extended service provision during evenings and weekends.

Adults with Mental Health Needs

Local services are integrated with health and social care needs, which involves Primary Care Trusts (PCT's), the Partnership Trust, voluntary groups, service users and carers working closely from co-located buildings. However, some of the buildings and offices occupied by joint mental health teams are not suitable, both in terms of their location and facilities and will be reviewed as part of the wider office accommodation strategy.

Community Support Centres (CSC's)

In response to the National Dementia Strategy; the findings of the previous CSC review were re-considered in light of future planning and service delivery for people with dementia, especially around the 'Living with Dementia' model, within the Council's new provider Care4CE. In June 2009, Members agreed to an investment of £1m at Lincoln House in Crewe to create both a new south area dementia wing and to refurbish existing bedrooms and facilities. This project was completed in June 2010, allowing for the closure of Santune House, and the integration of services under a new staff team at Lincoln House.

The next phase of CSC's closures, identified the dated Cypress House in Handforth, Wilmslow, which was closed at the end of August 2010. There are further proposals to develop a north area dementia facility by development of a site in Macclesfield for this purpose. Another is proposed at Mountview in Congleton, to deliver a dementia model jointly with the Central & East Cheshire Primary Care Trust, where it is proposed that a vacant wing will be brought back into use for this purpose to accommodate clients on a temporary basis.

Independent Living Centres – an Independent Living Centre is required in Crewe town centre, and a potential property has been identified for this use.

2.   Health & Wellbeing

Leisure and Green Spaces

Leisure Services are looking at ways of both rationalising leisure facilities, and also improving those which remain at their disposal. One of the projects under consideration is the provision of a new swimming pool and subsequent leisure facilities, to provide one large centre at Cumberland Sports Ground in Crewe. The existing swimming pool in Crewe is no longer fit for purpose. This proposal would also involve the relocation of the facilities operating from the Oakley Leisure Centre.

Queens Park in Crewe has received a £6.5m Heritage Lottery Fund grant, and renovation works are being carried out at this facility, including the park lodges

Libraries

The building stock dates back to the 1970's, with both the network and service point locations still remaining from the pattern inherited as part of the 1974 Local Government Reorganisation. A County-wide review of the Service was carried out in 2007, but the recommendations were not implemented due to Local Government Reorganisation. This review now needs to be revisited to fundamentally assess community needs and provide a modern library service that meets current requirements.

Civic and Community Buildings

It is proposed that Civic functions be devolved to local Town and Parish Councils, and this will involve the transfer of Civic Buildings under the same remit. Community buildings will be offered to Town/Parish Council and if they do not wish to take on the running of these facilities, they will then in turn be offered to community groups.

Registration – this Service is provided from town centre locations in Crewe and Macclesfield, together with some part time facilities in public buildings in Sandbach, Congleton, Handforth and Knutsford. The facilities at Crewe and Macclesfield need updating, and will be relocated to Crewe Municipal Building and Macclesfield Town Hall.

Transformation – the devolution/transfer of services to local Town and Parish Councils will inevitably involve the transfer of properties, empowering local communities from where service delivery takes place. Assets to be transferred will include community halls, public conveniences, land, and allotments, dependent on which services are devolved/transferred.

3.   Places

Highways Depots

There is an over-provision of depot facilities as a result of Local Government Reorganisation. The ambition is establish two 'Super-Depots' – one based in Crewe and the other in Macclesfield, supported by some smaller facilities. In addition, some of the smaller Depots may be of interest to the Local Area Partnerships (LAP's)

Waste

Operational Landfill - a joint venture between the Council & Cheshire West and Chester Council respectively, is the letting of a Waste Treatment contract through a Public Finance Initiative (PFI) Scheme, to address the requirement for a more sustainable

solution for disposal of both household and trade waste. This will require the provision of two Waste Transfer Stations in Crewe and Macclesfield – located within existing Council Depots respectively.

Streetscape and Bereavement Services – a site is being sourced in Crewe for the provision of a new cemetery, which may in due course require the purchase of privately owned land.

4.   Planning and Policy

Housing Strategy

The delivery of affordable housing is one of Cheshire East's priorities. There is currently a waiting list of 7800 applicants for social rented housing. This is against re-lets of 909 during 2008/09. A recent CAA inspection identified that the availability of affordable housing is a significant issue in Cheshire East, and stated 'It is unlikely that the identified need for affordable housing in Cheshire East Borough can be met because of the level of housing capital allocations and limited availability of suitable development sites'. Sites in the Council's ownership are proactively identified for the provision of affordable housing.

A strategic approach to housing is currently under development. A strong and skilled housing team has been established to develop the strategy.

Housing are Supporting ambitious plans for growth in delivering the identified initiatives of "Crewe and Macclesfield Vision" (enabling Crewe to become a significant centre by 2031). Strategic Housing and Wulvern Housing have been involved in the development of the vision and will continue to work with regeneration colleagues as the project progresses. Projects include

a regeneration project on the Sherborne estate with 2&3 bed family homes.

Other projects include supporting a PFI development of "Extra Care" Housing for the elderly. This includes a new build development of 73 apartments at Poynton and 107 apartments at Sandbach.
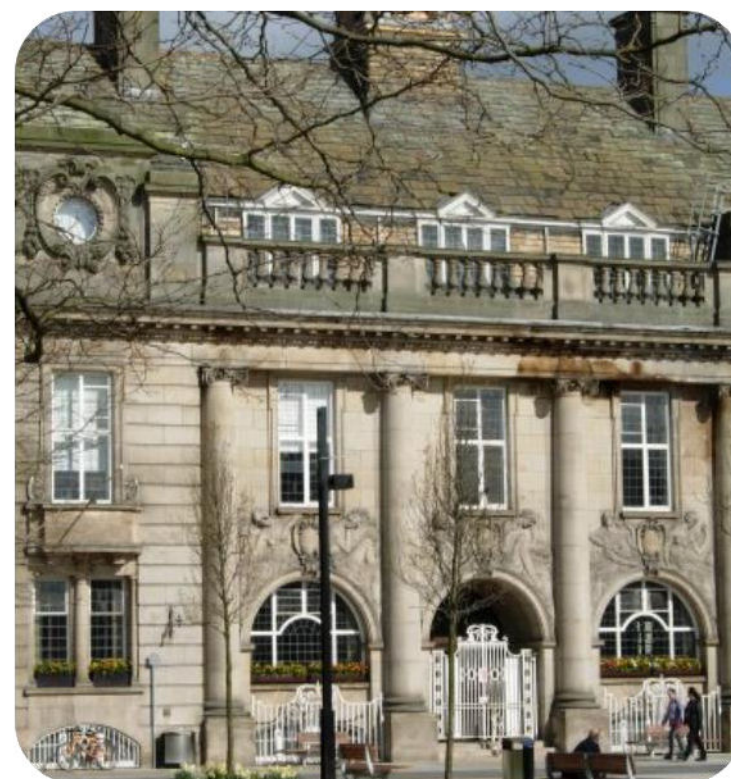
Crewe Municipal Building, Crewe

Asset Challenge Programme

Through the Councils Asset Challenge Programme, the following outcomes have been agreed in relation to the future direction of the management of the Council's property assets.

These outcomes are:

- The adoption of seven Local Area Partnerships Boundaries (LAP Boundaries) as a basic building block of service design

- The commitment to three main administrative centres (Macclesfield (Town Hall), Sandbach (Westfields), Crewe (Delamere House) supported by the provision of service hubs in the LAP areas

- A commitment to the principle of community asset transfer

- A commitment to the forging of relationships with partner organisations

- A commitment that all capital receipts will be treated as corporate receipts and distributed in accordance with the provisions of the Capital StrategyKey

The following key priority areas were agreed:

- Introduction of a Corporate Landlord Function

- Depots and Wastes Review

- Farms Estate Strategy

- Review of Non-operational estate

- Office Accommodation Strategy

- Devolution & Community Asset Transfer

- Disposals Strategy

- Review of alternative approaches to holding assets

- Shared Services

- Shared Assets

- Total Place and Placed Based Budgeting

- Carbon Targets, Energy Management & Sustainability

1.   Towards a Corporate Landlord Function

A clear vision for the establishment of a Corporate Landlord function for the Council has been identified. A Corporate Landlord delivers a coherent approach to property management. Sufficient resources should be centralised to allow economies of scale in the procurement and effective management of the Council's portfolio.

Under this model occupying departments no longer retain responsibility for operational assets and become notional tenants. The function of the Corporate Landlord is to provide suitable, affordable accommodation that continues to meet service delivery needs in accordance with corporate priorities.

A Corporate Landlord would strengthen the strategic and operational asset management of the Councils assets maintaining and enhancing a professional approach.

Advantages of this approach would be:

- Freeing up front line service staff to focus on service delivery.

- Creation of a focussed corporate approach to Asset

- Management.

- A fully encompassing corporate approach to statutory responsibilities, achieving compliance with associated health and safety and legislative requirements.

In terms of progress towards a Corporate Landlord Operating Model, the Asset Management Service is already responsible for:

- Management of the non-operational estate

- All Property related transactions and advice

- Planned preventative maintenance programmes of works to all non-school premises

- Operational management and building support services to administrative buildings

- Through Capital Asset Group the proceeds from property disposals are treated corporately

- Provision of energy management services

- Compliance monitoring of Corporate premises

A potential Target Operating Model is included in Appendix C

Macclesfield Town Hall, Macclesfield

2. Depot & Waste Review

A review of depots, waste recycling centres and refuse sites managed by Environmental Services was completed earlier this year in conjunction with the Asset Management Service. Improvements in service delivery and rationalisation of the estate were considered as priorities. As a result:

- The potential need for two "super-depots" was identified as the preferred locations in the Crewe and Macclesfield areas. A Depot Rationalisation Project will run as a work stream under the Fleet Improvement & Efficiency Programme.

- Procurement options are currently being explored for a private sector partner to deliver two waste transfer centres in the Crewe and Macclesfield areas.

Implementation will require a strategic and joined up approach with key inputs from the Asset Management Service.

3. Farms Estate

The Council's Farms Estate property assets (tabulated) comprise approximately 5,123 acres of agricultural land on 19 geographically dispersed estates, including 72 let farms with farmhouse and buildings, 1 let cottage, 9 vacant properties, and 53 acres of woodland respectively.

The service is delivered on an operational basis by the Cheshire Farms Shared Service, generating a net income in 2009 of £260,000. Performance is reported at national level to Government on an annual basis.

Farm Type	Area (Acres)	Number of Units
Dairy	2757.00	35
Livestock	1912.56	33
Secondary land lettings	244.03	7
Horticulture	8.98	2
Arable	92.74	2
Commercial	0.26	1
Let Cottage	0.37	1
Telecoms		1
Estate Road etc	69.16	
Woodland	52.76	
Vacant farm premises		9

The Council has continued to implement a radical re-organisational and improvement strategy for the Farms Estate, generating both revenue efficiencies and capital receipts and it is considering its approach to the provision of the service and management strategies addressing capital and revenue income/ financing.

The target structure in the current management strategy retains a service of a similar land area comprising between 38 40 farms potentially realising total receipts in the region of £13 million from the sale of surplus properties.

Challenges: An independent review has concluded that a more proactive approach will need to be implemented to deliver the strategy within the design life and the impact of LGR has reinforced that conclusion.

Conclusions & Actions: Access to capital, the resources required to deliver a project, and clarity of policy, are all essential to maintain momentum, deliver both structural change to the service and capital receipts and accordingly an analysis of the benefits to the authority from retaining the service, the value of the property and disposal profiles have been commissioned and will contribute to the development of a settled policy addressing:

Centenary Farm, Ridley

- Provision and scale of service.

- Management objectives.

- Maximising the benefits from the property asset delivering upon the wider corporate priorities and objectives.

4.   Non Operational Assets

Non-operational property directly contributes to the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy, Capital Strategy and Corporate Asset Management Plan.

In order to maximise the contribution of the non-operational estate, the Asset Management Service manages the estate in accordance with the following principles:

- An annual rental income target. This regular and secure source of income forms part of the revenue budget used to support corporate service provision.

- Charging full market rents for all properties (flexibility).

- Keeping the portfolio under review, identifying poorly performing properties (disposal/investment to improve performance).

- Equal opportunity in the letting and management of property.

- Improving performance – grants, match-funding, partnership.

- Acquisition of properties to improve performance of the portfolio.

- An investment programme that promotes the furtherance of the Corporate objectives and employment/regeneration opportunities.

Type	Number of Properties	Gross Income
Industrial	69	£414,000
Office	47	£174,000
Retail	4	£15,000
Misc	600	£ 1.197m
Total	**720**	**£1.8m**

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The aim is to increase the income from non-operational properties through a programme of disposing of poorer performing assets and reinvestment in properties providing improved income streams. These assets can be utilised to better support the Council's overall budget position. Capital receipts can be generated from the non-operational estate but as a consequence of the disposal there is potentially loss of revenue income. The portfolio should be managed in a way which includes target setting as one element of the Council's investment strategy.

A comprehensive review of the non-operational estate will establish the route to a move away from the historic, inherited legacy to a more balanced sustainable portfolio to meet the future financial and corporate objectives of the Council, as well as addressing the possibilities for the divesting of the entire estate.

5.   Office Accommodation Strategy

The relocation of Cheshire East staff from offices based within the Cheshire West and Chester boundary to Cheshire East has now been completed. Other than shared services staff all Cheshire East employees are now based in Cheshire East buildings

The relocation of staff from West to East has facilitated progress on the rationalisation of the shared administrative buildings held jointly with Cheshire West & Chester under the terms of the Property Transfer Agreement.

In excess of 1400 staff have been relocated, either from West to East or within Cheshire East's own buildings.

An extensive refurbishment/remodelling programme is underway to ensure that our main Corporate office buildings are of a consistent standard and are fit for purpose.

The next steps of the Accommodation Strategy will be to:

- Continue rationalisation of shared building stock with Cheshire West & Chester.

- Complete office refurbishment programme.

- Finalise proposals for the planned works to the Old Town Hall, Macclesfield and Municipal Buildings, Crewe, and facilitate the planned moves of the Registration Service.

- Determine the asset position in respect of the locality hubs and the delivery of services through these hubs.

6.   Devolution and Community Asset Transfer

In accordance with national policy it is the ambition of the Council to explore opportunities for devolution and transfer of services to Town and Parish Council's and encourages community groups to engage in the delivery of more relevant, responsive and value for money services.

In support of this policy, a strategy for transferring the Council assets to Town and Parish Councils and/or community ownership has been initiated.

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Benefits of the strategy include:

- Strengthening community cohesion

- Working with the aspirations of communities

- Enabling the Council to re-focus on its core business

The Council will undertake appropriate risk assessments of the asset transfer proposals to determine the benefits to the wider community and alignment with the Corporate Plan, Sustainable Communities Strategy and other asset priorities. A clear rationale and robust business case will need to be developed by any organisation with aspirations to own and manage Council assets.

As part of the devolution process, the Council will ascertain who is best placed to manage the risk associated with statutory compliance management.

7   Disposal Strategy

The Council owns land and buildings solely for the effective delivery of front line services to the East Cheshire community. When a property is no longer required for this purpose it can be declared surplus and passed to the Assets Manager for disposal. The Assets Manager is responsible for dealing with the disposal process and for approving the terms of disposal of all Council property. This responsibility is exercised in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders and includes ensuring that all statutory and other obligations relating to the disposal of local authority assets are complied with. A disposal of property means any freehold sale or any disposal by way of granting a lease for a period of more than seven years. Once declared surplus to

requirements properties are included in the relevant financial year's disposal programme.

The Disposal Strategy is an integral part of the Council's wider Property Strategy. The Assets Manager is responsible for all transactions involving land and buildings and this document aims to identify the main factors which apply to the disposal of land and buildings once they have been declared surplus to requirements.

Projected proceeds from disposals are an essential element taken into account in the preparation of the Council's Financial Strategies; regular monitoring reports contain confidential information fundamental to the Council's success in negotiations.

The purpose of the Disposal Strategy is to provide a framework for the disposal of land and buildings. The Strategy will also apply to all those who act in an agency/partnership capacity or otherwise on behalf of the Council.

8   Review of alternative approaches to holding assets

New outsourcing and joint venture approaches will be an increasingly vital way in which to use asset to their optimum and providing a catalyst for regeneration. One such approach is the use of LABV's (Local Asset Backed Vehicles) which are 50/50 owned by public and private sector partners, with the specific purpose of carrying out comprehensive area based regeneration or renewal of operational asset.

LABV's are Joint Venture Vehicles owned 50/50 by the public and private sector partners with the specific purpose of carrying out community based regeneration or renewal of assets and infrastructure. In essence the public sector invests land and property assets which are matched in cash or equity by private

sector partners. The new vehicle can use these assets to raise debt financing to develop and regenerate a portfolio of assets or projects. Assets may revert back to the public sector if the partnership does not progress in accordance with pre-agreed timescales.

Key benefits include:

- Provision of a long term strategic investment opportunity for the private sector

- Acceleration of project delivery through private sector incentive

- Partners provide matching investment in cash or equity

- Cheshire East continues to maintain control of regeneration

- Provides a tool for asset rich local authorities to leverage their surplus estate

9   Shared Services

The Shared Services Joint Committee has requested that options be developed to put shared services on a more commercial footing from April 2012.

One of the key issues for this development is the current location of these shared services. There is a strong view from Cheshire East that the current location (Chester) and buildings are inappropriate for the delivery of any emerging new Shared Services Company and that a more central location should be sought.

The majority of Shared Services staff are currently located in the shared administrative buildings, Nicholas House and Goldsmith House in Chester. These buildings are shared assets held under the terms of the Property Transfer Agreement with Cheshire West and, therefore, any decisions made in relation to Shared Services will have both revenue and capital implications for the Authority.

Developments in other shared services, most notably the Integrated Transport Unit, may well result in the dissolution of current agreements and the repatriation of staff to Cheshire East buildings.

Potential implications for the operational property estate include the repatriation of staff with a consequential impact on the Council's Office Accommodation Strategy and the operational footprint of Cheshire East.

Archives Shared Service: Current storage provision is subject to short term arrangements which are all due to expire in 2012 which will require another building to be found.

10   Shared Assets with Cheshire West & Chester Council

The Asset Management Plan for Shared Corporate Assets identifies those properties vested by agreement in the Property Transfer Agreement (PTA), dated 31st March 2009. Heads of Terms for the management and occupation of properties vesting by agreement are set out in Schedule 3 of the Agreement.

The fundamental principle of the PTA was to achieve cost savings by reducing building holdings, and thereby raising capital receipts, for example the disposal of County Hall. The Shared Asset

Management Plan identifies the relevant property assets, location, intended use and a programme of disposal, as well as highlighting any changes to the cost sharing arrangements, through the Property Liaison Group (PLG), which periodically reviews any changes to the strategy.

The vast majority of property assets were transferred to the authority in which they were geographically located. However, it was recognised during the LGR process that a significant number of corporate administrative buildings of the former County Council were based in Cheshire West and Chester, and that this factor may hinder the development of the new Authorities, and the prescribed timeframe for balance sheet disaggregation.

It was therefore agreed that some specific assets would be dealt with under a separate PTA. The terms of this agreement include the relevant assets, the agreed 50:50 ownership and the basis of the cost sharing to March 2014. It was agreed and signed by both Councils on 31st March 2009, and set out that the two new Councils should draw up an agreed Asset Management Plan for dealing with these shared properties.

The core objective for the Shared Corporate Assets is to vacate and dispose of as many assets by March 2014, provided it is deemed commercially viable by the PLG. The future of individual administrative buildings, such as County Hall and the subsequent proceeds of sale, will be assessed on a geographical basis with a specific strategy for each building. Schedule 3 outlines the agreement on shared costs of occupying and maintaining the office assets until they are disposed of, as outlined in the PTA.

A list of shared assets is set out in Appendix D

11 Total Place and Placed Based Budgeting

The Asset Management Service aims to take a 'Total Place' stance on property, which requires a thorough examination of local public sector expenditure. The Asset Challenge programme applies to all public sector organisations, by examining both asset ownership and usage, with a view to identifying and exploring opportunities for shared service delivery. The Service is well placed to support new government policies towards "placed based budgeting", with elected Council leaders playing a key role in co-ordinating wider public services.

Key partnering initiatives include:

- The Cheshire East Strategic Estates Group has representatives from all key partners (including PCT, Acute Trust, Fire and Police) and is chaired by the Council's Asset Manager. Its remit is to:

1 Explore opportunities for shared locations and services with partners

2 Share good practice

3 Share GIS and property information.

There is also a People's Directorate Estate Group which is attended by all relevant care, health and children's services to discuss asset related matters.

This group will complement the Corporate Asset Management Group.

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Approach to Primary Care Trusts (PCT's): The Government has set out a clear plan of reform in its white paper, "Equity and Excellence: Liberating the NHS". As part of this programme, PCT's and Strategic Health Authorities are due to be dissolved by 2013. There are no clear plans at the time of writing as to the direction of travel with regards to the PCT property portfolio consisting of Community Hospitals, clinics, walk-in centre's and GP surgeries.

The Council already works closely with the PCT and is looking to map asset information within the Atrium database. The "Caring Together" work stream led by the Council also aims to adopt a collaborative approach to future health care provision.

The Asset Management Service is well placed to play a full and active role in the property implications of dissolution.

12 Carbon Targets, Energy Management & Sustainability

The Council has set itself a challenging target of reducing Co2 emissions by 30%, by 2015-2016. This is being delivered in conjunction with the Carbon Trust through the Carbon Reduction Programme.

Invest to Save

Through the 2010-2011 Capital Programme, £400,000 was invested in energy efficiency initiatives. Contributions were made to various capital projects including office refurbishment and planned maintenance projects. Work delivered includes:

- Macclesfield Town Hall lighting controls

- Congleton Leisure Centre pool cover

- Delamere House boiler controls

- Shavington Leisure Centre lighting controls

- Voltage Optimisation equipment within the Data Centre at Macclesfield Town Hall.

Future programmes of work implementing energy efficiency measures will be focussed on targeting high energy users.

Climate Change Group

The Council has a well established Climate Change Steering Group, with senior representation from all areas of Council. The group aims to both develop and roll out best practice, ensuring that the Council meets its carbon emission targets. Clearly land and buildings are a major area which the group seeks to influence.

The group has played a key role in ensuring commitment towards the carbon management programme. It also looks to ensure that staff awareness of energy issues is raised through publicity.

Consideration for Asset Strategy

New legislation which allows local authorities to sell unused electricity back to the national grid, will allow local authorities to produce and sell electricity from a range of renewable sources including wind, solar and aero thermal. In the future, Cheshire East may, subject to affordability be able to utilise its landholdings to play a part in the development of renewable heat and electricity, as part of our key role in addressing the challenges of climate change.

Delivering Capital Programmes

1. Procurement & Prioritisation of Capital Programmes

The Capital Strategy sets out the approach adopted by the Council to manage its capital assets and the decision making process undertaken in respect of capital investment and disposals. Asset Management is an enabler in the delivery process and is involved in delivering approximately 75% of the annual Capital Programme.

In accordance with the Council's approved Procurement Strategy and government initiatives, the service has explored opportunities to collaborate with other agencies in the procurement of construction work. The North West Improvement and Efficiency Partnership (NWEIP) one of 6 No Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnership (RIEP's) in the UK, has established regional construction frameworks for public sector clients in the North West.

Through the Councils own frameworks and those established by the North West Construction Hub (NWCH), the Council will secure best value and become the main route for construction procurement.

As a large majority of the Councils capital projects fall within the medium band offered by the NWCH (£500,000 - £10million) it is envisaged where best value is the main driver that this will form the main route for construction procurement.
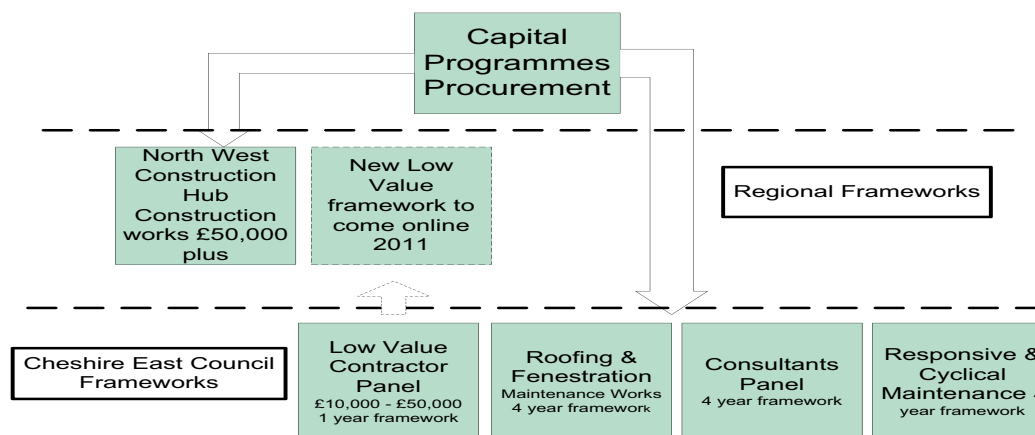
There may still be a need for traditional tendering routes where lowest cost is the sole requirement.

Currently there are no options for procuring maintenance through the NWCH. Asset Management Service has addressed this shortfall of suitable procurement alternatives by the introduction of a number of independent Framework arrangements to cover the following elements:

- Contractor Panel - to cover low value works between £10,000 and £500,000. This will operate for one year with the option to extend for up to a further year, when it is envisaged that the NWCH Low Value Framework may provide a suitable alternatives.

- Roofing and Refenestration Maintenance Works – a new four year framework agreement has been put in place.

- Consultants Panel – creation of a new 4 year framework agreement to provide a ' call off ' contract for construction related Professional services and advice on construction projects.

- Responsive and cyclical maintenance- a new four year framework to provide "a call off" contract for all the Councils service providers for cyclical and emergency response maintenance works

2.   Statutory Compliance & DDA

There is obviously a clear need to ensure the council continues to maintain effective compliance with all of its legislative obligations.

In recent years the statutory responsibilities for health and safety have increased substantially and there are clear duties for premises managers associated with the workplace regulations in respect of Legionella, Asbestos and Fire Safety.

The Asset Management Service is currently in the process of overhauling its existing policies and procedures to ensure a standard approach is adopted across the Council, taking on board the enhanced role of the Corporate Landlord and the increased responsibilities that will be required.

3.   Maintenance & Condition Surveys

Maintenance involves the planned preventative, cyclical and reactive repairs of buildings and services. The Asset Manager is the custodian of the Council's building assets and has responsibility to ensure that they are maintained to a standard that will contain, to an appropriate and acceptable level, the risks associated with:

- Loss of utilisation and functionality with regards to service delivery

- Efficient operation of the facility

- Security of both the asset and the users

- Health and Safety of the users

- Preservation of asset value

- Council image and reputation

The Council's portfolio comprises a wide range of buildings which have been managed under different management regimes. The key priority for the service is to bring all buildings into one maintenance regime using good practice to provide a model of excellence.

The overall condition of the asset stock is relatively good in comparison to other authorities although there are variations in the condition of buildings across the borough which requires further investigation.

Maintenance management policies and procedures are generally sound, well documented and transparent with procurement regimes in place to ensure best value is achieved.

Backlog maintenance data is continually reviewed. The condition of the building stock will decline with year on year reductions in real terms of the maintenance budget and the increasing age of the properties. A significant proportion of repairs will need to be undertaken for the foreseeable future to prevent a serious deterioration in asset stock.

Appendices

Tabley Hill Cemetery, Knutsford

Sandbach Town Hall, Sandbach

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Appendix A-   Example Performance Indicators

Property Indicators	
% gross internal floor space in condition categories A-D	Total costs in priority levels 1-3
Total costs in priority levels 1-3	% in priority levels 1-3
% in priority levels 1-3	Cost per square metre GIA
Cost per square metre GIA	Spend on energy per square metre GIA
Annual percentage change in total required maintenance	Consumption of energy (kwh) per square metre GIA
Total spend R&M	Spend on water per square metre GIA
Spend per square metre GIA	Consumption of water (cubic metres) per square metre GIA
% split between planned and reactive	Emissions of carbon dioxide in tonnes per square metre GIA
Operational office property as % of total portfolio/per head of population	% of portfolio with Suitability Survey undertaken in past 5 years
Office space as % of total floor space in operational office buildings	Number of properties with Suitability Survey undertaken in past 5 years
% of office/operational buildings shared with public agencies	Results of last Suitability Survey
Average office floor space per member of staff	% of office/operational buildings shared with public agencies
Annual property cost per workstation	Average office floor space per member of staff
Time predictability of the planning and/or design of capital projects	Annual property cost per workstation
Time predictability of the post-contract phase of capital projects	Operational office property as % of total portfolio/per head of population
Cost predictability of the planning and/or design of capital projects	Office space as % of total floor space in operational office building
Potential Non Operational Property Indicators	
Void Level	Rent Receivable v Budget
Property Empty for more than 6 months	Rent Reviews not served where appropriate

Appendix B – Improvement Plan & Key Areas

Number	Key Area of Focus	Progress	Responsibility	Date
1	Develop key aims and objectives for the strategic direction in asset use for the authority	Established through business planning processes	Assets Manager	Ongoing
2	Develop an approach to Assets based around a Target Operating Model for a Corporate Landlord.	Target Operating Model needs further development. Key service users and senior engagement is in progress to provide a basis for change.	Assets Manager	Ongoing
3	Challenge services in the use of property and draw out key priorities. Set in place a structured and resourced approach to working with service areas in the future as part of the service planning process.	Asset Challenge has a firmly established a business planning process and Asset is part of departmental SMT meetings.	Assets Manager	Ongoing
4	Develop a comprehensive Asset Management Plan for the council within the next 6 – 12 months. This should build on the development of key aims and objectives both at Strategic and Service levels	This document will be reviewed regularly -	Head of Property Strategy	COMPLETE
5	Set up a corporate group with responsibility for asset management planning which can challenge and ensure that integration with financial planning is undertaken.	Terms of reference established. A CAMG needs authorising by CMT.	Head Property Strategy	Dec-10
6	Arrange a timetable of regular coordination meetings between property and finance	The Assets team meet regularly with Capital Assets Group which contains representation from finance.	Assets Manager	Ongoing

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Number	Key Area of Focus	Progress	Responsibility	Date
7	Introduction of space standards and occupancy standards	Being introduced as part of accommodation strategy.	Head of Corporate Property	Ongoing
8	Establish a robust documented corporate capital prioritisation process	Established via Capital Strategy 2010.	Assets Manager	Aug-10
9	Establish an approach to prioritising maintenance spend on property including provision of KPI to enhance strategic decision making	Under development via Atrium and conditional survey programme. Key milestones include: Population of Atrium system with Condition data and completion of condition, suitability and sufficiency data of legacy estate.	Head of Capital Programmes	Feb-11
10	Organise awareness training on asset management for elected members to outline asset management priorities and key national initiatives affecting this area.	Asset Challenge sessions with Cabinet and Members is ongoing.	Assets Manager	Ongoing
11	Set in place a rolling programme of property review, preferably with other public sector partners in order to challenge the estate on a regular basis.	Ongoing through Asset Challenge Process and Strategic Estate Group	Assets Manager	Ongoing
12	Issue a general requirement for all service reviews to have Asset involvement at an early stage.	Incrementally Asset is becoming involved service reviews	Assets Manager	Ongoing
13	Continue to develop plans improving the approach to statutory compliance and health and safety.	Corporate approach is currently in the process of being reviewed.	Head of Property Strategy	Ongoing
14	Undertake a review and pull together all DDA information on assets so it is held and coordinated corporately- consider setting a budget aside for	Underway-potential capital bid is being put together to the CAG.	Head Property Strategy	Dec-10

Number	Key Area of Focus	Progress	Responsibility	Date
	carrying out priority DDA related work .			
15	Develop appropriate policies/procedures for the management of historic assets	No progress to date	Head Property Strategy	Mar-11
16	Develop relevant environmental/sustainability policies relating to the management and use of assets.	Being driven via Carbon Management Programme and Energy Management.	Head Property Strategy	Ongoing
17	Develop an intranet based approach with departments to report information on property relevant to the specific service and property users.	Intranet portal is in the system, but requires profile raising activities.	Head Property Strategy	Ongoing
18	Establish KPI benchmarking arrangement with a small number of similar organisations.	Considering joining ACES NW group to benchmark the portfolio	Head Property Strategy	Feb-11
19	Establish an integrated and rolling programme of condition, suitability and sufficiency	KPI's being developed,	Head of Capital Programmes and Procurement	Ongoing
20	Look for opportunities for the shared use of assets through closer working with other public agencies and joint mapping of assets.	Good progress through GIS and regular formal meetings with Partners in the Cheshire East Strategic Estates Group.	Head Property Strategy	Ongoing
21	Establish Community Asset Strategy	Community Asset Strategy has been developed.	Head Property Strategy	Complete
22	Review of the remaining TNRP stock to ensure they are being retained for clearly defined purposes and develop clear recommendations for retention or	TNRP stock being scoped as part of Asset Challenge	Head of Asset	Dec-10

Number	Key Area of Focus	Progress	Responsibility	Date
	disposal.			
23	Embrace new technology and agile working methods.	Office accommodation strategy supports new ways of working and is driven through the Asset Challenge	Office Accommodation Manager	Ongoing
24	Continue to investigate and implement sustainable solutions within new and maintenance programmes of work including energy efficiency measures	A number of projects have included sustainable solutions. A target list has been created of high energy users in readiness for programme roll-out.	All	Ongoing
25	Develop Innovative approaches to asset development	Requirement to develop a project brief for exploring the potential of new approaches.	Head of Asset	Ongoing
26	Non operational estate review	Review underway and report by end of the year	Head of Asset	Dec 2010
27	Review of Charging Policy	Process to be undertaken.	Head of Asset	June 2011

Appendix C – Corporate Landlord Operating Model

Governance
Cabinet / Sponsor / CMT / CAMG

Internal Customers

External Customers

Asset Managent Serice

Asset Manager

Strategic and Commercial Property Management

Operational Estate Management

Commercial Asset Management & Delivery

- Commercial Landlord
- SLA/Lease Management
- Property development
- Acquisitions
- Disposal
- Valuations
- Rent Reviews
- External Customer Liaison

Strategic Property Planning

- *Strategic Asset Planning*
- *Programme Office*
- *Strategic Space Planning*
- *New Ways of working*
- *Property policy*
- *Capital Programme Planning*
- *Strategy*
- *Property Information*
- *Terrier*
- *Records management (statutory and asset property records only)*

Operational Asset Management
Management & Planning

Delivery
- Corporate Landlord
- Space Management
- Space planning
- Space allocation
- SLA management
- Asset Management Planning
- Capital Programme & Project Management
- Design Teams
- CDMC
- Cost Management
- Customer Liaison

Hard FM
Management & Planning

Delivery
- PPM Strategy
- R&M
- PPM
- Stat Compliance (Asbestos/legionella/ DDA/FRA)
- Building & Conditions Surveyors
- Building energy
- Grounds Maintenance

Soft FM
Management & Planning

Delivery
- Catering
- Building cleaning
- Building management
- Concierge services
- Security
- Mail
- Janitorial / Handyman services
- Reception and related services
- Porterage
• Event Management & Room Booking

Supply Chain   **Delivery**

Capital Projects   **R&M**   **Soft FM**

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Appendix D –Schedule of Shared Assets between the Cheshire East Council and Cheshire West and Chester Council

Shared Assets	
Richard House, Chester	Freehold
Backford Hall, Chester	Freehold
Goldsmith House, Chester	Freehold
Nexus House, Chester	Freehold
Kelly House, Chester	Leasehold
Merchants House, Chester	Leasehold
Nicholas House , Chester	Leasehold
Phoenix House, Winsford	Freehold
Castle Square Car Park, Chester	Freehold
Chester Record Office, Chester	Freehold
Watling Street, Northwich	Freehold
Chapel Lane, Wilmslow	Freehold
Dalton House, Middlewich	Leasehold
Education Library Store, Winsford	Leasehold

Shared Assets	
Davy Court, Astmoor, Runcorn	Leasehold
Picow Farm Store, Runcorn	User Rights
Tatton Park, Knutsford	Leasehold
Burwardsley Outdoor Education Centre	Freehold
Beeston Outdoor Education Centre	Freehold
Tattenhall Outdoor Education Centre	Freehold
Delamere Outdoor Education Centre	Freehold
Conway Centre, Llanfairpwll, Anglesey	Leasehold

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Glossary of Terms

Term	Description
Assets	Terms applies to buildings, land, Infrastructure and ICT. Asset with regards to this document applies to buildings.
Asset Management Service	Operational and Strategic management of buildings and property
Cheshire East Council (THE COUNCIL)	A unitary council created in 2009
Sustainable Communities Strategy	Corporate document setting out priorities in delivery strong communities for Cheshire East
Corporate Plan	Strategic plan for delivering key objectives that will fulfil the key priorities set out in the Sustainable Communities Strategy
Enabling Strategies	Strategies that facilitate the delivery of Corporate and Service Priorities
Service Priorities	Operational Service objectives which support the Corporate Plan and Sustainable Communities
Capital Strategy	A process of allocating funds to buildings and infrastructure
Capital Asset Group	Governance process for the Corporate Strategy
CAA	Comprehensive Area Assessment delivered by the Audit Commission which provides a cross service assessment of services. Now defunct.
Rationalisation	A process of alignment with service requirements.
GIS	Geographic Information System which stores and analyses spatial information
CIPFA	Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy
Operational Asset	Buildings from core Council services are delivered
Non-Operational Asset	Buildings and land owned by the Council but not core to service delivery
Atrium	A property data system
Asset Challenge	A process of challenging the use of buildings and property within the Council
Corporate Landlord	The transfer of the ownership and management of all operational buildings to the Corporate Property Service, including repairs and maintenance, procuring & paying for running costs and the payment of all bills. The costs are then recovered from occupiers via an inclusive 'landlord's charge'.

Term	Description
Total Place	An approach that integrates all public sector service delivery into one "joined up" offering.
Capital Programme	Spending on Assets (see definition for "Assets")
NWEIP	North West Improvement and Efficiency Partnership
NWCH	North West Construction Hub
DDA	Disabilities Discrimination Act
LGR	Local Government Re-organisation

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CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

REPORT TO: CABINET

Date of Meeting:18th October 2010
Report of: Head of Policy and Performance
Subject/Title: Single Equality and Inclusion Scheme and Action Plan 2010-2013
Portfolio Holder: Cllr D Brown Portfolio Holder Performance and Capacity

1.0   Report Summary

1.1   This report introduces Cabinet to the Single Equality and Inclusion Scheme and Action Plan 2010 – 2013 and the Equality Impact Assessment Guidance.

2.0   Decision Requested

2.1   Cabinet is recommended to approve the Single Equality and Inclusion Scheme and Action Plan 2010 – 2013 and the Equality Impact Assessment Guidance.

3.0   Reasons for Recommendations

3.1   At the CMT meeting held on 13th October 2009 Corporate Management Team authorised an Interim Single Equality Scheme and Action Plan 2009-10 to set out the Council's overall commitment to equality and inclusion.

A revised draft Single Equality and Inclusion Scheme was written and approved by CMT on 2nd March 2010. The Scheme was in draft form to allow us to consult widely with partners, voluntary, faith and community stakeholders, staff and citizens so that their views could also be reflected in our Scheme and Action Plan.

Although the consultation period did not result in a vast number of comments, the stakeholders who responded were experts in their areas and their feedback has helped to refine and strengthen the Scheme. Consultees felt that disability access to Council buildings, services and communications needed to be given higher priority so this area has been further enhanced in the Action Plan in light of this feedback. Following comments from specific disability interest groups some actions have been made more specific and relevant to this particular group. The Scheme has also been revised to encompass the

Council's corporate policy on equality and inclusion with commitment and responsibility identified for Council managers.

Single Equality and Inclusion Scheme and Action Plan 2010-2013 (Appendix A and B) Equality Impact Assessment Guidance (Appendix C)

Scheme Aims and Objectives

The Single Equality and Inclusion Scheme (SEIS) is a public commitment showing how Cheshire East Council intends to meet the duties placed on it by equality legislation. The SEIS is relevant to all activities of the Council and to employees. Employees and Cheshire East citizens should all be afforded the opportunities to achieve their potential without prejudice or discrimination.

The Council has developed a singular approach to equality and inclusion, bringing together existing disability, race and gender equality agendas and aligned them with key legislative requirements, guidance and principles outlined in the Equality Act 2010.

The Scheme covers our statutory equality duties in relation to race, disability, gender, age, sexual orientation, religion/belief, pregnancy and maternity and marriage and civil partnerships. We have also identified four additional groups: carers, transgender people, gypsies and travellers and socially and economically deprived people for specific action because these groups can often be forgotten or hidden.

The three year action plan will focus on seven areas:

- To have a modern and diverse workforce

- To foster community engagement and satisfaction

- To have a responsive service and excellent customer care

- To understand our communities

- To embed and promote equality within partnerships, procurement and commissioning

- To have an effective performance framework and demonstrate continuous improvement and leadership

- To attain the Equality Framework for Local Governments' (EFLG) "Achieving" level within the lifespan of this 2010 – 2013 Scheme

To assist Council Services in delivering responsive services and excellent customer care, new Equality Impact Assessment Guidance has been developed. An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is a way to make sure individuals and teams think carefully about the likely impact of policies or procedures, strategies, functions and services, to identify

any unmet needs, and to provide a basis for action to improve services where appropriate. The EIA guidance has been devised to reduce the burden on services by being as flexible and simple as possible

Resource Implications

Services will be required to undertake EIA's on all strategies, policies functions and procedures. The EIA process has been developed to be part of the design of the policy, function or procedure and so should be more easily completed as part of the drafting process. The guidance uses a three page template and this is vastly reduced from the previous resource intense process that was used by some predecessor Councils. A one day in-house training course contained within the Corporate Training Directory is available to equip staff with the knowledge and skills needed to complete the EIA. Services will also need to review their workforce profile, current information shows that the Council's workforce is not representative of the Cheshire East community. Representation of people with disabilities and people from ethnic minority communities needs to be increased to achieve the Councils aim of having a modern and diverse workforce.

Conclusion

Cheshire East Council's new equality framework is based on the principles that:

- "A more equal and inclusive society protects and promotes equality, real freedom and opportunity in a way where people can value and realise their potential.
- "A more equal society recognises people's different needs, situations and goals, and removes the barriers that limit what people can do and be."
- "A more equal society does not constrain growth or prosperity. On the contrary, by focusing on those groups who experience persistent disadvantage because of factors beyond their control, a more equal society uses scarce resources efficiently, increases the level and quality of human capita, and creates more stability, all necessary to promote growth and prosperity"

Put simply it is about what we as a Council can do to create a fairer society and recognises that:

- Equality is an issue for us all
- We don't all start from the same place
- To create a fairer society we need to recognise different needs.

4.0   Wards Affected

4.1   All

5.0   Local Ward Members

5.1   All

6.0   Policy Implications including - Climate Change
**   - Health**

6.1   No implications for climate change

6.2   Policy implications for health are recognised within the Single Equality and Inclusion Scheme. The Scheme will support the addressing of health inequalities

7.0   Financial Implications (Authorised by the Borough Treasurer)

7.1   None

8.0   Legal Implications (Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)

8.1   As detailed in the Report the Single Equality and Inclusion Scheme 2010-13 will cover the Council's statutory duties and responsibilities under current equality legislation

9.0   Risk Management

9.1   The Council will not meet its statutory duties and responsibilities contained in equality legislation if the Single Equality and Inclusion Scheme 2010=13 is not approved

10.0   Background and Options

10.1   The comments and suggestions made by consultees have been considered and where appropriate incorporated into this revised Single Equality and Inclusion Scheme and Action Plan and Equality Impact Assessment Guidance.

11.0   Overview of Year One and Term One Issues

11.1   As detailed within the Report

12.0   Access to Information

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer:

Name: Carol Haydon
Designation: Policy and Research Manager
Tel No: 01270 685867
 Email: carol.haydon@cheshireeast.gov.uk

Appendices

Appendix A Single Equality and Inclusion Scheme 2010-13
Appendix B Action Plan 2010-13
Appendix C Equality Impact Assessment Guidance

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Cheshire East Council
Single Equality and Inclusion
Scheme 2010-2013

Contents

Section   **Page**

1. Introduction Chief Executive and Portfolio Holder for Performance and Capacity

Cheshire East Council is committed to providing high quality, customer focused services for all people living in, working in or visiting the Borough. We are determined to further develop our Equality and Inclusion agenda to meet our statutory responsibilities, provide quality customer services and to promote Equality throughout our corporate aims and objectives. Our aim is to deliver "**Inclusion for All"**.

Our Commitment and Vision

The Council's Single Equality and Inclusion Scheme will support and supplement the Council's corporate priorities, as set out in our Corporate Plan. This Scheme is a working document and will also act as the Council's Corporate Equality Policy.

Cheshire East is committed to providing high-quality, customer-focused services for all people living in, working in or visiting the area. Promoting fairness and providing equality and inclusion is one of our important values, and relates to:

- Accessing the Council's services
- Accessing employment opportunities with the Council, or with its contractors who supply goods or services to the Council
- Accessing voluntary work supported by the Council
- Developing policies and plans that impact upon communities and individuals

2. Equality Framework

Underpinning Equality Principles

Cheshire East Council's new equality framework is based on the principles that:

- "A more equal and inclusive society protects and promotes equality, real freedom and opportunity in a way where people can value and realise their potential.
- "A more equal society recognises people's different needs, situations and goals, and removes the barriers that limit what people can do and be."
- "A more equal society does not constrain growth or prosperity. On the contrary, by focusing on those groups who experience persistent disadvantage because of factors beyond their control, a more equal society uses scarce resources efficiently, increases the level and quality of human capita, and creates more stability, all necessary to growth and prosperity"

Put simply it is about what we as a Council can do to create a fairer society and recognises that:

- Equality is an issue for us all
- We don't all start from the same place
- To create a fairer society we need to recognise different needs.

2.1 Managing Equality and Inclusion at Cheshire East

The Leader of the Council and Chief Executive provide leadership and promotion of equality and inclusion throughout the Council.

Corporate Management Team (CMT) will be accountable for the implementation and enforcement of this Scheme. This will strengthen the Council's commitment to the Scheme, as it will be owned centrally and not by just one section of the Council. The ethos of the scheme will be thread through all corporate plans and policies and will be apparent in all Council activities.

Heads of Services and Service Managers implement Equality Impact Assessments and Equality Schemes in their respective service areas and support staff enabling them to contribute towards the delivery of key objectives in the scheme.

Equality and Inclusion Team co-ordinates the Fairness and Inclusion Group, update equalities policies to reflect current legislation and monitors relevant performance indicators, action plans.

Corporate Equality Group (CEG) Equality Champions help raise the profile of equality and inclusion among all employers of the Council. Within this role the CEG will:

- Inform services about key issues affecting the Council in relation to equality and inclusion
- Review, monitor and report progress on dealing with equality and inclusion issues
- Influence and ensure equality and inclusion are embedded into the culture of the organisation
- Steer and advise services in relation to the implementation of our duties under equality legislation

Fairness and Inclusion Group (FIG) will be set up to oversee the progress of the Equality Impact Assessments. The group includes members of staff from all the Council's divisions, a representative from the unions and identified Equalities Champions.
The FIG will meet quarterly to:

- Review Equality Impact Assessments.
- Monitor the progress of equality action plans and report annually.

Human Resources Team ensures HR policies reflect current legislation and best practice and provides appropriate training and development to Members and employees.

Staff uphold the aims and principles of the scheme and act as an internal consultation group.

Unions are consulted on equality issues and have the responsibility of representing the views and concerns of staff on equality issues and supporting the continuous improvement of equalities procedures and policies.

Community Groups and Partner Organisations offer feedback and information to support the development of equalities policies.

Cheshire East Annual Equality and Inclusion Conference offers a means of celebrating achievements, consultation and feedback for employees, customers, partners and stakeholders in the support and development of Cheshire East's equalities policies, procedures and functions.

2.2 Revised Single Equality and Inclusion Scheme (SEIS) 2010 - 2013

The Single Equality and Inclusion Scheme (SEIS) is a public commitment showing how Cheshire East Council intends to meet the duties placed on it by the equality legislation. The SEIS is relevant to all activities of the Council and to employees. These areas of activity include, for example, employment, education, and housing, the provision of services and the policies and procedures that govern them. Employees and Cheshire East citizens should all be afforded the opportunities to achieve their potential without prejudice or discrimination.

Cheshire East Council has adopted and developed a singular approach to equality and inclusion, bringing together existing Disability, Race and Gender equality agendas and aligned them with key legislative requirements, guidance and principles outlined in the new Equality Act 2010. This Act brings together discrimination law introduced over four decades through legislation and regulations. It replaces most of the previous discrimination legislation, which is now repealed. The Act covers discrimination because of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. These categories are known in the Act as **'protected characteristics'.**

This Single Equality and Inclusion Scheme (SEIS), action plan and Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Guidance were all subject to public consultation between 1 May and 11 July 2010. The comments and suggestions from the consultation were reviewed and considered, along with the new legislation and requirements have resulted in constructive changes to the scheme, action plan and EIA template and guidance.

The Council has identified a total of 10 Protected Characteristics that will form the main focus of this SEIS 2010-2013. However, if during the lifespan of this scheme, any other Protected Characteristic is identified as being significantly or disproportionately disadvantaged in terms of accessing services or opportunities, the Council will take all reasonable steps to redress this.

The Ten Protected Characteristics for this scheme are:

- Age
- Carers
- Disability
- Gypsy Travellers
- Race
- Religion and/or Belief

- Sex

- Sexual Orientation

- Socio-Economic Disadvantage

- Transgender

2.3 Revised Single Equality and Inclusion Scheme Action Plan

We have further developed and revised our (SEIS) action plan as a result of the comments and suggestions made from the consultation and new legislative requirements and guidelines. This three year action plan will focus on seven areas:

- To have a modern and diverse workforce

- To foster community engagement and satisfaction

- To have a responsive service and excellent customer care

- Understand our community

- Embedding and promoting equality within partnerships, procurement and commissioning

- To have an effective performance framework and demonstrate continuous improvement and leadership

- Attaining the Equality Framework for Local Governments' (EFLG) "Achieving" level within the lifespan of this 2010 – 2013 Scheme.

The action plan which is a 'live' document and therefore subject to update and review, sets out how the Council will implement its equality and inclusion agenda. It brings together the work which is currently being done across the Council, together with setting out priority areas where further work needs to be done.

2.4 Equality Impact Assessments Guidance

An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is a method that enables local authorities to examine proposed or existing policies, procedures and functions in order to identify and eliminate (or minimise) any negative impact these may have on any particular group or groups of people. Equality Impact Assessments also help to identify any unmet needs.

To reflect Cheshire East's commitment of *"Inclusion for All"*, we will assess all the protected characteristics outlined in both the Council's SEIS and 2010 Equality Act. When undertaking EIAs the Council will ensure that the procedure is easier to use and more effective in the assessment of the likely impact of our policies, procedures and functions on all our clients, staff, suppliers and community representatives. Service managers and relevant officers will undertake (EIA) training. The outcomes resulting from the Council's EIA's will be published.

2.5 Involvement and Consultation

To ensure the successful delivery of any EIA's the Council understands the significance of qualitative data collection. This very important aspect of the assessment process will need the active involvement and consultation with different groups of people, the organisations representing them, people from across the Council, service users, strategic partners and voluntary and community organisations, including specialist groups.

2.6 Equality Framework for Local Government

The Equality Framework for Local Government (EFLG) builds on and recognises the work that councils have already undertaken under the old Equality Standard for Local Government. It is based on three levels of achievement, 'Developing', 'Achieving' and 'Excellent'.

2.7 Training & Development

Equality and Inclusion training and development will be available for all employees and councillors and will be fully integrated into the councils learning and development program, with additional training available based on job requirements.

3. Legal Framework

3.1 Equality Act 2010

The new Equality Act is the most significant piece of equality legislation for a generation. It will simplify, streamline and strengthen the law. It will give individuals greater protection from unfair discrimination. It will make it easier for employers and companies to understand their responsibilities. And it will set a new standard for public services to treat everyone, no matter what their background or personal circumstances, with dignity and respect.

3.2 What has changed?

A new single Equality Act will be implemented in stages from October 2010 and will pull all the current Acts and Regulations into one single Act (except the Human Rights Act). It will also strengthen equality law by:

- Introducing a new public sector duty to consider reducing socioeconomic inequalities;
- Putting a new integrated Equality Duty on public bodies;
- Using public procurement to improve equality;

- Extending the scope to use positive action;
- Protecting carers from discrimination;
- Clarifying the protection for breastfeeding mothers;
- Strengthening protection from discrimination for disabled people; and
- Protecting people from dual discrimination - direct discrimination because of a combination of two protected characteristics.

3.3 The Human Rights Act 1998

Public authorities have a duty under the Human Rights Act 1998 (HRA) to act compatibly with rights under the European Convention for the Protection of Fundamental Rights and Freedoms (the Convention). It is unlawful for public authorities to breach Convention rights in any area of their activity, including service provision or employment and work-related activities. Organisations not in the public sector have a duty to act compatibly with Convention rights only in relation to functions of a public nature that they may carry out. The public functions covered by this Code are functions of a public nature under the Human Rights Act 1998 (HRA).

4. Procurement

We have published guidance to ensure that contractors and suppliers meet our legal requirements to promote Equality and Inclusion. This will also cover the need to ensure that contractual arrangements are accessible to small and medium sized enterprises and the voluntary sector. Potential contractors and suppliers are required to provide information on their approach to Equality and Inclusion and evidence that they have relevant systems in place for legal compliance.

In simple terms the aim of the Council's procurement process is to ensure that council contractors represent all business sectors/communities within Cheshire East, that they all have an equality agenda, and that contractors demonstrate and implement their agenda through policies, statements and actions.

The Council will consider Positive Action and Reasonable Adjustments as a way of promoting and attaining a more diverse contractor base.

5. Partnerships

All partnership working arrangements that the Council participates in will be subject to EIA to ensure that there are no adverse impacts on a particular community as a result of the partnership activity or governance arrangements.

6. Monitoring

Cheshire East Council has a legal duty to ensure that its services and employment are provided fairly, but without effective equality monitoring the Council will not know whether its equality policies are working. Equality monitoring can help all services to ensure that they are reaching and

offering equality of opportunity to all individuals and groups, and can help us to make changes based on facts and not assumptions. To achieve these obligations the Council has adopted the following to ensure monitoring is captured:

6.1 Three Year Single Equality and Inclusion Scheme Action Plan

Equality and Inclusion Groups and Teams will monitor the overall progress of actions and report on an annual basis, through the **Cheshire East Equality and Inclusion Annual Conference** where achievements, opportunities, outcomes and development will be presented to Members, Partners, Stakeholders, and Employees, Business Sector, Communities and their support groups. Opportunities for consultation and feedback will assist in measuring the levels of success against actions and timeframes.

6.2 Service Standards and Performance Management

We want to deliver services to a clear standard. Performance indicators measure the achievement of these standards. Performance indicators also allow us to see how we compare with others and identify areas that require improvement.

The Council's *workforce profile data at 31/03/2010 shows that performance is good in some areas and very poor in others. The Council employs 6,650 non schools staff, of this 1.22% are from ethnic minority groups but only 0.88% are represented in the top 5% of earners. Employees with a disability make up 0.98% of the workforce with 0.57% represented in the top 5% of earners. Encouragingly women make up 53.42% of the top 5% of earners. This information identifies the key areas for improvement in workforce representation, and is monitored by the Corporate Management Team and Cabinet each quarter. Actions have been included in the Action Plan to improve the diversity of the Council's workforce.

The data is that which is currently available on the Council's workforce profile, but it should be noted that there are significant information gaps in the profile due to the amalgamation of workforce information from the previous constituent authorities. A key action in the attached Action Plan has been developed to ensure that the workforce profile information is accurate for Cheshire East Council.

6.3 Equality Impact Assessments

Issues arising from Equality Impact Assessments feed into the Single Equality Scheme Action Plan and are monitored regularly by the Equality Team and by (FIG) on a quarterly basis.

6.4 Equality Monitoring

This guidance provides best practice advice with regards to the monitoring of Cheshire East's employees and customers to ensure everyone has opportunity and inclusion in relation to employment and access to services. Equality monitoring also applies to businesses and other service providers seeking to work in partnership with the Council.

It is becoming increasingly important for us to monitor who our customers are, and to find out why certain people are not using our services. If we know who our customers are, we will know if for example black and minority ethnic people, disabled people, older people, people belonging to different religions, and people of different sexual orientations are using our services and equally importantly if they are not.

Equality monitoring in employment enables us to ensure that our workforce reflects the diversity of Cheshire East and highlights areas for improvement when it does not. In relation to procurement equality monitoring enables us to ensure that contracts are delivered in a way that promotes opportunity for all providers.

By collecting monitoring information the Council is able to provide evidence that we are reaching the people that need our services. This will enable us to set realistic targets based on factual data, for example, how we are going to tackle under-representation and inequalities through service and/or equality action plans.

6.5 Complaints

The Council takes all complaints seriously. If anyone feels that the Council has failed to implement the Equality Policy in the service they receive, a complaints procedure is available and can be obtained by contacting the Council. A complaint can be made in a number of ways.

- Visit our website www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/customerfeedback
- Call us on 0300 123 5038
- Email us at letusknow@cheshireeast.gov.uk
- Complete the ' Let Us Know' form
- Write to us at: Let us Know, Customer Relations Team, Cheshire East Council, Westfields, Middlewich Road, Sandbach, CW11 1HZ
- Call and see us at any of our Customer Service Centres
- Fax us on 01625 504191

6.6 Joint Strategic Needs Assessment JSNA

Cheshire East's Joint Strategic Needs Assessment is a shared statement on the health and social care needs of people living in Cheshire East which the Council and Primary Care Trust have a legal duty to undertake, and use to develop and improve services.

The Joint Needs Assessment pulls together a range of needs assessment, and qualitative and quantitative data within a more joined up framework for commissioners to utilise, to develop and improve services. It is also a source of information for the local community and 3rd Sector organisations to find out more about health and social care.

7. What we know about our Communities

Cheshire East Population by broad age groups

Legend:
- 0 to 4 yrs
- 5 to 10 yrs
- 11 to 14 yrs
- 16 to 44 yrs
- 45 to 64 yrs
- 65 to 74 years
- 75 +

Pie chart values: 5%, 7%, 6%, 35%, 28%, 10%, 9%
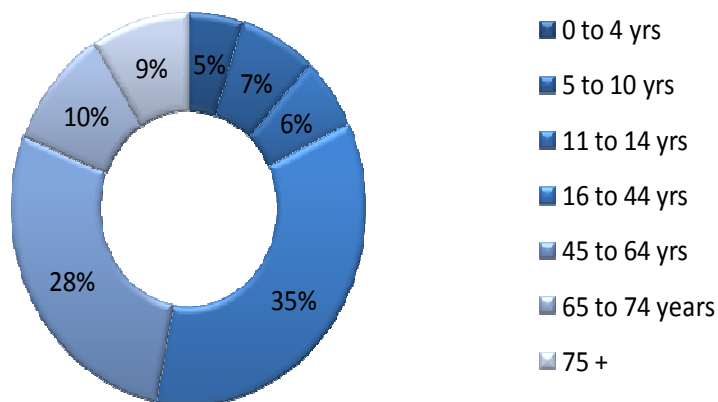
Age profile: 4% of our residents are aged 16-18, 6% are in the 19-24 age group, 33% are between 25 and 49, and 17% are between 50 and retirement age (male 65/ female 60). The other 40% are either 0-15 year-olds (18%) or of retirement age (22%).

Cheshire East has an age structure slightly older than that of England and Wales and has an aging population. 17% of the population were over 65 at the time of the 2001 Census. This had risen to 18% in 2007 and is forecast to reach 26% by 2026. (Cheshire East Population Forecasts).

The number of older people (aged 65+) has increased by 20% from around 54,200 in 1991 to 64,800 in 2007. The increase was greater in the Congleton area (29%) than in the Crewe & Nantwich (19%) and the Macclesfield area (15%).A higher proportion of older people living in income-deprived households live in the Macclesfield area.

Carers

- Carers may be as young as 7 or 8 years, looking after a disabled parent or other siblings.
- Carers can be older people themselves, perhaps in their 80's looking after a partner or friend of similar age.
- Carers come from diverse cultural and religious communities.
- Carers live in diverse geographical areas, from urban towerblocks to remote rural areas.
- Carers have diverse relationships; they may be heterosexual, gay or lesbian.
- Anyone looking after a person with an illness or disability, whatever their situation, is considered a carer with equal rights to help, support, information and services.
- Every day another 5.5 thousand people take on a caring responsibility.
- One in eight adults are carers: around six million people!
- There are 5.2 million carers in England and Wales.
- Carers save the economy £57 billion per year, an average of £10,000 per carer.
- Over 3 million people juggle care with work.
- 125 million people provide over 50 hours of care per week.
- People providing high levels of care are twice as likely to be permanently sick or disabled.
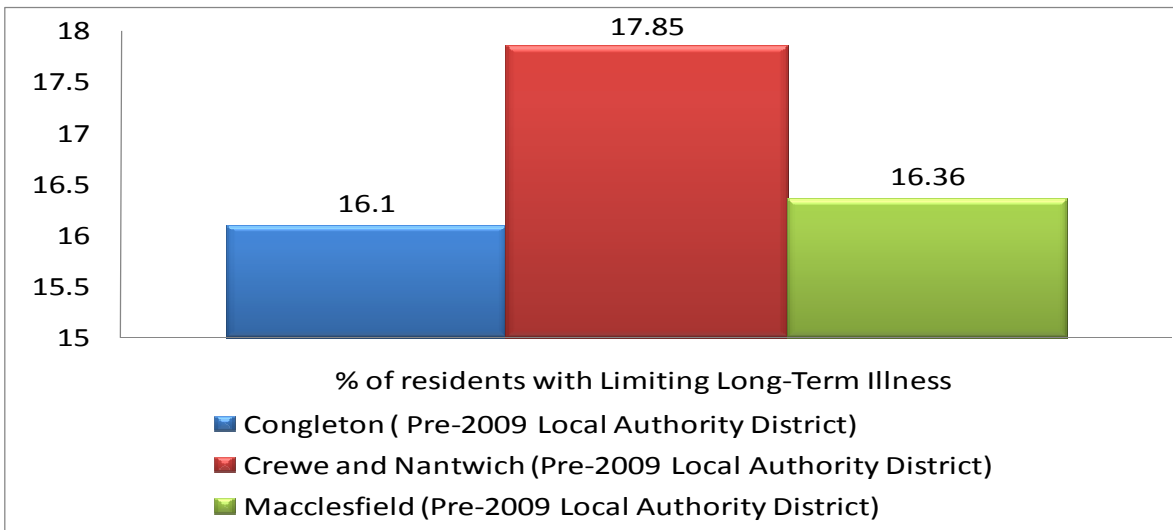
Disability Profile: 31,600 (14.5%) of residents are disabled. All but 5,700 of these people (2.6% of all working-age residents) have a work-limiting disability.

Just over fourteen percent of the working age population in Cheshire East are disabled. This figure is lower than both the North West (19.6%) and England & Wales (18.2%).

It is also estimated that 21,700 (10.0%) of working-age people are both DDA and "work-limited" disabled (i.e. their disability restricts the sort of work they can do). A further 5,700 (2.6%) are DAA-only disabled and 4.200 (2.0%) are only work-limited
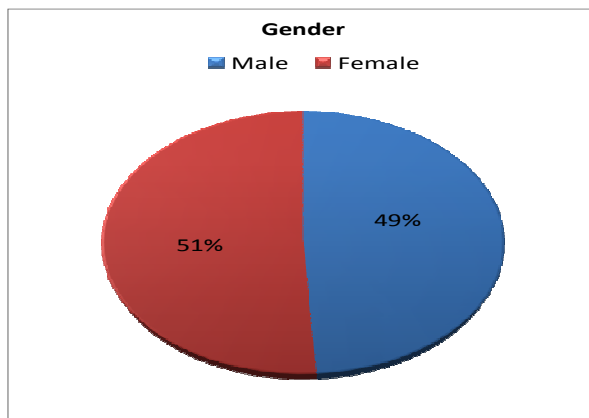
Gender Profile: Just over half (50.9%) of all Cheshire East residents are female. However, among residents of working age, the majority (52.9%) are male.

Gender inequality can be understood in terms of difference in pay between male and female workers overall as a society or within similar designations. It can also be understood by looking at the proportions of both men and women who work in different parts of Cheshire East and/or Service Sectors

Pregnancy and Maternity matters can also impact on gender equality.

% of non - white British groups in (CE)2007
ONS Ethnicity Population Estimates

Legend:
- White: Irish
- White: Other
- White & Black Caribbean
- White & Black African
- White & Asian
- Other Dual Heritage
- Asian/British: Indian
- Asian/British: Pakistani
- Asian/British: Bangladeshi
- Asian/British : Other
- Black/British: Black Caribbean
- Black/British: Black African
- Black/British: Other
- Chinese
- Other Ethnic Group

Pie chart values: 12%, 33%, 5%, 2%, 3%, 4%, 10%, 6%, 2%, 3%, 3%, 4%, 1%, 7%, 5%
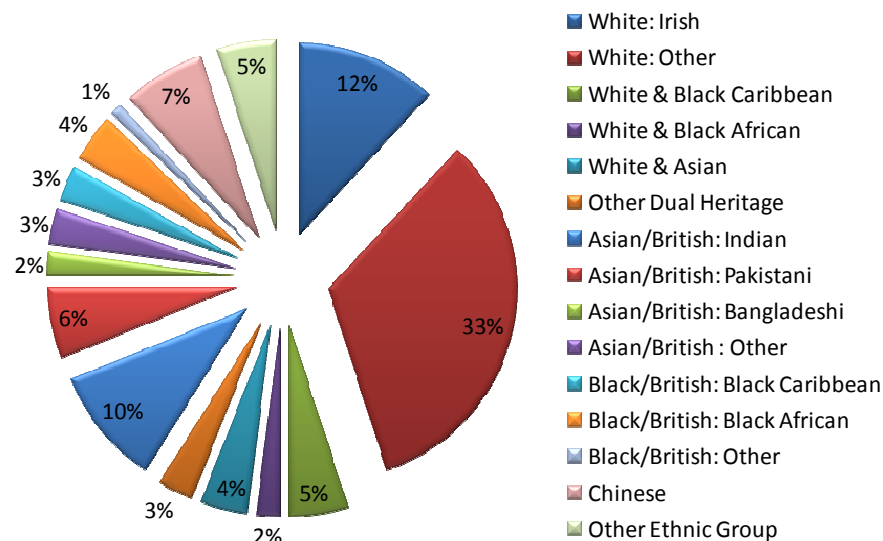
Cheshire East's population by Religion 2001 Census

Pie chart values: 80.3%, 12%, 6.5%, 0.4%, 0.2%, 0.2%, 0.2%, 0.2%, 0.1%

Legend:
- Christian 80.3%
- No religion 12.2%
- Religion not stated 6.5%
- Muslim 0.4%
- Hindu 0.2%
- Jewish 0.2%
- Buddhist 0.2%
- Sikh <0.1%
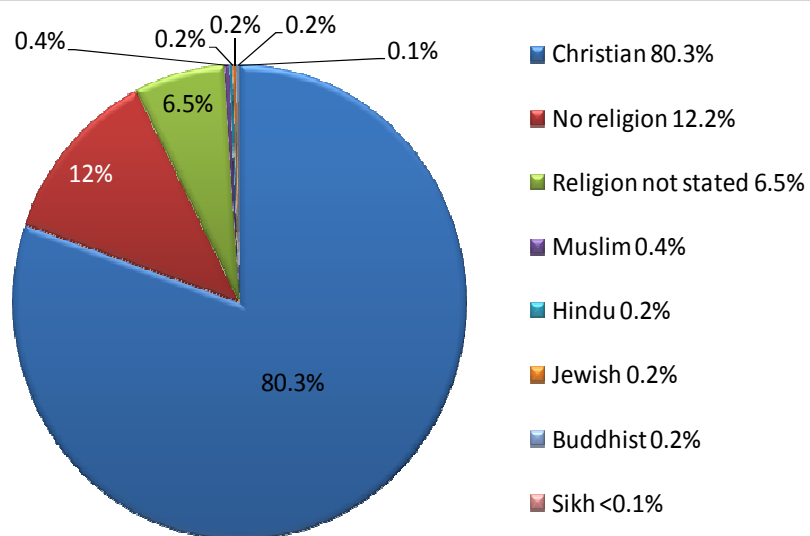
Race Profile: The latest (2007) data suggest that around 13,200 (3.7%) of Cheshire East's residents are from non-white ethnic minority groups. Of these non-white residents, Asians (5,000, or 1.4% of the total population) form the largest group, followed by people of mixed race (3,300, or 0.9%). 2,000 residents (0.6% of the total population) are Black and 2,800 (0.8%) are Chinese or from other non-white groups.

Gypsy Traveller Community: The 2007 Cheshire Partnership Area Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation and Related Services Assessment identified an additional requirement of between 37 and 54 pitches across Cheshire East over the period 2006-2016 plus 4 pitches for travelling show people (in the former Congleton area).

Migration: Since the 2004 EU expansion, there has been a large inflow of migrant workers from Eastern Europe (although evidence suggests a sharp decline in these inflows since 2006). There has been a particularly large flow of these migrants – mostly Poles - into Crewe & Nantwich, adding to Crewe's existing Polish community.

Religion and Belief: More than 80% or Cheshire East residents are Christian (Census 2001), higher than the national average. 3,275 people are from the Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim or Sikh faiths (Census 2001), but demographic changes since the last Census are expected to have increased this number.

Immigration from Eastern Europe, particularly Poland in the Crewe area, is expected to have also increased the numbers of Roman Catholics.

Many faith play important and similar roles as third sector and community support groups do in supporting the vulnerable and disadvantaged.

Sexual Orientation

Around six percent of the adult population are estimated to be lesbian, gay or bisexual. Across Cheshire East this equates to 17,700 adults. Between 2006 and 2008 there were 276 civil partnerships across Cheshire.

Research and evidence of LGBT Enterprise and business opportunities in the North West is limited. The LGF report 'Breaking the Cycle' reports that of the 68 registered LGB charities in the UK, only five are based in the North West.

Socio-Economic Disadvantage

Despite good overall quality of life, there are some areas where the experience is different. 6% of our population live in neighbourhoods classified as being in the 20% most deprived nationally, based on the 2007 indices of Multiple Deprivation. The majority of these neighbourhoods are in Crewe town, with the rest in Wilmslow, Macclesfield and Congleton towns.

Factors that influence inequality include:

- Living in poverty
- Low income
- Caring responsibilities
- Bring up children on your own
- Refugees and people asking for asylum
- In receipt of benefit
- Homelessness
- Worklessness
- Cannot read & write or read & write well
- No legal status

Transgender People

The number of transsexual people in the North West by the end of 2009 is likely to approximate between 600-700 (and this excludes those not seeking gender recognition or reassignment).This is a conservative estimate in the absence of available data, and the real figure is likely to be higher.

The number of transsexual people in Cheshire is likely to be around 100, assuming that the distribution of transsexual people mirrors the distribution of the population in the North West.

8. What we know about our Workforce
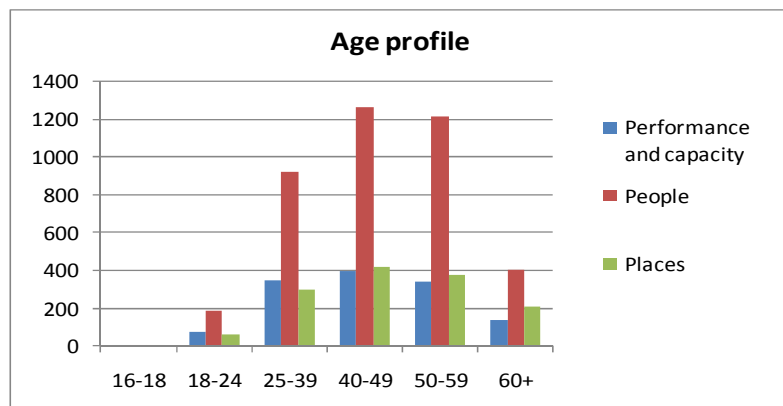
Age profile

Age Profile

The graph demonstrates that employees between the ages of 25 - 49 represent 3,634 of the total workforce or 54.6%. This is proportionately higher than the 33% of 25 – 49 working age group of Cheshire East. Good data collection/intelligence and analysis will determine whether this may be at the detriment to the younger and older people of Cheshire East seeking employment within the Council.

Disability Profile

Disability Profile

Despite displaying the Disability Two Tick symbol and committing to being a "Mindful Employer" the Council acknowledges the need to dramatically improve representation of this protected characteristic at all levels within Cheshire East Council.

We are also interested in understanding why employee monitoring is returning such high null responses when information about disability is requested and why disability is not proportionally represented in Cheshire East Council.
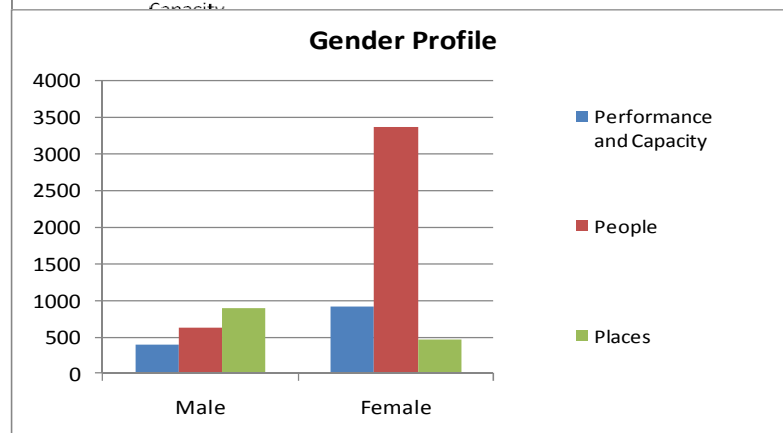
Gender Profile

Gender Profile

Gender inequality can be understood in terms of difference in pay between male and female workers overall as a society or within similar designations. It can also be understood by looking at the proportions of both men and women who work in different parts of the country.

This graph demonstrates a high female presence within Cheshire East Council. There is also a significant female presence in Cheshire East Council top earners with 53.42%.

A gender profile by Service/Department will establish if this figure percentage is representative and proportionate throughout the Council.

Cheshire East None White Britsh Staff
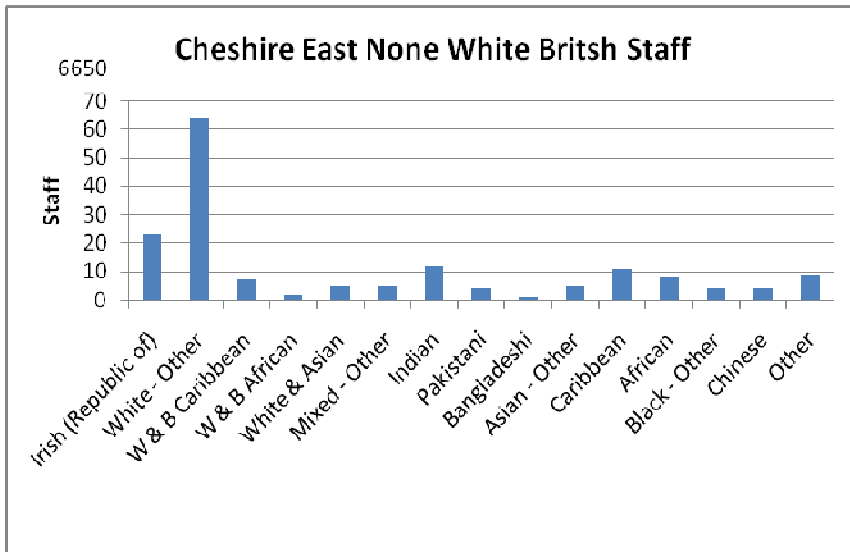
Race Profile

Cheshire East Council Workforce Planning Data as at 31st Jan 2010. From this data we can see that 1.22% of the workforce are non-white this is disproportionate to the estimated 3.7% non-white population of Cheshire East.

The largest groups of non British were white Irish and white other. However the null responses which total 5.3% could significantly alter these dynamics. It highlights the importance of complete data collection.

Carers, Religion and Belief, Sexual Orientation, Transgender,

The Council is committed to developing a greater understanding of these groups, their differing needs and requirements in terms of achieving equality of opportunity either during or seeking employment with Cheshire East Council.

9. Conclusion

Cheshire East Council aspires to become an inclusive council and is seen to be putting the principles of equality and inclusion into practice. The information we have attained will enable the Council to:

- Identify gaps in data collection.
- Establish the purpose and aims of our policies, services or functions.
- Consider any information, data or research that is already available in relation to equalities and what this tells us.
- Make an assessment of the impact or effects on different Communities
- Consider whether there is anything which could be done to remove any adverse impact or effects, or to further promote equality, social inclusion or community cohesion
- Consult those affected and their support framework , for their views and ideas
- Identify any change and/or decide whether to proceed with any new policy, procedures, proposals, or changes to services
- Decide how to best monitor and review policies, services and functions and put forward proposals for any changes
- Where necessary, add the main equality objectives to service plans, action plans etc

- **Formulate an Action Plan to address inequalities, remedy data gaps, improve service delivery, community cohesion and delivery of the corporate objective " inclusion for all"**
- Write up assessments, outcomes and publish these on the Council's website.

Impact Assessment

This policy has been reviewed in accordance with Equalities Legislation on race, disability, age, gender, sexual orientation and gender identity, faith and belief and other protected characteristics.

Review and Assessment

This Equality Policy/Scheme may be amended by Cheshire East Council at any time in order to take into account changes in legislation and best practice.

Advice and guidance on the operation of this policy is available. For further information and advice on the implementation of the policy, or if this publication is required in an alternative format (for example, large type or electronically) please contact the Equality Team tel: 01270 685901 or email: equalityandinclusion@cheshireeast.gov.uk

Policy Created: Monday, August 23, 2010
Co Policy Authors: Carol Haydon, Granville Thelwell
Date Last Reviewed: Monday, August 23, 2010

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SEIS Ref	Action	Lead	Action Deadline	Tasks
1.	**Have a modern and diverse workforce**			
	Ensure the council understands its local labour market	Head of Human Resources & Organisational Development	Sept 2011	Undertake a labour market profile for Cheshire East
	Ensure the Council understands its Workforce		Sept 2011	Undertake an employee survey to profile the Cheshire East Council Workforce
	Understand the barriers equality groups face and the impact this has on achieving a diverse workforce.		Sept 2011	Undertake a project to establish barriers in employment processes
	Monitor staff by equality group to ascertain representation of those recruited, trained, promoted, disciplined and those that leave the Council. Any employee grievances should also be monitored.		Sept 2011	Refresh existing staff monitoring incorporating information on identifying Disability, Sexual Orientation Religion or Belief, Age, Carer status and Transgender Develop an appropriate process for gathering this information
1.2	Identify disparities of pay between men and women within the council. Action plan activity to address disadvantage. Continue regular monitoring	Head of Human Resources & Organisational Development	Apr 2011	Carry out an equal pay audit and present findings.
	Promote good gender equality practice within the Council.		Apr 2011	Promote good gender equality practice
	Promote opportunities for men and women to develop careers in sectors where they are underrepresented		Apr 2011	Develop activities and awareness which look at and question traditional gender specific roles and create an environment of change
1.3	Develop recruitment policies and practices that will encourage a diverse workforce	Head of Human Resources & Organisational Development	June 2011	Carry out EIA on recruitment process and implement actions

				Ongoing monitoring and correlation of applicants to staff profile
	Maintain % of women in the top 5% of council earners		June 2011	Ensure appropriate targets for improving staff representation and profile in terms of equality at all levels within the organisation
	Increase overall % of BME Staff with the Council including into the top 5% of council earners		June 2011	Ensure the recruitment process addresses the need for reasonable adjustment and positive action
1.4	Identify initiatives on how to increase the younger adult population into the council e.g. apprenticeships scheme work placements	Head of Human Resources & Organisational Development	June 2010	Develop apprenticeship scheme and similar to increase young adult representation within the Council and to promote positive relations with the young adults of Cheshire East Develop an apprenticeship scheme, which encourages applications from under-represented groups
1.5	Develop our understanding of how the Council responds to the needs of LGB and Transgender staff	Head of Human Resources & Organisational Development	Sept 2011	Complete the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index and implement actions that come from this
1.6	Ensure a range of inclusive consultations are in place to engage and involve staff before priorities are set.	Head of Human Resources & Organisational Development	Mar 2011	Develop a central point of information and data, with support tools to share across the Council, with staff in order to achieve equality outcomes

1.7	Develop a Council wide Learning and Development programme for Equality and Inclusion	Head of Human Resources & Organisational Development		Ensure Equality and Inclusion training is embedded in the strategy for learning and development Increase the knowledge and competency of Equality and Inclusion at all levels Ensure the Council delivers a range of learning and development interventions to support Councillors and officers to deliver equality outcomes
1.8	Raise the profile of carers and ensure that their specific requirements are considered and understood. e.g. flexible working	Head of Human Resources & Organisational Development	Jan 2011	Monitor systems where strand specific issues can be identified, assessed, actioned and logged.
1.9	Promote and implement workplace policies which support carers in their caring role	Head of Human Resources & Organisational Development	Jan 2011	Identify existing policies that support carers Ensure future policies practices and services take into account the needs of carers Deliver a range of activities to ensure that our workplace practices continue to increase our understanding and support for carers both within the council and throughout Cheshire East
1.10	Develop Equality and Inclusion training specific to the differing needs of people within the Council and as identified by staff themselves	Head of Human Resources & Organisational Development	Ongoing	Ensure Equality and Inclusion training is embedded in the strategy for learning and development Increase the knowledge and competency of Equality and Inclusion at all levels Ensure the Council delivers a range of learning and development interventions to support Councillors and officers to deliver equality outcomes

1.11	Develop internal stakeholder group to assist in E.I.A process through representing the views of staff and unions	Head of Human Resources & Organisational Development	Jan 2011	Develop Stakeholder Groups who will be instrumental in the EIA process ensuring actions are driven forward and barriers to completion are resolved.
1.12	Review Council Policy that reflects our commitment to eliminate harassment and bullying	Head of Human Resources & Organisational Development	Oct 2010	Ensure equality policies reflect the council's commitment to the elimination of harassment and bullying and that our publications and other medias echo this message.
1.13	Deliver employee consultation on the Single Equality and Inclusion Scheme (SEIS), Action Plan. E.I.A Template and Guidance	Head of Human Resources & Organisational Development	April 2010	Develop evidence base to inform policy development and service planning in order that the Council can improve service delivery
1.14	Develop our understanding of how the Council responds to the needs of disabled staff	Head of Human Resources & Organisational Development	Dec 2011	Complete 2 ticks Positive About Disabled People Accreditation form Sign up to the Mindful Employer Charter Conduct a range of internal focus groups leading to an action plan of activity to improve meeting the needs and increasing the representation of people with a disability within Cheshire East Council.
	Retain people who become disabled. Make every effort when employees become disabled to make sure they stay in employment		Ongoing	Review existing policy and procedures to ensure reasonable adjustments are embedded into the process.
	Work with Disability Networks to develop a strategy to raise disability representation at senior levels and throughout the Council.		June 2011	Conduct a range of meetings with various 3rd sector specialists to discuss possible strategies to increase representation of people with disabilities.

SES Ref	Action	Lead	Action Deadline	Tasks
	Examine barriers to disclosure and exclusion for purposes of monitoring disability.		Dec 2011	Conduct a range of internal focus groups leading to an action plan of activity to improve meeting the needs and increasing the representation of people with a disability within Cheshire East Council.
SES Ref	**Action**	**Lead**	Action Deadline	Tasks
2.	To foster community engagement and satisfaction			
2.1	Develop Internal, external and partnership communication strategies that are designed to promote good relations across all local communities	Head of Policy & Performance	Dec 2011	The Council and partners will be demonstrating a commitment to promote equality through contracts, commissioning and partnership working arrangements
2.2	Single Equality and Inclusion Scheme(SEIS) prioritises Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) on Services	Directors/Heads of Service	Dec 2010	Single Equality and Inclusion Scheme incorporates all protected characteristics and groups identified by the Council as disadvantaged. Develop EIA Template and Guidelines to assist in the reviewing of all the Councils current and future services, functions, policies and procedures
2.3	Help to eradicating harassment bullying and hate crime	Head of Policy & Performance	Ongoing	Consult with police to establish CE Council as a hate crime reporting centre in consultation with Customer Services and Safer Communities Team. Develop hate crime report procedure
2.4	Ensure consultation questionnaires and monitoring forms are relevant to identifying short falls in service take up.	Head of Policy & Performance	Sept 2011	Develop internal and external SEIS and EIA consultation procedure to include monitoring process form

			Dec 2011	Review existing data to ascertain gaps in knowledge
	Map all third sector/community groups who currently share working relationships with Cheshire East Council			
2.6	Work with the third and voluntary sectors and local communities to: provide high-level strategic support and advice to the council on equality and inclusion issues	Head of Policy & Performance	Dec 2011	Review and map existing strategies, partnerships, relationships, action plan for shortfalls with a commitment to a partnership strategy that reflects the communities we serve.
			Dec 2011	Organise consultation and engagement to celebrate achievements, consult and get feedback from employees, customers, partners and stakeholders in support of Cheshire East's equalities agenda
2.7	Involve appropriate community and/or stakeholder groups to review service assess and satisfaction	Head of Policy & Performance	Ongoing	Demonstrate a commitment to promote equality through voluntary and community sector capacity building which should result in an expansion of knowledge and a shared understanding.

All EIA will be made available through Cheshire East's Intranet and website |
| 2.8 | Improve Gypsy/Travellers access to, and experiences of, services;

develop and improve services so that services meet their needs; | Head of Policy & Performance | March 2013 | Consult and work with Cheshire Partnership Gypsy Traveller Coordinator and Travellers Community to identify service/communication/cultural gaps and action plan to redress. |
| | Break down service barriers by increasing understanding of their culture and issues they face; and engage and involve Gypsy/Travellers in assessing their needs | | March 2013 | Consult and work with Cheshire Partnership Gypsy Traveller Coordinator and Travellers Community to identify service/communication/cultural gaps and action plan to redress. |
| | Research with the community and | | March 2013 | Consult and work with Cheshire Partnership Gypsy |

				Traveller Coordinator and 3rd sector support groups to identify service/communication/cultural gaps and action plan to redress shortfalls.
2.9	To develop a framework for translation, interpreting and formatting information and literature	Head of Policy & Performance	May 2010	Improve access to services by providing information in differing formats and languages consistently and cost effectively
2.11	Arrange and promote public consultation on the Single Equality and Inclusion Scheme Action Plan and E.I.A's	Equality and Inclusion Team	May 2010	Provide consultation period for staff and residence to contribute towards the Councils SEIS and 3 year Action Plan Ensure their views are reflected in the Scheme and Action Plans.
2.12	Include carers as key stakeholders in the development of relevant policies	Head of Policy & Performance	Ongoing	Ensure carers and their support groups contribute to the decision making process of relevant policies, procedures and services
2.13	The council to recognise the inclusion of carers and design services around individual carer needs and to influence and support community care service providers and support organisations	Director of Adult Services	Ongoing	Ensure we have initiated work on understanding the socio-economic inclusion and/or exclusion of carers. Understand why carers who are not benefiting from accessing programmes and projects are not engaging and identify and address any .gaps.
2.14	Explore with partners the sharing of resources to undertake consultation with the community	Head of Policy & Performance	Ongoing	Develop a central point of information and data with support tools which are shared across the Council and with partners and communities of interest in order to achieve equality outcomes.

SES Ref	Action	Lead	Action Deadline	Tasks
2.15	Develop a communication strategy to inform people with disabilities about services, service development, policies and disability access. To include use of the Councils internet site and customer centers as a comprehensive and reliable source of information – and as an entry point for service users to provide feedback around barriers experienced or apparent.	Head of Policy & Performance	Sept 2011	Develop joint project/strategy to assist in improving communication between the Council and people with disabilities residing or visiting Cheshire East.
SES Ref	Action	Lead	Action Deadline	Tasks
3.	**To have responsive services and excellent customer care**			
3.1	Ensure that equality and inclusion is incorporated into the Councils performance management systems and processes	Head of Policy & Performance	Sept 2011 & ongoing thereafter	Review current performance management systems
	Ensure all services EIA their policies procedures services and functions	Directors or Heads of Service	June 2011 & ongoing thereafter	Conduct EIA screening on all the policies practices and procedures.
3.2	Support Services to develop Equality and Inclusion action plans leading to mainstreaming equality within service and business planning	Head of Policy & Performance	Ongoing	Develop a system at corporate and service level to ensure the delivery, review and monitoring of the Council's services, procedures and equality agenda

Form a Fairness and Inclusion Group to assess service actions which are derived from their EIA's |
| **3.3** | Develop and agree a strategy to monitor actions and to report on outcomes | | June 2010 | Ensure systems are in place at corporate and service level to ensure the delivery, review and monitoring of the Council's services, procedures and equality agenda |

3.4	Provide accurate, timely and accessible information about supports and services for carers throughout the different stages of caring	Director of Adult Services	Ongoing	Develop an understand the socio-economic challenges faced by this particular group and produce a variety of information media, publications, consultations and events outlining actions the council is taking to address gaps and understand how to best support this group through service development..
3.5	Develop a Website where shared partner information is accessible through a hosted Joint Strategy Needs Assessment website.	Head of Policy & Performance	Dec 2010	Produce web pages that provide a central point of information, data, and support tools that are shared across the Council, with partners and communities of interest in order to achieve equality outcomes
3.6	Review current performance management systems

Measure equality outcomes against current service performance with emphasis on areas of possible exclusion or engagement of certain groups within Cheshire East | | March 2011 | Ensure systems are in place at corporate and service level to ensure the delivery; review and monitoring of the Council's performance on equality actions and outcomes. |
| 3.7 | Develop ways of signposting Gypsies and Travellers to key supportive services. | | Jun 2011 | Gypsies and Travellers have a mechanism for having an influential voice and have increased ownership of services |
| 3.8 | Ensure that all Council buildings used, owned or funded are audited for accessibility | Borough Treasurer & of Assets | Aug 2013 and ongoing thereafter | Conduct an audit of all Cheshire East buildings to best practice standard

Develop a programme of alterations/reasonable adjustments where required

Explore opportunities for the Council to highlight and engage in good practice with partners and specialised 3rd sector organisations |

SES Ref	Action	Lead	Action Deadline	Tasks
	Services are audited for accessibility this should includes all of the human interactions involved in delivering policies, procedures and functions.	Directors/Heads of Service	Ongoing	Ensure access audit includes an assessment of services on disability
	Communications Media are audited for accessibility Include "Access to Information" (printed and electronic) both about the service and how it is delivered.	Directors/Heads of Service	Aug 2013 and ongoing thereafter	Ensure access audit includes an assessment of communications media on disability including website access Deliver communication which relies on an understanding of our audience and delivery of a clear message in a format that will be accessible and understood.
	Support services to improve accessibility for customers from black & minority ethnic communities	Head of Policy & Performance	Ongoing	Review current procedures and where necessary initiate alternative strategies
	Support services to improve accessibility for customers from socio-economically deprived communities		Ongoing	Review current procedures and where necessary initiate alternative strategies
SES Ref	**Action**	**Lead**	**Action Deadline**	**Tasks**
4.	**To understand and know our community**			
4.1	Increase the awareness the Council has in understanding the reason for gaps in community data/intelligence	Head of Policy & Performance	June 2011	Ensure evidence base is in place to inform policy development and service planning in order that the Council can improve service delivery Develop the ability to map communities of interest and need as well as having the ability to define communities by geography Work towards a central point to access accurate, valid, reliable, timeless, relevant and complete data.

4.2	Raise the profile of carers within the council and Cheshire East	Director of Adult Services	Dec 2010	Produce clear actions that ensure our employment policies promote equality for carers. Ensure carers are represented within the equality groups, and networks that assist in the Council's decision making processes.
4.3	Ensure services develop robust intelligence about service access to inform Equality Impact Assessments	Head of Policy & Performance	June 2011	Develop a programme/strategy of research to identify short falls in service development and/or delivery Ensure evidence base is in place to inform policy development and service planning in order that the Council can improve service delivery Develop strategy to identify social isolation and vulnerable groups and to look at the actual experience of these people in their communities
	Map other disadvantaged groups and develop an understanding that some white individuals, families and communities are at risk of disadvantage		Dec 2012	Establish an equality strategy to improve the socio – economic opportunities for disadvantaged or at risk white individuals families and communities.
	Consider commissioning a quality of Life and wellbeing Survey of Cheshire East.		Dec 2012	Review existing data collection systems to justify or exclude the need for a Quality of Life survey.
4.4	Understand the impact that the council is having in terms of up-skilling and addressing worklessness across different disadvantaged groups giving consideration to disadvantaged white families and communities at risk of socio-economic exclusion.	Equality and Inclusion Team	Dec 2012	Develop/engage in a range of research activities to identify any disadvantage and to action plan against this.

SES Ref	Action	Lead	Action Deadline	Tasks
5.	**To embed and promote equality within our Partnerships. Procurement and Commissioning**			
5.1	Website development where shared partner info is accessible through a hosted Joint Strategy Needs Assessment website	Head of Policy & Performance	Sep 2011	Establish a central point for information and data, with support tools that are shared across the Council and with partners and communities of interest in order to achieve equality outcomes
5.2	Develop a sustainable procurement policy ensuring Equality and Inclusion is reflected in policy and contractual agreement	Borough Treasurer & of Assets	Dec 2010	Ensure the policy reflects equality codes of practice and guidance developed by the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC)
5.3	Encourage and develop a more diverse supplier base.		Dec 2010	Monitor the ownership and size of business that apply to and do work with the council. Develop an appropriate monitoring process.
5.4	Ensure that procurement procedures and documents practice Equality and Inclusion		Dec 2010	Ensure that tender documentation incorporates equality and inclusion as part of the awarding criteria.
5.5	All commissioning and procurement processes take account of equality issues. Contracts include a requirement to deliver an effective and appropriate service fairly and equitably.		Dec 2010	Reassurance that the council is working with businesses that align with its own values Ensure that the council benefits from engaging and working with all businesses
SES Ref	Action	Lead	Action Deadline	Tasks
6.	**To have an effective performance framework and demonstrate continuous improvement and leadership**			
6.1	Identify individuals responsible within Directorates for progress on the SEIS and taking action forward	Directors and Heads of Services	July 2010	Establish equality leadership to influence partners and to promote Equality and Inclusion through the provision of excellent service delivery

6.2	Establish a Equality Champions Group that has a clear remit; represents all council functions and understands community aspirations and has a committed membership focused on supporting the council's equality agenda.	Head of Policy & Performance	June 2011	Develop Equality Champions/Groups who are competent, confident, skilled and fully understand the complexities and issues that the role entails
	Support equality champions and Managers in the production of equality action plans, EIAs and mainstreaming equality through each service.		Ongoing	Ensure appropriate training and briefings are established and delivered to equality champions
6.3	To become an "Achieving Council" under the Equality Framework for Local Government with areas of "Excellence" being reached within the next 3 year		Aug 2013	Arrange for self assessment of EFLG "Achieving Standard" against delivered outcomes Arrange for Peer Assessment of EFLG "Achieving Standard" against delivered outcomes
	EFLG "Developing Level Actions"	Directors and Heads of services	Sept 2011	Complete EFLG "Developing Level Actions" Ensure that actions are met and embedded within the Service's performance framework
	Complete EFLG "Achieving Level Actions"		Mar 2013	Complete EFLG "Achieving Level Actions" Ensure that actions are met and embedded within the Service's performance framework
6.4	Support the Leader, Portfolio holder (Performance & Capacity) Chief Executive and partners to commit publicly to improving equality outcomes and tell the equality story for their	Head of Policy & Performance	Nov 2010	Provide leadership for the Council's consultation agenda

	community			
6.5	Develop the sustainable Community Strategy and Local Area Agreement and other partnership strategies and working arrangements. Local Strategic Partnership Strategies have been reviewed with the voluntary and community sector and the community to deliver locally identified equality outcomes.		Ongoing	The Council and partners will be demonstrating a commitment to promote equality through policies and services, commissioning and partnership working arrangements with the voluntary and community sectors.
6.6	Corporate and service level structures are in place to ensure delivery and review of the equalities agenda		July 2010	Equality and Inclusion has a higher positive profile within the council to meet statutory responsibilities as well as incorporating good practice equality models
6.7	Inform CMT of SEIS Action Plan progress		Aug 2011 and Annually thereafter	Prepare annual monitoring report detailing progress against SEIS Action Plan Deliver the consultation and engagement agenda including SEIS Action plan progress and monitoring outcomes

Equality Impact Assessment & Guidance
2010

Cheshire East Council

Appendix C

Contents

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1. Purpose of this template

This toolkit has been developed to help you place equality and diversity at the centre of your day-to-day thinking at work. It will help you assess the likely and actual impact of policies & practices on different sectors of the community and target action where it is needed most .If used effectively, this should help to put right inequalities, Increase public confidence and serve all sections of the community according to their circumstances and needs.

Every member of the organisation involved in policy making or implementation, will be expected to take account of equality issues and expected to follow the guidance inimpact assessing policies and report results as appropriate.

The guidance will be reviewed regularly in order that we can develop and improve it as experience is gained, therefore, if you have any queries for suggestions on how we can improve this guidance please contact:

Equality and Inclusion Team
01270 685867
equalityandinclusion@cheshireeast.gov.uk

2. What do we mean when we talk about Equality, Diversity and Inclusion?

Equality is about respect and not treating an individual or group of people unfairly. It is about giving people an equality of opportunity to access services and to fulfil their potential. Diversity is a part of equality , its about all the ways in which people differ and recognising how differences is a natural part of society. Inclusion is giving consideration and a voice to all the visitors, communities and groups in Cheshire East with regards to designing and delivering services and employment opportunities. The table below identifies what the new legislation refers to as " Protected Characteristics."

Age	Age includes everyone, however; specific focus may be centred on children, young people and older people's needs.
Carers	Carers may be as young as 7 or 8 years, looking after a disabled parent or other siblings. Carers can be older people themselves, perhaps in their 80's looking after a partner or friend of similar age. Carers come from diverse cultural and religious communities. Anyone looking after a person with an illness or disability, whatever their situation, is considered a carer with equality rights to help, support, information and services
Disability	A person with a disability is someone with a physical or mental impairment which as a substantial and long term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day to day activities. Examples include long term illnesses including cancer, diabetes, multiple sclerosis and heart conditions: hearing or sight impairments, or a significant mobility difficulty; and mental health conditions or learning difficulties.
Gender	Gender has traditionally been seen to be about women's rights – this is now not the case. Gender issues may include things like maternity, adoption and paternity rights, and pay gap issues among other things.
Race	Race includes issues such as ethnic origin, race and colour. It means that for example language barriers are a race issue. Certain groups such as gypsies/travellers are protected under this protected characteristic
Religion & Belief	It is unlawful to discriminate against people because of religion or similar belief. Religion or belief is defined as being any religion, religious belief. This does not include any philosophical or political belief unless it is similar to religious belief.
Sexual Orientation	Under the law you shouldn't be discriminated against because of your sexual orientation or "perceived" sexual orientation – including orientation towards someone of the same sex (lesbian/gay), opposite sex (heterosexual) both sexes (bisexual) or possible change in orientation due to gender reassignment.
Socio-Economic Disadvantage	A person, family, group or community who face disadvantage and barriers to social mobility due to social and economic restraints that mainstream society do not. E.g. where you live may impact on educational or status advancement, deprived communities (including white), single parents.

Cheshire East Equality Impact Assessment template and Guidance

3. What is an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)?

An equality impact assessment (EIA) is a way to make sure individuals and teams think carefully about the likely impact of policies or procedures, strategies, functions and services, to identify any unmet needs, and to provide a basis for action to improve services where appropriate.

It systematically assesses and records the actual, potential or likely impact of a service, policy or project – or a significant change in a service, policy or project - on different groups of people.

This toolkit goes further than identifying the impact of policies, services and procedures. It also assesses whether people's needs are being met and if the legislative requirements are being met.

All managers and project leaders are responsible for incorporating equalities into their projects, plans or strategies and for assessing the equality impact. This should be a continuous process, starting at the very beginning of the project.

4. Nine steps to take when carrying out Equality Impact Assessments

1. Identify the purpose and aims of the policy, service or function or any proposals being made
2. Consider any information, data or research that is already available in relation to equalities and what this tells you
3. Make an assessment of the impact or effects on different Communities

4. Consider whether there is anything which could be done to remove any adverse impact or effects, or to further promote equality, social inclusion or community cohesion
5. Consult those affected for their views and ideas
6. Identify any change and/or decide whether or not to go ahead with your policy, procedures, proposals, or changes to services
7. Decide how you will monitor and review your policy, proposals or other changes
8. Where necessary, add the main objectives from your impact assessment to your service plan, action plan etc
9. Write up your assessment and publish it on the council's website via the Corporate Equality and Inclusion Team.

5. Why are we doing Impact Assessments?

Local Authorities have a responsibility under Equality Duties to assess both their existing and new policies and functions, and to set out how they will monitor any possible negative impact any against protective characteristic

They also have to consult on proposed policies and train their staff about this law, and have a positive duty to promote good relations between communities.

In addition, Cheshire East Council will be working towards the Equality Framework for Local Government which will require the authority to impact assess for race gender and disability, and demonstrate commitment to addressing the needs of and impact assessing around sexual orientation, age, transgender, religion and belief .

5

Failure to assess the likely impact of new or ongoing work could lead to legal challenge as well as the inability of services to provide care for those who need it most.

6. its not just about compliance – the moral and business case

There are many additional aspects to the impact assessment process. As well as it being the right thing to do for moral reasons, there is a clear business case for mainstreaming equality.

A business that is seen to be putting the principles of Equality and Inclusion into practice, both in the workforce and in the products and services it offers to customers, is more likely to project a positive public image in the community
(Business Case for Diversity, Women & Equality Unit, DTI).

Organisations with a diverse workforce are likely to:
 better reflect and understand the community it serves
 provide a better, more tailored service to meet individual
 needs.

Reduction in discrimination and unfair treatment can lead to:
a positive knock-on effect on grievances and relations in general within the organisation

• reduced absenteeism
• enhanced employees' attachment to the organisation
• reduced labour turnover
• increased labour productivity.

The impact assessment process also has potential effects on:

•Public perception of the Council
•Inspection and audit scorings

7.Equality Impact Assessment process
Initial screening involves a process of identifying and prioritising what policies, procedures or strategies will be assessed, then scoping their potential impact on service users, employers and the wider community.
 Initial screening should be carried out at the initial planning and development stages of the project, strategy or policy development.

Some large projects will be made up of many different activities, some of which are in themselves projects. As part of the screening, these activities should be listed and if any of them are projects in themselves, the project lead should consider whether they need to undergo a separate EIA screening.

7.1 'Dos' and 'don'ts' for the EIA process

Do	Don't
•Do treat the exercise as a challenge. •Do build contracts and relationships with colleagues in other departments and even from other councils, to assist and challenge the process. •Do involve the right people. •Do use plain English. •Do build in specific tasks and topics for individuals to share information, progress and so on, with a timetable and targets. •Do focus on finding real improvements in your service, procedures or policies rather than trying to get the form completed and off the desk •Do know your customers their needs the barriers they face and focus on improving the service they receive. •Do make sure you have enough information to assess all the strands and where possible break data down into individual groups	•Don't even think about the impact assessment form and/or template until the end of the assessment. •Don't treat as a form filling exercise; think of it as the final audit trail of a service improvement , think of it as the final audit trail of a service improvement exercise. •Don't panic •Don't try to complete the EIA on your own. •Don't be daunted by the consultation element. Find out if the research or data already exits or consult directly with the representatives of relevant groups or specialist organisations •Don't use the process as a last minute check. Develop plans that include time to make changes to a project, strategy or policy as identified by the EIA •Don't focus on race faith; look at the demographics in your area. There may be issues such as age or sexuality that are important in the wider community •Don't put it off – do a little at a time and it won't seem an overwhelming task.

7.2 Tips and general guidance

Equality Impact Assessments are designed to be a challenging process, but they are not intended to be over complicated or about 'getting it right'. It is not an exact science and Managers should take a common sense approach

• Managers need to be prepared for changes to the policy, procedure or function that the EIA identifies as necessary. It should not be a last minute check.
• The aim should be to try to take the perspective of some one outside of the council, such as a potential beneficiary or user, when carrying out an EIA.

7

Equality Impact Assessment Flow Chart

```
┌─────────────────────────────────┐
│   Pre-screen and prioritise     │
│  functions/policies/procedures  │
└─────────────────────────────────┘
              │
              ▼
┌─────────────────────────────────┐
│ Gathering evidence and before   │
│ the EIA may be an effective     │
│ strategy                        │
└─────────────────────────────────┘
              │
              ▼
┌─────────────────────────────────┐
│        Carry out  EIA           │
└─────────────────────────────────┘
```

Possible Outcomes No adverse impacts identified

Publish initial EIA on intranet and council website

Re-assess in 1/3 years

Possible Outcomes Minor action or amendments required

Undertake and complete actions

May require initial review e.g. 3 months

Monitor Action Plans and assess outcomes

When complete produce final report and publish Reassess 1-3 Years

Possible Outcomes Negative Impact established

Further research and/or consultation required

Analyse Research & Consultation to determine Actions required

Monitor Action Plans and assess outcomes

When complete, produce final report and publish Re-assess 1-3 Years

Possible outcomes High adverse impact identified

Implement Immediate Action Plan (short term if necessary)

May require initial review when Actions are complete

Monitor Action Plans and assess outcomes

When complete, produce final report and publish Re-assess 1-3 Years

The form does not need to be completed by one person in isolation. Neither does the EIA form require completion all in one go.

Completing the form is similar to doing a risk assessment. It involves predicting and assessing what the implications of a policy, procedure or function will be on a wide range of people with different and varied needs. This can be a difficult thing to do and it is not intended that Managers complete the form without the support and advice of others. Completing the form with a colleague or critical friend, who can provide a different perspective, will help.

Do not spend too long on the initial screening. At the screening stage, you are just trying to assess obvious negative or positive impacts or, importantly, gaps in our knowledge about likely impact.

The screening should make full use of the following:

- professional knowledge of the issue and/or personal experience
- previous consultation results
- analysis of previous complaints, comments, evaluations and monitoring
- research and reports
- library searches
- internet searches
- advice from internal and external specialists
- staff with previous involvement of direct implementation of a similar policy, procedure or function

It is particularly important that Managers realise they have legal duties to assess the impact of policies, procedures and functions.

If the likely impact on the different equality target groups is not known, then action is needed to acquire that information.

The best way to find out if a policy or project is likely to impact negatively or positively on equality target groups is to find out if research or data already exists or to directly consult representatives of those groups or relevant specialist organisations.

Following the completion of an EIA, an action plan is required to outline any changes required to mitigate against any adverse impacts.

8. Partnership projects

The Council aims to be an exemplary organisation in relation to equality and to champion equality across Cheshire East. The statutory requirements to assess the impact of policies and functions apply to partnerships and contractual relationships.

The EIA procedures apply to all projects and policies where the Council is the lead agency in a multi-agency project or a key delivery partner. The council is the lead agency if the project or policy was initiated by the council and the monitoring, evaluation and strategic overview of the implementation lies with the council, even if the council is not the operational lead.

On joint projects and initiatives where the council is not the lead organisation, the council representatives should raise the issue of the need to carry out an equalities assessment in order to comply with the legislation. The council should carry out an EIA screening before deciding to participate in the partnership project or initiative.

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9. How will compliance and progress be measured?

The Council is committed to principles laid out in the Equality Framework for Local Government (EFLG). The EFLG provides us with a framework to measure progress against equality objectives. A key part of progressing through the Equality Framework involves carrying out equality impact assessments on existing and new policies, procedures and functions.

10. Whose responsibility is it to complete the impact assessment process?

Everyone who works within the Council has a responsibility to adhere to the principles of Equality and Inclusion. This means that every manager, policy writer, policy implementer, project manager and event organiser must consider the practical and implied issues that may arise for people. It's strongly recommended that you do not undertake an EIA on your own, and a 'critical friend' approach it often useful.

11. Data Collection

Data is vital to give us an understanding both of the numbers and groups of people affected by the Council's service provision. While we may have a feeling that there may be some kind of impact, for the impact assessment process, it is necessary to back up our beliefs with factual information. If we want to find out if a policy is likely to impact negatively or positively on sections of the community we should first discover if data or research already exists. It is important to consider both qualitative and quantitative data – qualitative data is obtained through opinions / perceptions / experience of service users and providers, while quantitative data is about facts and figures.

Data collection plays an important role in the initial impact assessment. Indeed it may be identified that no data exists to back up a theory about a policy so a logical action from the initial impact assessment would be to put an effective monitoring system in place for the policy.

Useful information sources include:
• complaints & comments
• service user profiles/stats
• customer satisfaction surveys
• results of previous consultations/focus groups/surveys
• inspectorate and review reports
• front line employee's comments
• issues raised with or by elected Members
• staff surveys
• other local authorities and public service providers
• partner organisations and stakeholder forums
• library/internet searches

12. Consultation

Consultation is one of the key elements to carrying out a meaningful impact assessment. It is imperative to hear the views of all sections of the community which may be affected by policies. It is especially important to consult with groups which you believe may suffer a potentially negative impact. Different methods of consulting are more effective for some groups than others and consideration needs to be given as to when and where consultation will take place. For further advice regarding consultation methods or tools, please contact the Equality and Inclusion Team.

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Appendix 1

Department/Service			Equality Impact Assessment Form Template		
Ref **See Appendix 1**			Officer responsible for the assessment		
Name of policy procedure function being assessed				Start date of assessment	
Are there are any other policies or procedures associated or linked with this one.		• • • •			
Briefly describe the aims, objectives and outcomes of the policy / procedure / function					
Who is intended to benefit from this policy –procedure – function?					
What factors could contribute to or detract from the outcomes?					
Who are the main stakeholders in relation to the policy – procedure- function? (Please consider key equality groups)					
Who is responsible for the policy – procedure – function?					
To take us forward in: (a) eliminating discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010; (b) advancing equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; (c) fostering good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it					

Cheshire East Equality Impact Assessment template and Guidance

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Please indentify any impact (Positive / Negative) this policy, procedure, function or service will have on the following protected characteristics:			
Age - Is there an impact?	**Yes**	**No**	Comments/Actions:
Carers – Is there an impact?	**Yes**	**No**	Comments/Actions:
Disability - Is there an impact?	**Yes**	**No**	Comments/Actions:
Gender (Including pregnancy and Maternity, Marriage)?	**Yes**	**No**	Comments/Actions:
Gypsies & Travellers - Is there an impact?	**Yes**	**No**	Comments/Actions:
Race – Is there an impact?	**Yes**	**No**	Comments/Actions:
Religion & Belief- Is there an Impact?	**Yes**	**No**	Comments/Actions:
Sexual Orientation -Is there an impact?	**Yes**	**No**	Comments/Actions:
Transgender - Is there an impact?	**Yes**	**No**	Comments/Actions:

Other socio-economic disadvantaged groups (including white individuals, families and communities) Is there an impact?	**Yes**	**No**	Comments/Actions:
Please give details of any other potential impacts of this policy (i.e. Poverty & deprivation, community cohesion, environmental)	**Yes**	**No**	Comments/Actions:
Could the impact constitute unlawful discrimination in relation to any of the Equality Duties	**Yes**	**No**	Comments:
Does this policy – procedure – function have any effect on good relations between the council and the community	**Yes**	**No**	Comments:
Do you require further data/information/intelligence to support decision making?	**Yes**	**No**	Comments: (please note if you answer yes or no you will still be required to complete the Data Methods/Collection to Support Decision Making Section)
Please specify any question(s)/issues/concerns/actions identified as a result the assessment. What needs to be done?			Comments • • • • •

Data Methods/Collection to Support Decision Making

Please indicate what methods of research, information and intelligence will be/have been used e.g. consultation, reports, comparisons with similar organisations	Internally	Externally
Please state who will be/who was involved/engaged/consulted	Internal (Staff/Members/Service/Dept)	External (stakeholders/service users/partners)
Please indicate any significant expected costs & resource requirements for completing the data collection		

Developing Your Action Plan & Making Changes

Having completed the 1st stage of your Equalities Impact Assessment, you are likely to have identified a number of areas where improvements could be made. The action plan will:

1.   Outline what you are doing and how you are going to do it - developing your Action Plan
2.   Measures progress towards implementation (you should complete this on a quarterly basis)
3.   Measure the impact of the changes you have made or to set a benchmark that can be measured against future assessments.

Developing the Action Plan

The first step is to draw up your action plan. The following explains what needs to go into each of the boxes:

Completing the Action Plan

Ref: (See Appendix1))

Action: Issues arising from the EIA requiring a form of intervention to address disparities in service/function

Responsible Persons Those member/s of your team who will be responsible for making these changes.

Action Deadline: The date by which the action will be completed. This should be realistic and achievable.

Tasks The changes that you propose to make to address the issues that you have identified

Progress Monitor progress both positive and problematic identifying any potential barriers that may hinder completion e.g. Time, Internal or External factors,

Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) Action Plan: Making Changes					
REF	Action	Responsible Person/s	Action Deadline	Tasks	Progress
Please state the date the policy/procedure/function will be reassessed? (generally 1-3 yrs)			Comments/Date:		

Signed (Service Manager) ……………………………………….. Date…………………

Signed (Head of Section) ……………………………………….. Date…………………

Once you have completed this section please email it to the Equality and Inclusion Team. The Equality and Inclusion Team will convene a quarterly meeting of the Fairness and Inclusion Group (FIG) who will quality check our EIA's to ensure we have considered everyone. We plan to send approximately 2-5% of our completed EIAs Forms to the (FIG).

Quarterly Progress and monitoring

Having drawn up your Action Plan, it is important to monitor progress in implementing the different actions. Please complete the following progress report. This will help to ensure that you keep to the time-scales you have outlined and to seek advice from the Equality and Inclusion Team where you are experiencing problems with implementation of particular actions. (simply cut and paste information from the Action Plan)

	Action	Progress	Completed

Once you have completed your progress report, please email it to the Equality and Inclusion Team. Make a copy of the progress report template so you can present an update in three months time.

Once you have completed your quarterly progress report, please email it to the Equality and Inclusion Team

Cheshire East Equality Impact Assessment template and Guidance

Equalities Impact Assessment - Monitoring Impact Report

Having implemented each of the tasks outlined within your Action Plan, it is important that you measure the impact of these changes to see whether they have improved the accessibility of your policy and/or service.
Completing your Monitoring Impact Report

Action -   The changes that you have made to remove the gaps you have Identified (simply cut and paste these from the action plan).

Impact -   What has been the overall impact of making the particular changes? Could include wider community involvement in policy development or greater use of service by diverse communities.

Outcomes - What are the concrete results of having changed your policy or service? Could include improved service use, reductions in complaints or increased satisfaction. These will be based on detailed data and should outline how the changes have brought about improvements for different communities and groups.

Ref	Action	Impact	Outcome	Review Date

Once you have completed your impact report, please email it to the Equality and Inclusion Team. The Equality and Inclusion Team will prepare an annual report for Corporate Management Team and Cabinet on our progress.

Appendix 2

Service Reference Index

Service Reference Index			
Safer & Stronger – **SSC**	Regeneration – **REG**	Planning & Housing – **PAH**	Legal & Democratic Services – **LAD**
Children & Families – **CHI**	Adults – **ADU**	Health & Wellbeing – **HWB**	Human Resources & Organisational Development – **HROD**
Policy & Performance – **PAP**	Corporate Improvement - **CI**	Environmental – **ENV**	Borough Treasurer & Head of Assets – **BTA**

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Agenda Item 7

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Cabinet

Date of Meeting: 18 October 2010

Report of: Lorraine Butcher, Director of Children's Services

Subject/Title: Annual Unannounced Inspection of Contact, Referral and Assessment Arrangements within Local Authority Children's Services

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Hilda Gaddum

1.0   Report Summary

1.1   Cheshire East Council Children's Services were inspected on the 20 and 21 July 2010 by OFSTED under section 138 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006. This report conveys the outcome of that inspection. The findings of the report were published on the 18 August 2010. An action plan detailing actions to address the areas for development identified from the inspection is currently being compiled.

2.0   Decision Requested

2.1   Members are asked to note the contents of this report and at a future date receive regular updates on progress being made to address the areas for development identified.

3.0   Reasons for Recommendations

3.1   To ensure effective scrutiny of the ongoing improvement in the arrangements for effectively safeguarding children and young people in Cheshire East.

4.0   Wards Affected

4.1   All

5.0   Local Ward Members

5.1   All

6.0   Policy Implications including - Climate change
                                                          - Health

6.1   Effective safeguarding of children and young people contributes to their emotional health and well-being.

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7.0 Financial Implications for Transition Costs (Authorised by the Borough Treasurer)

7.1 Not applicable

8.0 Financial Implications 2010/11 and beyond (Authorised by the Borough Treasurer)

8.1 Actions being taken to address improvements in safeguarding arrangements particularly in the assessment, contact and referral procedures are being contained within the budget agreed for the Service by the Council.

9.0 Legal Implications (Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)

9.1 None

10.0 Risk Management

10.1 Establishing effective arrangements for contact, referral and assessment is at the heart of steps taken to safeguard children and mitigate risks.

11.0 Background and Options

11.1 In July 2010 the Local Authority was inspected by OFSTED under section 138 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, of its contact, referral and assessment arrangements.

11.2 The purpose of the annual unannounced inspection of contact, referral and assessment arrangements within local authorities is to assess the effectiveness of front-line practice in managing potential risks to children and young people and to minimise the incidence of abuse and neglect.

11.3 The outcomes of the inspection can inform the scheduling of future inspections, in particular the full inspection of safeguarding and services for looked after children.

11.4 Attached as Appendix 1 is the letter confirming the findings of the inspection conducted in July 2010. Critically no Priority Actions were identified. These are areas where there are significant concerns identified by the inspectors that children and young people are not being kept safe.

11.5 Detailed in the letter are areas identified as satisfactory practice and areas for development. Attached as Appendix 2 is an Action Plan to address the areas for development identified. The Head of Service for Safeguarding and Specialist Services will have responsibility for implementing the Action Plan and driving forward the required areas for improvement. It is proposed that quarterly reports on progress are reported to the Children and Families Scrutiny Committee.

12.0   Overview of Year One and Term One Issues

12.1   Shortcomings in safeguarding arrangements were identified by Cheshire East Council shortly after becoming a new unitary council in April 2009.   The Uannounced Inspection while identifying areas for development has provided a useful external perspective on progress to date and areas for further improvement.   The Service is keen to maintain it's momentum for securing further improvements.

13.0   *Access to Information*

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer:

Name: Lorraine Butcher
Designation: Director of Children's Services
Tel No: 01270 686021
 Email: lorraine.butcher@cheshireeast.gov.uk

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Appendix 1

Freshford House   **T** 0300 1231231   **Direct T** 0117 9456333
Redcliffe Way   enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk   **Direct F** 0117 9456554
Bristol BS1 6NL   www.ofsted.gov.uk   Safeguarding.lookedafterchildren@ofsted.gov.uk

Ofsted

raising standards
improving lives

18 August 2010

Mrs Lorraine Butcher
Head of Service for Children and Families
Cheshire East Council
Westfields
Middlewich Road
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ

Dear Mrs Butcher

**Annual unannounced inspection of contact, referral and assessment
arrangements within Cheshire East Council children's services**

This letter summarises the findings of the recent unannounced inspection of contact,
referral and assessment arrangements within local authority children's services in
Cheshire East Council which was conducted on 20 and 21 July 2010. The inspection
was carried out under section 138 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006. It will
contribute to the annual review of the performance of the authority's children's
services, for which Ofsted will award a rating later in the year. I would like to thank
all of the staff we met for their assistance in undertaking this inspection.

The inspection sampled the quality and effectiveness of contact, referral and
assessment arrangements and their impact on minimising any child abuse and
neglect. Inspectors considered a range of evidence, including: electronic case
records; supervision files and notes; observation of social workers and senior
practitioners undertaking referral and assessment duties; and other information
provided by staff and managers. Inspectors also spoke to a range of staff including
managers, social workers, other practitioners and administrative staff. During the
inspection 56 children's files and 18 staff supervision files were seen.

The inspection identified areas of satisfactory practice, with some areas for
development.

From the evidence gathered, the following features of the service were identified:

Satisfactory practice
▪ All child protection enquiries are undertaken by experienced and qualified social workers and in the cases seen by inspectors appropriate actions were identified to ensure that children are protected.
▪ Management oversight ensures that timely decision-making and prompt action occur to allocate work, to undertake initial assessments or to divert or close

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referrals appropriately.

- Managers monitor the timeliness of initial assessments effectively and ensure that risks to children are considered where there are delays.

- The quality of initial assessments is adequate and includes attention to risk and protective factors; where children require further assessment this is recognised.

- Safeguarding and child protection thresholds are set at an appropriate and consistent level. Referrals seen from partner agencies are appropriate and contain relevant and sufficient detail.

- The recent establishment of the duty and initial assessment team has resulted in a reduction in social workers' caseloads in the children in need/child protection teams, which are now at a manageable level.

- Clear guidance for staff supports effective case transfers between the initial assessment team and the children in need and child protection teams.

- Child protection strategy meetings are held in a timely way and in the majority of cases relevant agencies attend in line with statutory requirements.

- Children and young people are interviewed alone where appropriate and are routinely involved in their assessments. Children and their families are consistently informed about the outcome of their assessment.

- Children's identity and their cultural and linguistic needs are assessed satisfactorily and there is effective use of translation and interpreter services.

- Social workers receive regular supervision and inspectors saw some examples of challenging and reflective discussions.

- There is a good range of training and development opportunities and staff expressed positive views about their access to, and the quality of, recent training.

Areas for development

- Timeliness in completing initial and core assessments varies and in some cases results in delays in meeting children's needs.

- The management oversight of core assessments is inconsistent and so does not always ensure their timeliness or that risks to children are sufficiently monitored when there are delays.

- The quality of core assessments is not consistent. Although some are satisfactory, others are too brief and lack analysis of risk or protective factors. Inadequate assessments are being seen and signed off without challenge by

Ofsted

first line managers, which is unsatisfactory.

- Although no children were found to be at risk, the quality of child protection enquiries is variable and some were inadequate. Inspectors found cases where not all of the factors which had led to the referral had been sufficiently addressed and potential risks to children had not been adequately assessed. The quality of the recording of these enquiries also varied.

- The quality of child protection strategy meeting minutes is inconsistent. In some cases, inspectors saw brief and superficial records which lacked sufficiently detailed or clear plans about how the child protection enquiries would be carried out. Similarly, they lacked necessary information about how criminal investigations would proceed.

- The council's electronic system does not deliver sufficient management information or support managers at all levels in the effective management of performance. The impact of this is recognised by the council and funds have been secured to purchase a new system.

- Although policies to quality assure and audit social work practice have been developed recently, the inspection did not find evidence of effective implementation or impact. Consequently, strengths and areas for development are not systematically identified and analysed by managers, or reported to Cheshire East Safeguarding Children Board to drive improvement.

Any areas for development identified above will be specifically considered in any future inspection of services to safeguard children within your area.

Yours sincerely

Judith Nelson
Her Majesty's Inspector

Copy: Erica Wenzel, Chief Executive, Cheshire East Council
David Mellor, Chair of Cheshire East Safeguarding Children Board
Hilda Gaddum, Lead Member for Children's Services, Cheshire East Council
Andrew Spencer, Department for Education

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ACTION PLAN – Unannounced inspection of Contact, Referral and Assessment Arrangements.

On the 20/21 July 2010 OFSTED conducted an inspection of the Contact, referral and assessment arrangements within Cheshire East Children Services. The inspection identified areas of satisfactory practice, with some areas for development. It should be noted that the areas for development that have been identified will be specifically considered in future inspection of services to safeguard children with our area.

The inspectors identified seven (7) areas for development which have been addressed accordingly in the plan outlined below:

Area for Development	Action	Timescale	Risk/other Factors	Person Responsible	Notes/Outcomes
(1) Timeliness in completing initial and core assessments varies and in some cases results in delays in meeting children's needs	Interim Changes within Access service involving splitting into two service areas 1) contact and referral 2) duty and initial assessment team (DIAT). This to ensure that all referrals coming into access are assessed in a timely way on the safety, need and wellbeing of child/YP.	12 August 2010 ongoing until further notice	Changes are interim whilst a review undertaken by Elaine Peace is completed. Review is looking at threshold model, interagency working and understanding and viability of a permanent duty and initial assessment service which will undertake all IA and S47 work up within an eight week period. Changes are in line with the redesign of services	Integrated Delivery Team comprising of: Cath Knowles Dave Richards Shirley Jordan Julie Lewis Elaine Peace - consultant	

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(2) The management oversight of core assessments is inconsistent and so does not always ensure their timeliness or that risks to children are sufficiently monitored when there are delays	Routine audits of Core Assessments to be undertaken.	With immediate effect	Group Manager's continue to manage day to day work which remains high in volume. Need to move to unit structure and practice consultants this should reduce inconsistency.	Shirley Jordan - PM Julie Lewis – PM	
	Weekly reporting card per team required to identify Initial and core assessments progress.	Linked to ICS/ICT programme - ongoing	Change request likely to be delay to ICT services to enable such information to be available.	Mark Bayley/ Bev Harding	
(3) The quality of core assessments is not consistent. Although some are satisfactory, others are too brief and lack analysis of risk or protective factors. Inadequate assessments are being seen and signed off without challenge by first line managers, which is unsatisfactory.	Back to Basics training to be undertaken by all managers/ practice consultants and social workers as per workforce development proposal of February 2010. CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL workforce d	With immediate effect, this training is mandatory and needs to be implemented asap	Timetable needs to be agreed for roll out of workforce development programme and linked to CPD of staff	Annas Feeney	
	Development of standards in practice	Within next 3 months	Standards will enable a more effective quality	Annas Feeny/Shirley Jordan/Julie Lewis/Sue	

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	which is linked to evidence based practice particularly around risk, decision making and care planning		assurance and should be linked to CPD of social work profession	Atkinson	
	Quality assess via auditing programme via safeguarding unit to measure quality of assessments ensuring they are linked to need and are child focused	With immediate effect		Safeguarding Unit	
(4) Although no children were found to be at risk, the quality of child protection enquiries is variable and some were inadequate. Inspectors found cases where not all of the factors which had led to the referral had been sufficiently addressed and potential risks to children had not been adequately assessed. The quality of recording of these enquiries also varied.	Implement proposed auditing programme as outlined in report of Paul Jackson Safeguarding Manager Also linked to action 1 changes within Access service Also linked with action 3 development of standards in practice and back to basics training	With immediate effect – need to ensure ongoing timetabling of dates throughout the year		Safeguarding unit, Principal Managers Integrated Delivery, Group Managers, Annas Feeny workforce development.	
(5) The quality of child	Linked to action 4	With immediate effect		Safeguarding unit,	

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protection strategy meeting minutes is inconsistent. In some cases, inspectors saw brief and superficial records which lacked sufficiently detailed or clear plans about how the child protection enquiries would be carried out. Similar, they lacked necessary information about how criminal investigations would proceed.	implement auditing programme Also linked to action 3 development of standards in practice and back to basics training			Principal Managers Integrated Delivery, Group Managers, Annas Feeny workforce development.	
(6) The council's electronic system does not deliver sufficient management information or support managers at all levels in the effective management of performance. The impact of this is recognised by the council and funds have been secured to purchase a new system.	Linked to ICT/ICS shared service redesign	Ongoing	Issue of separating shared system from CWAC and then CE Adults, cost implications of whether this can be achieved.	Cath Knowles/Mark Bayley/Bev Harding/Peter Thorley	
(7) Although policies to quality assure and audit social work practices	Implement proposed auditing programme as outlined in report from	With immediate effect		Safeguarding Unit/ Tim Newton (LSCB)	

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have been developed recently, the inspection did not find evidence of effective implementation or impact. Consequently, strengths and areas for development are not systematically identified and analysed by managers, or reported to Cheshire East Safeguarding Children Board to drive improvement.	Paul Jackson safeguarding manager Ensure progress reporting to LSCB of all audits and this action plan				

Catherine Knowles Head of Safeguarding and Specialist Services (Interim)

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CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

REPORT TO: CABINET

Date of Meeting: Monday 18th October 2010
Report of: Strategic Director – Places
Subject/Title: Draft Local Transport Plan Strategy
Portfolio Holder: Cllr Jamie Macrae

1.0 Report Summary

1.1 This paper outlines the draft Local Transport Plan (LTP) strategy setting out the proposed priorities for transport. The strategy is directly linked to the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) and shows how transport contributes to the achievement of wider ambitions for the area. Following Cabinet approval there will be a 5 week period of public consultation on the draft strategy.

2.0 Decision Requested

2.1 Note the proposed thematic priorities for the LTP strategy to be released for public consultation – "ensure a sustainable future" and "create conditions for business growth".

2.2 Approve the draft LTP strategy to be released for public consultation on the 19th October.

3.0 Reasons for Recommendations

3.1 The draft strategy and proposed priorities reflect the outputs from stakeholder and Member consultation. The transport priorities reflect wider aspirations for the area contained within the SCS and Corporate Plan, as well as emerging corporate objectives within the Local Development Framework (LDF), Economic Development Strategy and Climate Change Strategy.

4.0 Wards Affected

4.1 All

5.0 Local Ward Members

5.1 All

6.0 Policy Implications including - Climate change
- Health

6.1 The LTP is a statutory document that must be prepared by the Council by April 2011. It will be supported by a combined Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), a Health Impact Assessment (HIA), and an Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA). The LTP supports wider climate change objectives in terms of mitigation and adaptation.

7.0 Financial Implications (Authorised by the Borough Treasurer)

7.1 Traditionally LTP funding has been linked to the quality and delivery of the plan. However, in future the funding settlement will not be linked to performance and will be significantly reduced.

8.0 Legal Implications (Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)

8.1 Under the Transport Act 2000 as amended by the Local Transport Act 2008, the LTP is a statutory document that must be prepared by all local transport authorities in England. Cheshire East Council is a local transport authority. LTPs must contain policies for the promotion and encouragement of safe, integrated, efficient and economic transport to, from and within their area, and proposals for implementation of those policies. The legislation also sets out provisions for taking into account Government guidance on environment and climate change, and for making the final plan available for inspection by the public.

9.0 Risk Management

9.1 The financial challenges of the coming years require the need to address hard questions of priority, manage expectations and plan delivery carefully. Other challenges include the extremely difficult economic climate, meeting the needs of an ageing population and the imperative to adapt and respond to climate change.

9.2 It is also recognised that a 5 week public consultation period is shorter than recommended. However, extensive engagement has already been undertaken including stakeholder and Member workshops and LAP questionnaire. The timescales have been driven by the committee cycle to ensure Full Council sign off before the end of March 2011. The tight timetable results in public consultation beginning on 19th October.

10.0 Background and Options

10.1 Cheshire East's draft Local Transport Plan (LTP) sets out a 15 year transport strategy for the borough (2011-2026), which relates directly to the SCS priorities for action. The SCS thematic areas are:

- Ensure a sustainable future
- Create conditions for business growth
- Drive out the causes of poor health

- Nurture strong communities
- Support our children and young people
- Prepare for an increasingly older population
- Unlock the potential of our towns

10.2   The LTP has been subject to wide ranging community engagement, including integrated public consultation with the SCS, a stakeholder workshop, LAP questionnaire and analysis of existing town and parish plans. In addition, two Member workshops have been held to prioritise the transport challenges and policies within each theme, as well as the relative priorities across all the thematic areas.

10.3   Through stakeholder and Member consultation, there are two clear priorities for the LTP strategy – "ensure a sustainable future" and "create conditions for business growth".

10.4   It is proposed that future investment in transport will be directed towards the policies and interventions which support these priority areas to help grow the economy and tackle carbon emissions. This does not mean that the needs of the other thematic areas will be neglected – rather they will be supported by targeted aspects of the adopted policy solutions, which have a wide sphere of influence in other areas (e.g. needs of young and older people).

10.5   In addition, within each thematic area indicative priority policies have been identified for public consultation and are set out below. The policies within the sustainability and business growth themes are 'core' policies – others are 'complementary' and will be taken forward where resources allow, where they reflect community priorities and/or development aspirations.

10.6   The challenges for "unlocking the potential of towns" are unique to each place and will be addressed within a series of transport frameworks for principal towns and key service centres (as defined by the LDF) to be developed post-April 2011. Working with the LAPs, town & parish councils and community & voluntary groups will facilitate a better understanding of transport and accessibility needs at a local level. The aim will be to enable local communities to determine local interpretation of the LTP, and enable detailed exploration of tailored localised solutions.

10.7   The LTP will remain a live document supporting continuous improvement in the planning and delivery of services with a focus on achieving greater outcomes more efficiently, with fully engaged communities. As new national and local policies, strategies and priorities emerge and new challenges are identified, the strategy and associated daughter documents will be reviewed and updated. The daughter documents include the Transport Asset Management Plan, Network Management Plan, Passenger Transport Strategy and Road Safety Strategy.

Indicative Priority Policies

10.8   Within each thematic area, indicative priority policies have been identified for public consultation. As the challenges for young people and older people are

cross-cutting, they have been included within the theme of "nurturing strong communities". The challenges for "unlocking the potential of towns" will be addressed within a series of transport frameworks (detailed above).

10.9 To ensure a **sustainable future**, the following 'core' policies have been identified as indicative priorities:

- Public Transport (Service Levels & Reliability) – Work with passenger transport operators (bus, rail, community transport & taxis) to explore improvements to service levels and reliability.
- Public Transport (Integration & Facilities) – Work with passenger transport providers (bus, rail and community transport) to improve public transport integration and facilities.
- Spatial Planning – Seek to minimise the future need to travel through a strategy in the Local Development Framework that focuses most new developments in larger settlements where there is a good range of housing, jobs, shops and services already accessible by public transport, cycling and walking.

10.10 To create conditions for **business growth**, the following 'core' policies have been identified as indicative priorities:

- Maintenance – Adopt a robust and efficient approach to maintenance to minimise deterioration in the highway network and associated infrastructure assets (e.g. lighting, street furniture etc.)
- Network Management – Effectively manage the highway network to reduce the level of delay and provide for the needs of all road users including pedestrians, cyclists and motorists.
- Enabling Development – Seek to enable appropriate new development by supporting transport infrastructure, regeneration and/or behaviour change initiatives that will mitigate the potential impact of development proposals.

10.11 Within the **health** thematic area, a number of 'complementary' policies have been identified as indicative priorities and will be taken forward where resources allow. These are:

- Public Rights of Way & Green Infrastructure – Protect and enhance public rights of way and transport related green infrastructure and will endeavour to create new links where beneficial for health or access to green spaces.
- Promotion of Active Travel and Healthy Activities – Work in partnership to promote walking, cycling and horse riding as active travel options and healthy activities.
- Road Safety (Engineering) – Improve road safety through highway design improvements at collision blackspots.

10.12 A Road Safety Strategy is currently being developed for Cheshire East. This will identify the key road safety challenges in the borough and will examine the most effective measures to reduce casualties on the road network. This may result in re-assessment of policies in relation to this evidence. Road safety issues were a key issue of concern within town and parish plans across the borough.

10.13 Within the **stronger communities**, **young people** and **older people** thematic areas, a number of 'complementary' policies have been identified as indicative priorities and will be taken forward where resources allow. These are:

- Community – Work in partnership with local communities to support community led solutions that improve accessibility to key services (employment, education, health, shopping and leisure).
- Accessibility of Services – Work with partner organisations and local communities to make key services easier to access with a particular focus on disadvantaged groups and areas, including people living in rural areas, older people, young people and those without access to a car.
- Access for all – Consider the diverse range of needs concerning disabled people and other groups who experience difficulties using the transport system.

11.0   Overview of Year One and Term One Issues

11.1   The LTP strategy and first implementation plan must be prepared by the Council by April 2011. The 15 year strategy will be supported by rolling three-year implementation plans to allocate resources and prioritise key transport measures.

12.0   *Access to Information*

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer:

Name: Jenny Lees
Designation: Principal Transportation Officer
Tel No: 01270 686349
Email: jenny.lees@cheshireeast.gov.uk

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Local Transport Plan

Draft Strategy (2011-2026)

Cheshire East
Council

Executive Summary

1   Cheshire East has excellent national and international transport links via the motorway network, rail connections and proximity to Manchester airport, which support Cheshire East's ambition to be a premier location for business growth. This level of connectivity also helps make Cheshire East an attractive place to live, along with its diversity of unique natural and built environment, and a strong sense of community.

2   Cheshire East's Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) - 'Ambition for All' - sets out the vision for the area and priorities for action. Cohesive, empowered and active communities in which people can influence the decisions that affect their locality is at the heart of the SCS for Cheshire East. Local communities are often best placed to identify their own transport needs and to develop local transport solutions. Achieving a high level of community engagement is seen to be a vital component of how the Council will seek to deliver this transport strategy.

3   Cheshire East's draft Local Transport Plan (LTP) relates directly to the seven priorities of the SCS to illustrate how transport contributes to the achievement of wider aspirations and ambitions for the area over the next 15 years (2011-2026). The SCS thematic areas are:

- Ensure a sustainable future
- Create conditions for business growth
- Drive out the sources of poor health
- Nurture strong communities
- Support our children and young people
- Prepare for an increasingly older population
- Unlock the potential of our towns

4   In developing the draft strategy, consideration has been given to the relative priorities across the thematic areas and an understanding of where transport interventions can achieve the greatest results. Following consultation with stakeholders and Member, the proposed priorities for the LTP are "**ensure a sustainable future**" and "**create conditions for business growth**".

5   It is proposed that future investment in transport will be directed towards the policies and interventions which support these priority areas to help grow the economy and tackle carbon emissions. This does not mean that the needs of the other thematic areas will be neglected – rather they will be supported by targeted aspects of the adopted policy solutions, which have a wide sphere of influence in other areas (e.g. needs of young and older people).

6   In addition, within each thematic area indicative priority policies have been identified for public consultation and are set out below. The policies within the sustainability and business growth themes are 'core' policies – others are 'complementary' and will be taken forward where resources allow, where they reflect community priorities and/or development aspirations.

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7 The challenges for "unlocking the potential of towns" are unique to each place and will be addressed within a series of transport frameworks for principal towns and key service centres (as defined by the Local Development Framework) to be developed post-April 2011. Working with the Local Area Partnerships (LAPs), town & parish councils and community & voluntary groups will facilitate a better understanding of transport and accessibility needs at a local level. The aim will be to enable local communities to determine local interpretation of the LTP, and enable detailed exploration of tailored localised solutions.

8 The LTP has been subject to wide ranging community engagement, including integrated public consultation with the SCS, stakeholder and Member workshops, LAP questionnaire and analysis of existing town and parish plans.

9 The LTP strategy will be supported by rolling three year implementation plans, translating the strategy into deliverable actions. The first implementation plan will be released for public consultation in January / February 2011 and will include a criteria for prioritisation against which potential initiatives will be judged, as well as performance indicators. The LTP will remain a live document supporting continuous improvement in the planning and delivery of services with a focus on achieving greater outcomes more efficiently, with fully engaged communities.

Thematic Areas – Key Transport Links

10 To ensure a sustainable future, the SCS identifies the key transport role as: improving transport connections and accessible services, but also in supporting provision of appropriate housing, while protecting the countryside and encouraging more sustainable living. This will include ensuring that Cheshire East's ambitious plans for growth in the spatial priority areas of Crewe and Macclesfield encourage sustainable living.

11 Hence, the key issues revolve around management of transport impacts through the spatial planning system, and especially minimising the need to travel, and ensuring that there are attractive and available sustainable alternatives for the trips people make. This means walking and cycling for shorter journeys and efficient public transport for longer journeys.

12 The scale of the challenge in this area is evidenced by the past and projected growth in CO_2 emissions from road transport, which is 37% of the total and is expected to grow by 2020 – whereas other sources of carbon are being reduced. Macclesfield, Knutsford and Wilmslow have the highest emissions from road transport in the borough. This is indicative of a very car dominated area and low public transport use relative to other areas.

13 To ensure a sustainable future, the following 'core' policies have been identified as indicative priorities:

- Public Transport (Service Levels & Reliability) – Work with passenger transport operators (bus, rail, community transport & taxis) to explore improvements to service levels and reliability.

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- Public Transport (Integration & Facilities) – Work with passenger transport providers (bus, rail and community transport) to improve public transport integration and facilities.
- Spatial Planning – Seek to minimise the future need to travel through a strategy in the Local Development Framework that focuses most new developments in larger settlements where there is a good range of housing, jobs, shops and services already accessible by public transport, cycling and walking.

14   The issues in relation to **business growth** focus on creating the conditions for greater prosperity, and in transport terms centre on the removal of barriers to doing business, such as congestion. Current congestion 'hotspots' occur on the inter-urban network including Crewe Green Roundabout and the A500 Barthomley Link in Crewe, as well as the A34 around Congleton and the A6 through Disley. Schemes such as the Crewe Green Link Road will unlock the potential of towns, enable development and make Cheshire East an increasingly attractive location for business growth.

15   There are important links to the sustainability chapter above, in that the locations of new commercial activity will create destinations which people will wish to access from both existing and new housing sites. Hence, the two will need to be planned together, particularly where edge of centre sites need improved access provision.

16   Further location and access issues are raised by the existence of pockets of deprivation and worklessness in parts of the borough, particularly in Crewe, with a need for jobs at suitable skill levels and which can be reached affordably without the need to run a private car. These issues will be accounted for further in transport frameworks developed locally.

17   Attracting investment and fostering growth in the commercial sector will need transport to be reliable and predictable – especially by road, where most goods movement and much business travel takes place. Hence, it will be vital to more effectively maintain and manage this network to ensure delays are minimised and journey quality is acceptable.

18   To create conditions for business growth, the following 'core' policies have been identified as indicative priorities:

- Maintenance – Adopt a robust and efficient approach to maintenance to minimise deterioration in the highway network and associated infrastructure assets (e.g. lighting, street furniture etc.)
- Network Management – Effectively manage the highway network to reduce the level of delay and provide for the needs of all road users including pedestrians, cyclists and motorists.
- Enabling Development – Seek to enable appropriate new development by supporting transport infrastructure, regeneration and/or behaviour change initiatives that will mitigate the potential impact of development proposals.

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19 The action to drive out the **sources of poor health** highlights two obvious challenges: the first is to reduce loss of life and injury in transport-related accidents; and the other to ensure people do more walking and cycling, which will help reduce obesity levels and the related health problems of diabetes, heart disease and cancer targeted by the SCS.

20 Alongside this, a less obvious positive contribution to health can be made by ensuring that all people have good access to nature and the countryside, which is proven to have a beneficial effect on mental health and well-being, as well as the active travel benefits.

21 Although big improvements in road safety have been made in recent years, there are still significant numbers of accidents, with over 68% of residents reporting having been involved in a road traffic collision. The roads remain disproportionately higher risk for motorcyclists, cyclists and people on foot – so creating a further barrier to active travel.

22 Within the health thematic area, a number of 'complementary' policies have been identified as indicative priorities and will be taken forward where resources allow. These are:

- Public Rights of Way & Green Infrastructure – Protect and enhance public rights of way and transport related green infrastructure and endeavour to create new links where beneficial for health or access to green spaces.
- Promotion of Active Travel and Healthy Activities – Work in partnership to promote walking, cycling and horse riding as active travel options and healthy activities.
- Road Safety (Engineering) – Improve road safety through highway design improvements at collision blackspots.

23 A Road Safety Strategy is currently being developed for Cheshire East. This will identify the key road safety challenges in the borough and will examine the most effective measures to reduce casualties on the road network. This may result in re-assessment of policies in relation to this evidence. Road safety issues were a key issue of concern within town and parish plans across the borough.

24 In nurturing **strong communities**, the key transport issues will be primarily local, so that engagement and consideration of their views prior to determining any course of action will be crucial in achieving the SCS priority to 'support the community to support itself'.

25 Local delivery of services and enabling solutions to emerge from within communities is vital to success – often finding innovative ways to retain service provision more locally, so reducing the need to travel to larger towns to access the facilities that people want. This capacity can be improved by devolving responsibility for delivery and maintenance of some current Council transport-related activity down to town, parish and local level.

26   Accessibility to services such as education, employment, shopping and leisure can be challenging for the 39% of Cheshire East's population living in rural areas. Areas within the Nantwich LAP have the greatest distance to travel to reach key services. Accessibility within towns can also be challenging, particularly in areas of deprivation where cost can be a barrier. Improvements in this area can emerge through technology, as well as transport services.

27   The best solutions to providing for disabled people, and those who experience difficulty with making longer trips, may also often be found within their local communities. This should however complement measures to ease physical access to public transport and the availability of flexible, on-demand door-to-door services for those who need them.

28   Many of the transport issues affecting **children and young people** are closely related to accessibility by modes other than the car, since most will be too young to drive. Here, there are particular challenges associated with ensuring access to education at all stages.

29   Additionally, issues remain with younger people's exposure to risk on the roads – with over 10% of those killed or seriously injured being under 16, along with unusually high risks of involvement in an accident for car occupants and motorcyclists under 25. This sits alongside the growing threat to young people's health from rising obesity rates.

30   The overall health and accessibility issues identified above are often exacerbated for young people; however, outside of the education sector, better targeting of solutions – rather than additional measures – may be the best way to ease the transition to adulthood.

31   Transport issues faced by **older people** are in many ways a subset of the challenges outlined in the community and health thematic areas. Retaining good health longer through life is important, and active travel and access to a range of facilities and services helps older people retain a higher quality of life for longer, postponing the time when availability of specialist transport and access to healthcare services become the primary transport issues affecting them.

32   Cheshire East has a large (19%) and growing – but also a largely healthy and prosperous – population of older people, with increasing numbers continuing to drive for longer as well as a high take-up of free concessionary bus travel. However, as people live longer, they eventually require more specialist support and the issues of transport to facilities versus at-home service provision will become acute. Older people have expressed more difficulty accessing hospitals than other facilities, and need for better targeted services.

33   Inevitably, physical mobility declines with age, and it is important to ensure that day-to-day use of transport systems and streets is not compromised by unnecessary barriers to older people's mobility such as high kerbs or steps,

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lack of seating, or poor information, as well as minimising the risk of slips, trips and falls on streets and in transport systems. The Poynton shared space scheme is a positive example of where this approach has been implemented.

34   Within the stronger communities, young people and older people thematic areas, a number of 'complementary' policies have been identified as indicative priorities and will be taken forward where resources allow. These are:

- Community – Work in partnership with local communities to support community led solutions that improve accessibility to key services (employment, education, health, shopping and leisure).
- Accessibility of Services – Work with partner organisations and local communities to make key services easier to access with a particular focus on disadvantaged groups and areas, including people living in rural areas, older people, young people and those without access to a car.
- Access for all – Consider the diverse range of needs concerning disabled people and other groups who experience difficulties using the transport system.

What Happens Next?

35   The draft LTP strategy will be released for public consultation on **Tuesday 19th October** to ensure that the strategy reflects the views of local communities and key stakeholders as far as possible.

36   Following public consultation, the transport priorities will be finalised and reflected in rolling three-year implementation plans to allocate resources, as well as in each of the LTP daughter documents (e.g. Transport Asset Management Plan, Network Management Plan, Rights of Way Improvement Plan, Passenger Transport Strategy, Road Safety Strategy and Transport Frameworks for Towns).

37	The key dates in the development of the LTP are as follows:

Key Dates	Key Event
20th Oct 2010	Results of Government "Comprehensive Spending Review"
19th Oct – 21st Nov 2010	Draft Strategy Document: Public Consultation
17th Jan 2011	Final Strategy Document and Draft Implementation Plan: Cabinet
Jan – Feb 2011	Draft Implementation Plan: Public & Member Consultation
Feb 2011	Final Strategy Document: Full Council
Mar 2011	Final Implementation Plan: Cabinet

Cheshire East Council
Westfields, Middlewich Road
Sandbach, Cheshire CW11 1HZ
www.cheshireeast.gov.uk

This information is available in other formats on request

Local Transport Plan

Draft Strategy (2011-2026)

Cheshire East
Council

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LTP Strategy

Foreword

Transport and travel is a fundamental part of everyday life – it enables us to visit friends and family, commute to work, access healthcare, education, shopping and leisure activities, and supports a healthy and vibrant economy. The Local Transport Plan (LTP) aims to capitalise on the strengths of the existing transport system in Cheshire East, including excellent transport links to major centres via the rail and motorway network, and set out a strategy of how we will look to improve it into the future.

Good transport connections are integral to our ambitious plans for economic growth and protecting our environment to ensure a sustainable future for all our residents and businesses. The quality of the transport on offer will be influential in meeting our wider aspirations for the borough, as set out in our Sustainable Community Strategy – "Ambition for All".

We are ambitious about our future in Cheshire East and the role transport will play, but we must also be realistic about the challenges we face. The way we travel is changing to adapt to climate change and new technologies, the age profile of the population and shifts in the global economy. Our travel patterns are car dependent for the majority, which means we will have to find ways to travel smarter, possibly less often and in some cases look to other modes of travel such as public transport, walking and cycling.

The LTP will shape future investment in our highways and public transport network over the next 15 years, so we would welcome your comments on the proposed priorities and strategic direction for transport in Cheshire East.

Once finalised, the strategy will be supported by three year implementation plans which will transform our strategy into action. There will be a period of public consultation on the first draft implementation plan in the New Year.

I look forward to receiving your comments and suggestions.

Wesley Fitzgerald

Leader of Cheshire East Council

If you have any questions about the consultation process, please email:

ltp@cheshireeast.gov.uk

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1   Cheshire East has excellent national and international transport links via the motorway network, rail connections and proximity to Manchester airport, which support Cheshire East's ambition to be a premier location for business growth. This level of connectivity also helps make Cheshire East an attractive place to live, along with its diversity of unique natural and built environment, and a strong sense of community.

2   Cheshire East's Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) - 'Ambition for All' - sets out the vision for the area and priorities for action. Cohesive, empowered and active communities in which people can influence the decisions that affect their locality is at the heart of the SCS for Cheshire East. Local communities are often best placed to identify their own transport needs and to develop local transport solutions. Achieving a high level of community engagement is seen to be a vital component of how the Council will seek to deliver this transport strategy.

3   Cheshire East's draft Local Transport Plan (LTP) relates directly to the seven priorities of the SCS to illustrate how transport contributes to the achievement of wider aspirations and ambitions for the area over the next 15 years (2011-2026). The SCS thematic areas are:

- Ensure a sustainable future
- Create conditions for business growth
- Drive out the sources of poor health
- Nurture strong communities
- Support our children and young people
- Prepare for an increasingly older population
- Unlock the potential of our towns

4   In developing the draft strategy, consideration has been given to the relative priorities across the thematic areas and an understanding of where transport interventions can achieve the greatest results. Following consultation with stakeholders and Member, the proposed priorities for the LTP are "**ensure a sustainable future**" and "**create conditions for business growth**".

5   It is proposed that future investment in transport will be directed towards the policies and interventions which support these priority areas to help grow the economy and tackle carbon emissions. This does not mean that the needs of the other thematic areas will be neglected – rather they will be supported by targeted aspects of the adopted policy solutions, which have a wide sphere of influence in other areas (e.g. needs of young and older people).

6   In addition, within each thematic area indicative priority policies have been identified for public consultation and are set out below. The policies within the sustainability and business growth themes are 'core' policies – others are 'complementary' and will be taken forward where resources allow, where they reflect community priorities and/or development aspirations.

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7   The challenges for "unlocking the potential of towns" are unique to each place and will be addressed within a series of transport frameworks for principal towns and key service centres (as defined by the Local Development Framework) to be developed post-April 2011. Working with the Local Area Partnerships (LAPs), town & parish councils and community & voluntary groups will facilitate a better understanding of transport and accessibility needs at a local level. The aim will be to enable local communities to determine local interpretation of the LTP, and enable detailed exploration of tailored localised solutions.

8   The LTP has been subject to wide ranging community engagement, including integrated public consultation with the SCS, stakeholder and Member workshops, LAP questionnaire and analysis of existing town and parish plans.

9   The LTP strategy will be supported by rolling three year implementation plans, translating the strategy into deliverable actions. The first implementation plan will be released for public consultation in January / February 2011 and will include a criteria for prioritisation against which potential initiatives will be judged, as well as performance indicators. The LTP will remain a live document supporting continuous improvement in the planning and delivery of services with a focus on achieving greater outcomes more efficiently, with fully engaged communities.

Thematic Areas – Key Transport Links

10   To ensure a sustainable future, the SCS identifies the key transport role as: improving transport connections and accessible services, but also in supporting provision of appropriate housing, while protecting the countryside and encouraging more sustainable living. This will include ensuring that Cheshire East's ambitious plans for growth in the spatial priority areas of Crewe and Macclesfield encourage sustainable living.

11   Hence, the key issues revolve around management of transport impacts through the spatial planning system, and especially minimising the need to travel, and ensuring that there are attractive and available sustainable alternatives for the trips people make. This means walking and cycling for shorter journeys and efficient public transport for longer journeys.

12   The scale of the challenge in this area is evidenced by the past and projected growth in CO_2 emissions from road transport, which is 37% of the total and is expected to grow by 2020 – whereas other sources of carbon are being reduced. Macclesfield, Knutsford and Wilmslow have the highest emissions from road transport in the borough. This is indicative of a very car dominated area and low public transport use relative to other areas.

13   To ensure a sustainable future, the following 'core' policies have been identified as indicative priorities:

- Public Transport (Service Levels & Reliability) – Work with passenger transport operators (bus, rail, community transport & taxis) to explore improvements to service levels and reliability.

- Public Transport (Integration & Facilities) – Work with passenger transport providers (bus, rail and community transport) to improve public transport integration and facilities.
- Spatial Planning – Seek to minimise the future need to travel through a strategy in the Local Development Framework that focuses most new developments in larger settlements where there is a good range of housing, jobs, shops and services already accessible by public transport, cycling and walking.

14 The issues in relation to **business growth** focus on creating the conditions for greater prosperity, and in transport terms centre on the removal of barriers to doing business, such as congestion. Current congestion 'hotspots' occur on the inter-urban network including Crewe Green Roundabout and the A500 Barthomley Link in Crewe, as well as the A34 around Congleton and the A6 through Disley. Schemes such as the Crewe Green Link Road will unlock the potential of towns, enable development and make Cheshire East an increasingly attractive location for business growth.

15 There are important links to the sustainability chapter above, in that the locations of new commercial activity will create destinations which people will wish to access from both existing and new housing sites. Hence, the two will need to be planned together, particularly where edge of centre sites need improved access provision.

16 Further location and access issues are raised by the existence of pockets of deprivation and worklessness in parts of the borough, particularly in Crewe, with a need for jobs at suitable skill levels and which can be reached affordably without the need to run a private car. These issues will be accounted for further in transport frameworks developed locally.

17 Attracting investment and fostering growth in the commercial sector will need transport to be reliable and predictable – especially by road, where most goods movement and much business travel takes place. Hence, it will be vital to more effectively maintain and manage this network to ensure delays are minimised and journey quality is acceptable.

18 To create conditions for business growth, the following 'core' policies have been identified as indicative priorities:

- Maintenance – Adopt a robust and efficient approach to maintenance to minimise deterioration in the highway network and associated infrastructure assets (e.g. lighting, street furniture etc.)
- Network Management – Effectively manage the highway network to reduce the level of delay and provide for the needs of all road users including pedestrians, cyclists and motorists.
- Enabling Development – Seek to enable appropriate new development by supporting transport infrastructure, regeneration and/or behaviour change initiatives that will mitigate the potential impact of development proposals.

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19 The action to drive out the **sources of poor health** highlights two obvious challenges: the first is to reduce loss of life and injury in transport-related accidents; and the other to ensure people do more walking and cycling, which will help reduce obesity levels and the related health problems of diabetes, heart disease and cancer targeted by the SCS.

20 Alongside this, a less obvious positive contribution to health can be made by ensuring that all people have good access to nature and the countryside, which is proven to have a beneficial effect on mental health and well-being, as well as the active travel benefits.

21 Although big improvements in road safety have been made in recent years, there are still significant numbers of accidents, with over 68% of residents reporting having been involved in a road traffic collision. The roads remain disproportionately higher risk for motorcyclists, cyclists and people on foot – so creating a further barrier to active travel.

22 Within the health thematic area, a number of 'complementary' policies have been identified as indicative priorities and will be taken forward where resources allow. These are:

- Public Rights of Way & Green Infrastructure – Protect and enhance public rights of way and transport related green infrastructure and endeavour to create new links where beneficial for health or access to green spaces.
- Promotion of Active Travel and Healthy Activities – Work in partnership to promote walking, cycling and horse riding as active travel options and healthy activities.
- Road Safety (Engineering) – Improve road safety through highway design improvements at collision blackspots.

23 A Road Safety Strategy is currently being developed for Cheshire East. This will identify the key road safety challenges in the borough and will examine the most effective measures to reduce casualties on the road network. This may result in re-assessment of policies in relation to this evidence. Road safety issues were a key issue of concern within town and parish plans across the borough.

24 In nurturing **strong communities**, the key transport issues will be primarily local, so that engagement and consideration of their views prior to determining any course of action will be crucial in achieving the SCS priority to 'support the community to support itself'.

25 Local delivery of services and enabling solutions to emerge from within communities is vital to success – often finding innovative ways to retain service provision more locally, so reducing the need to travel to larger towns to access the facilities that people want. This capacity can be improved by devolving responsibility for delivery and maintenance of some current Council transport-related activity down to town, parish and local level.

26   Accessibility to services such as education, employment, shopping and leisure can be challenging for the 39% of Cheshire East's population living in rural areas. Areas within the Nantwich LAP have the greatest distance to travel to reach key services. Accessibility within towns can also be challenging, particularly in areas of deprivation where cost can be a barrier. Improvements in this area can emerge through technology, as well as transport services.

27   The best solutions to providing for disabled people, and those who experience difficulty with making longer trips, may also often be found within their local communities. This should however complement measures to ease physical access to public transport and the availability of flexible, on-demand door-to-door services for those who need them.

28   Many of the transport issues affecting **children and young people** are closely related to accessibility by modes other than the car, since most will be too young to drive. Here, there are particular challenges associated with ensuring access to education at all stages.

29   Additionally, issues remain with younger people's exposure to risk on the roads – with over 10% of those killed or seriously injured being under 16, along with unusually high risks of involvement in an accident for car occupants and motorcyclists under 25. This sits alongside the growing threat to young people's health from rising obesity rates.

30   The overall health and accessibility issues identified above are often exacerbated for young people; however, outside of the education sector, better targeting of solutions – rather than additional measures – may be the best way to ease the transition to adulthood.

31   Transport issues faced by **older people** are in many ways a subset of the challenges outlined in the community and health thematic areas. Retaining good health longer through life is important, and active travel and access to a range of facilities and services helps older people retain a higher quality of life for longer, postponing the time when availability of specialist transport and access to healthcare services become the primary transport issues affecting them.

32   Cheshire East has a large (19%) and growing – but also a largely healthy and prosperous – population of older people, with increasing numbers continuing to drive for longer as well as a high take-up of free concessionary bus travel. However, as people live longer, they eventually require more specialist support and the issues of transport to facilities versus at-home service provision will become acute. Older people have expressed more difficulty accessing hospitals than other facilities, and need for better targeted services.

33   Inevitably, physical mobility declines with age, and it is important to ensure that day-to-day use of transport systems and streets is not compromised by unnecessary barriers to older people's mobility such as high kerbs or steps,

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lack of seating, or poor information, as well as minimising the risk of slips, trips and falls on streets and in transport systems. The Poynton shared space scheme is a positive example of where this approach has been implemented.

34   Within the stronger communities, young people and older people thematic areas, a number of 'complementary' policies have been identified as indicative priorities and will be taken forward where resources allow. These are:

- Community – Work in partnership with local communities to support community led solutions that improve accessibility to key services (employment, education, health, shopping and leisure).
- Accessibility of Services – Work with partner organisations and local communities to make key services easier to access with a particular focus on disadvantaged groups and areas, including people living in rural areas, older people, young people and those without access to a car.
- Access for all – Consider the diverse range of needs concerning disabled people and other groups who experience difficulties using the transport system.

What Happens Next?

35   The draft LTP strategy will be released for public consultation on **Tuesday 19th October** to ensure that the strategy reflects the views of local communities and key stakeholders as far as possible.

36   Following public consultation, the transport priorities will be finalised and reflected in rolling three-year implementation plans to allocate resources, as well as in each of the LTP daughter documents (e.g. Transport Asset Management Plan, Network Management Plan, Rights of Way Improvement Plan, Passenger Transport Strategy, Road Safety Strategy and Transport Frameworks for Towns).

37 The key dates in the development of the LTP are as follows:

Key Dates	Key Event
20th Oct 2010	Results of Government "Comprehensive Spending Review"
19th Oct – 21st Nov 2010	Draft Strategy Document: Public Consultation
17th Jan 2011	Final Strategy Document and Draft Implementation Plan: Cabinet
Jan – Feb 2011	Draft Implementation Plan: Public & Member Consultation
Feb 2011	Final Strategy Document: Full Council
Mar 2011	Final Implementation Plan: Cabinet

1 Introduction & Context

1 Introduction & Context

Introduction

1.1   This document is the first Local Transport Plan (LTP) to be developed by Cheshire East Council following the re-organisation of local government in Cheshire in April 2009.

1.2   The plan seeks to build on past achievements, but also sets out to develop a greater focus on the area's communities. The plan has been developed in accordance with the Department for Transport (DfT) document 'Guidance on Local Transport Plans', but also clearly reflects local priorities.

1.3   Good transport is vital in building sustainable communities, contributing towards the development of safer and stronger communities, healthier children and young people, older people living independently, equality and social inclusion, environmental objectives and better local economies. The LTP is a vital tool to help the council work with its stakeholders to strengthen its place shaping role and its delivery of services to the community.

What is a Local Transport Plan?

1.4   This LTP is a strategic plan for the development of transport within Cheshire East over the period 2011-2026, outlining how transport will contribute to and support the longer-term aspirations of the borough. Delivery of the plan will be set out in a short-term implementation plan to allocate resources and prioritise key transport measures. The duration of the implementation plan will match the indicative funding commitments by central government – currently proposed as three year settlement periods.

1.5   In addition to the strategy and implementation plan, the LTP will be supported by a series of topic-specific 'daughter documents' which will address detailed or technical issues relating to the delivery of the LTP in Cheshire East.

1.6   The LTP will remain a live document and will therefore be subject to ongoing review and development. As new national and local policies, strategies and priorities emerge and new challenges are identified, part or all of the LTP suite of documents will be reviewed and updated.

Setting the Context - The People

1.7   Approximately 360,000 people live in Cheshire East, which has experienced a steady increase in the size of the population since 1999. However, over recent years, the 'young people' population has decreased and population at retirement age has grown, leading to an increasingly ageing population within the borough. Population projections estimate that these trends will continue in the future.

1.8   Cheshire East is a good place to live. In 2008, 85% of residents said they were satisfied with their local area. This was 5% above the national average. Residents also have a longer life expectancy than the national average.

1.9   Young people in the borough perform well. For example, in the 2008/09 academic year, 57.3% of Year 11 pupils achieved five or more GCSE A*-C grades including Maths and English. This exceeded the average for maintained (Local Authority) schools in England (50.7%)

1.10   Despite good overall quality of life, there are some parts of the area where the experience is different. Around 6% of the borough's population live in neighbourhoods classified as being in the 20% most deprived nationally, based on the 2007 Index of Multiple Deprivation. The majority (10 out of 14) of these neighbourhoods are in Crewe town, with the rest in Macclesfield and Congleton towns and the Wilmslow-Handforth conurbation. This means that 22,700 people live in neighbourhoods which rank among England's worst 20% for overall deprivation.

1.11   There are some significant health inequalities between parts of Cheshire East. For example, life expectancy ranges from 73 years for men in parts of Crewe to 84 years in parts of Wilmslow. Life expectancy is as low as 77 years for women in some parts of Crewe but is 94 years in parts of Macclesfield.

1.12   Cheshire East has active and vibrant communities – a strong town and parish councils network, many neighbourhood groups and a strong volunteer force consisting of large and small voluntary groups at work throughout our communities.

Poynton Shared Space Scheme Concept

Setting the Context - The Place

1.13   Cheshire East is the third largest unitary authority in the North West, next to Manchester and Liverpool. The borough has a total area of 116,638 hectares, with boundaries to Warrington, Greater Manchester, Stockport, Derbyshire, Staffordshire, Shropshire and Cheshire West and Chester.

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1.14

The area has a diverse mixture of urban and rural areas with approximately 39% of the population living in rural areas and 61% in our towns. The borough has two major towns in Crewe and Macclesfield and a number of smaller towns including Wilmslow, Congleton, Sandbach, Poynton, Nantwich, Middlewich, Knutsford and Alsager. The unique and diverse character of the borough's towns is seen as a major asset of the area and something which local people highly value.

1.15 93% of the area is classed as at least 'more rural than urban', while 88% is classified as 'greenspace'. The borough has a wide variety of green spaces including parts of the Peak District National Park, the Cheshire plain, mosses, meres and heaths.

1.16 Cheshire East has a rich and varied heritage and many unique environmental and cultural assets. Many of the region's finest historic assets are found here, and their effective conservation is central to maintaining strong local distinctiveness, driving the economy, supporting educational targets and promoting community cohesion.

1.17 These assets include Macclesfield's industrial heritage, Tatton Park, Little Moreton Hall, Crewe railway heritage, Tegg's Nose, the canal network, historic towns such as Nantwich, parts of the Peak District National Park and 2,637 listed buildings, of which 47 are Grade I listed. In addition, we have other unique attractions such as Jodrell Bank Radio Telescope and the many fine houses and gardens open to the public. The wealth of heritage and history is seen by local people as one of the areas most distinctive and valuable assets.

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1.18 Cheshire East has a strong economy. The unemployment claimant rate (2.7% in July 2010) is below the UK average (4.5%). Whilst Cheshire East contains only 5.1% of the North West's working-age population, it contributes 5.5% of the region's workforce and 6.9% of its economic output. It also accounts for 7.4% of its businesses, the highest share of any North West authority area. The borough has strong economic relationships with surrounding economies, particularly Greater Manchester and North Staffordshire.

Jodrell Bank

1.19 In recent years the boroughs economy has become less dependent on traditional manufacturing and more dependent on service sector jobs. By 2008, the manufacturing sector accounted for only 13.5% of Cheshire East employees, down from 23.5% in 1998 (and from 17.4% in 2006). Financial services activity accounts for a relatively high share of the employment total (higher than its share in Great Britain as a whole) and the sector grew substantially in the years leading up to the latest recession.

1.20 The boroughs visitor economy is worth over £650m each year (37% of the visitor economy volume for Cheshire & Warrington) and supports 10,000 jobs.

1.21 There are wide gaps in economic prosperity in the area, with average household income in the most affluent neighbourhood being around three times that of households in the least affluent neighbourhood. Over a quarter of people are out of work and claiming benefits in the borough's poorest neighbourhoods.

1.22 One consequence of the borough's strong economy is that a higher than average impact on the environment. At present the level of CO2 emissions per capita (10.3 tonnes in 2007) is higher than the averages for both the North West and the UK (both 8.4 tonnes).

1.23 Affordability of housing is also a significant issue as prices are high, making buying a home out of the reach of many people. By 2009, house prices in Cheshire East were 6.9 times average earnings, compared to ratios of 5.2 for the North West and 6.3 for England as a whole. In January 2010, Cheshire East average house prices were £154,400, or 31% above the North West average (£117,900).

1.24 Cheshire East has been sub-divided into seven Local Area Partnership (LAP) areas. These partnerships bring together the key agencies (e.g. emergency services, health bodies, town and parish council representatives, third sector

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organisations) within localities to ensure engagement with communities, provide empowerment opportunities and improve service delivery through the development of robust, evidence based Area Delivery Plans.

Policy Context

1.25 Transport is not an end in itself, but rather an enabler of other activities and outcomes. For this reason this LTP must support and enable the delivery of the Council's wider strategy and ambition. These are:

Sustainable Community Strategy

1.26 Cheshire East's Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) 'Ambition for All' outlines a 15-year strategy to improve the quality of life, contribute to sustainable development and improve the economic, environmental and social well-being within the area.

1.27 The SCS outlines a vision – shared with this LTP – that, by 2025, Cheshire East will be "A prosperous place where all people can achieve their potential, regardless of where they live. We have beautiful countryside, unique towns with industrial character and a wealth of history and character. The people of Cheshire East live active and healthy lives and get involved in making their communities safe and sustainable places to live."

1.28 The SCS defines seven priority areas for action:

- *Nurture strong communities*
- *Create conditions for business growth*
- *Unlock the potential of our towns*
- *Support our children and young people*
- *Ensure a sustainable future*
- *Prepare for an increasingly older population*
- *Drive out the sources of poor health*

1.29 The LTP will utilise these priorities as the foundation of its chapter structure and explore how transport can support these wider aims.

1.30 Beneath each priority theme sits a number of priorities for action, some of which are capable of influence by transport interventions. These are addressed in each chapter, along with an assessment of evidence and trends, and the results of engagement.

Cheshire East Council's Corporate Plan

1.31 Cheshire East Council's **Corporate Plan** (2010-13) outlines an overarching strategy and range of initiatives to improve the quality of community life for residents in the borough. This will be achieved through working towards the following goals:

- Health and wellbeing

- Children and young people
- Economy, Transport and Housing
- Safer communities
- Environment and Climate change

1.32 In terms of definite transport goals – the Corporate Plan has the following ambition:

- Maintain the condition of our highway network in the face of Government funding reductions;
- Invest in cycling and walking infrastructure;
- Continue to support road safety measures.

Local Development Framework (LDF)

1.33 Cheshire East's emerging LDF will provide the overall development strategy for the borough and will set out a strategy to deliver the Council's ambitious plans for growth to deliver economic prosperity. It will also provide a framework for the Council's Economic Development Strategy (EDS).

Economic Development Strategy (EDS)

1.34 Transport plays an essential role in regeneration and economic growth. The LTP has therefore been developed alongside the draft EDS to ensure mutually inclusive policies and objectives are outlined within these two documents. The Council's draft EDS highlights the principal towns of Crewe and Macclesfield as spatial priorities, alongside a focus on "Sustainable Towns".

1.35 The first of these priority spatial areas has been considered in Crewe's "Strategic Framework for Economic Growth 2010-2030" which describes the challenges for economic development and the role that transport needs to take to support the long-term prospects of Crewe's economy, businesses and community. Key transport actions include the redevelopment of Crewe railway station (potentially providing a new interchange and safer passenger facilities) and the access works associated with the development of the Basford strategic sites.

1.36 An economic master plan will likewise consider the future development of Macclesfield and identify how key development sites can best contribute towards the town achieving its maximum potential. The master plan will examine both the revitalisation of the town centre and aspirations for the South Macclesfield Development Area.

1.37 The "Sustainable Towns" priority will examine the potential for sustainable economic development to support smaller towns – known as key service centres in the LDF.

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Climate Change Strategy

1.38   Transport currently accounts for 37% of total carbon dioxide emissions in Cheshire East. This emerging strategy and action plan will cover the whole borough and work across all sectors. It will plan to adapt and provide mitigation for unavoidable climate change.

Other Key Strategies

1.39   Other key strategies that our transport planning will reflect, inform and influence include:

- *Housing Strategy*;
- *Visitor Economy Strategic Framework*;
- *Health Inequalities Strategy;* and
- *Children and Young People's Plan.*

LTP Objectives

1.40   To help deliver the SCS priorities for action and key strategies, a series of LTP objectives have been developed through the consultation process with stakeholders and Members. These aim to make explicit the areas where transport can make a positive contribution to the achievement of the priority goals within each area, and also where it would be likely to hinder achievement if under-performance is not addressed. The seven objectives are:

RELEVANT OBJECTIVES

Objective 1 (Congestion): Minimise congestion and improve the overall efficiency of the highway network.

Objective 2 (Accessibility): Improve accessibility to key services (employment, education, health, shopping and leisure) and reduce the need to travel.

Objective 3 (Maintenance): Improve maintenance of the highway and transport network.

Objective 4 (Community): Support community involvement and decision-making.

Objective 5 (Health): Support active and healthy lifestyles.

Objective 6 (Environment): Protect and enhance the local and global environment.

Objective 7 (Safety): Improve road safety for all users and increase personal and community safety.

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1.41 The table below identifies the links between the SCS key priorities for action and the LTP objectives. This matrix highlights the most direct links only; less direct links exist between some of these objectives and are highlighted individually within each chapter.

SCS Themes: Objectives	Sustainability (S)	Business Growth (B)	Health (H)	Stronger Communities (C)	Children & Young People (Y)	Older Population (O)	Towns (T)
Congestion		X					X
Accessibility	X	X		X	X	X	X
Maintenance		X					X
Community				X			X
Health	X			X		X	X
Environment	X	X	X				X
Safety			X	X	X		X

SCS themes and LTP objectives

Developing the Plan

1.42 A six stage process has been undertaken to develop the LTP, and this document covers the process up to step five – the final stage being to develop an implementation plan:

- Clarify the overarching vision, goals and objectives for transport in Cheshire East through direct involvement in development of the SCS.
- Assess the evidence and identify the key issues or challenges to solve, through data collection for the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping, Transport Baseline and stakeholder workshops.
- Generate options for measures that will resolve these challenges, through stakeholder workshops and examination of evidence.
- Appraise the feasible policy options and predict their likely effects, through stakeholder workshops and policy refinement and filtering.
- Select the strongest set of preferred policy options and priorities; influenced by stakeholder workshops, evidence and emerging draft strategy consultation feedback.
- Plan to deliver the most effective transport measures within these policy areas, though preparation of an implementation plan for years 1-3 of the LTP strategy period.

1.43 The initial high-level vision which informs the draft LTP was developed in conjunction with the process that led to the adoption of "Ambition for all: the Cheshire East Sustainable Community Strategy 2010-2025", by directly engaging with the strategic and thematic partnerships and undertaking consultation with members of the public.

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1.44 To inform the development of the LTP, data was gathered from a variety of sources to identify trends and issues in wider social, economic and environmental circumstances. Existing transport infrastructure and service performance has been assessed, and travel patterns analysed to build up a picture of current and future transport challenges, and how they relate to the wider outcomes which transport can either support or constrain.

Consultation Process

1.45 In addition to the public consultation on transport issues integrated into the SCS development process, extensive consultation was also undertaken with transport stakeholders, community representatives, and elected Members. This detailed engagement was undertaken through two initial workshops (with stakeholders and Members) and a questionnaire (for LAP members). These workshops (supplemented by analysis of existing town and parish plans) identified the most important issues and challenges, and enabled attendees to propose policy options. A final workshop (with Members) identified the strategic priority themes and policies for inclusion in the draft LTP.

1.46 Public and stakeholder views on the draft LTP will be considered during the October/November consultation period and a final version will be published in March 2011.

1.47 The initial 3 year implementation plan will be developed following the LTP strategy consultation period and will be subject to public and Member consultation in January/February.

Sustainability Appraisal

1.48 Government guidance and legislation relating to transport planning, requires that all new LTPs should be subject to:

- Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)
- Health Impact Assessment (HIA)
- Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)
- Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)

1.49 A Sustainability Appraisal (SA) has been prepared in parallel with the draft LTP strategy in order to inform its development. The SA documents each of the elements above and sets out how the draft LTP contributes to meeting environmental, health, equality, social and economic objectives.

1.50 The SA document is available as part of the consultation and is open for comment during the consultation period.

Teggs Nose

Challenges & Priorities

1.51 In the short term, the Council faces very challenging reductions in transport spending from central Government.

1.52 The LTP must be realistic and deliverable whilst also retaining the ambition to achieve much more when the funding climate improves. In order to achieve this it is necessary to indicate which themes and policies have priority over others.

1.53 Through consultation with elected Members, two proposed priority SCS themes have emerged – these are **creating the conditions for business growth**, and **ensure a sustainable future**. This does not mean that the needs of other areas will be neglected – rather they will be supported by targeted aspects of the core policy solutions adopted.

1.54 A similar exercise has been undertaken to prioritise the policies within each area. Proposed 'core' and 'complementary' polices are highlighted in the chapters. The level of funding available for transport over the lifespan of this strategy will determine the number of policy areas that can effectively be delivered.

"Daughter Documents"

1.55 The transport priorities of the final LTP will be reflected in a series of technical, topic specific, "daughter documents". The scope of these documents will be separately determined for each, but will consider the Council's approach to both statutory and non-statutory duties in the context of LTP priorities. The following "daughter documents" are to be prepared either in parallel to the LTP or during the first year of the plan period:

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- Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan
- Transport Asset Management Plan
- Network Management Plan
- Passenger Transport Strategy
- Road Safety Strategy
- A series of individual Transport Frameworks for towns

LTP Structure

1.56 The chapters are structured around the SCS themes:

- **Chapter 2: Sustainability** – Ensure a sustainable future
- **Chapter 3: Business** – Create conditions for business growth
- **Chapter 4: Health** – Drive out the sources of poor health
- **Chapter 5: Communities** – Nurture strong communities
- **Chapter 6: Young people** – Support our children and young people
- **Chapter 7: Older people** – Prepare for an increasingly older population
- **Chapter 8: Towns** – Unlock the potential of our towns

1.57 In each chapter, the ways in which the SCS area for action is linked to transport are identified, relevant evidence is assessed, and emerging issues identified. These are refined down to more transport-specific challenges, and a range of policies and interventions which might resolve a challenge identified. This process is brought together through cross-referencing where policies that might also have a beneficial impact in other action areas are highlighted.

1.58 **Chapter 8: Towns** is slightly different from the rest, in that it sets out the mechanism to ascertain local priorities and undertake locally specific discussion on transport issues, through preparation of a series of Transport Frameworks for towns.

1.59 Finally, a summary chapter is provided which highlights how this strategy will be reflected in the implementation plan and how we propose to measure our performance.

1.60 **Appendix A** contains a draft Transport Framework for Crewe.

2 Ensure a Sustainable Future

Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) Priorities

2.1   The SCS has identified four priorities for action to encourage sustainable living and meet the future needs of communities in Cheshire East. These are:

- Provision of affordable and appropriate housing
- Encouraging environmentally sustainable living
- Improving transport connections and accessible services
- Protecting and enhancing our heritage and countryside

2.2   Transport will be influential within each of the four SCS actions for sustainability. Spatial planning decisions need to be proactively considered due to the long term influence on sustainability. The key sustainable development objective is to strike the right balance between the ability of transport to serve economic development and the ability to protect the environment and sustain quality of life, both now and in the future.

2.3   The location of housing and key services influences the need to travel and the ability to use non-car modes. Encouraging environmentally sustainable living through the use of public transport, walking and cycling will minimise the impact that individuals have on the natural environment.

Evidence Overview

2.4   Road transport accounts for 37% of the total carbon dioxide emissions in Cheshire East. When compared to the North West, Cheshire East has a higher percentage of emissions from domestic and local transport services. Macclesfield, Knutsford and Wilmslow have some of the highest emissions from road transport in the North West. This is indicative of the high car dependency and low public transport use in Cheshire East relative to other areas.

2.5   Transport is the only sector of the economy where emissions have increased since 1990, and the only sector where emissions are predicted to increase up to 2020[a]. However, the carbon emissions from transport should not be seen as an insurmountable challenge, but an opportunity for systemic change over the next 15 years.

2.6   The bus industry is taking the lead for road transport through the statutory introduction of low emission vehicles. These standards are progressively being raised over time, making buses one of the least polluting forms of road transport. Achieving modal shift from private vehicles to bus use would significantly reduce carbon emissions from transport.

2.7   In addition, much of the rail network in Cheshire East has been electrified, reducing emissions from trains. Many of the electric trains used on suburban services in the borough are fitted with regenerative braking, where the braking energy is fed back into the power supply and reused by other trains for acceleration, thereby reducing energy consumption and emissions.

2 Ensure a Sustainable Future

2.8 Smarter choices are techniques for reducing the need to travel and influencing travel behaviour towards more sustainable modes of transport. They can be applied to both personal and business travel. Evidence suggests that we are not doing enough to implement and monitor smarter choices locally within Cheshire East.

2.9 However, national evidence suggests that smarter choice techniques are cost effective in influencing travel behaviour. The results from the DfT's 'Sustainable Travel Towns' programme found that annual per capita emissions from car driving fell by approximately 4.6% for journeys of all lengths.

Stakeholder Opinion

2.10 Attendees at the final stakeholder consultation workshop identified the need to **create a sustainable future** as one of the two key priority themes, alongside **creating the conditions for business growth.**

2.11 They also identified the following priority policy areas:

- Public Transport (Service Levels & Reliability) – Work with passenger transport operators (bus, rail, community transport & taxis) to explore improvements to service levels and reliability.
- Public Transport (Integration & Facilities) – Work with passenger transport providers (bus, rail and community transport) to improve public transport integration and facilities.
- Spatial Planning – Seek to minimise the future need to travel through a strategy in the Local Development Framework that focuses most new developments in larger settlements where there is a good range of housing, jobs, shops and services already accessible by public transport, cycling and walking.

2.12 The feedback and priorities from earlier workshops and consultation questionnaires was used to develop the policy options used for prioritisation in the final workshop. In exploring the detailed transport challenges related to planning for sustainability and future needs, there was strong stakeholder support (throughout all stages of consultation) for improving the quality of public transport and tackling climate change through improving the network for sustainable modes of travel.

LTP Objectives

RELEVANT OBJECTIVES

Objective 6 (Environment): Protect and enhance our local and global environment.

Objective 2 (Accessibility): Improve access to key services (employment, education, health, shopping and leisure) and reduce the need to travel.

Objective 5 (Health): Support active and healthy lifestyles.

2 Ensure a Sustainable Future

Transport Challenges & Policy Solutions

Spatial Planning

2.13 The Council's Local Development Framework (LDF) will provide the overall spatial development strategy for the borough. There is a critical link between spatial planning and transport – as the location of housing, employment, retail, healthcare and education facilities will be a major determinant of the need to travel and the attractiveness of each mode.

2.14 Current planning policy encourages new development in sustainable locations, so as to minimise the need to travel to that destination by private vehicle. Where a greater range of attractive travel opportunities exist, more people will have the ability to choose sustainable travel modes such as public transport, walking and cycling.

2.15 The aim, which is widely supported by stakeholders, is to ensure that development sites have good accessibility and that conditions are imposed on the application which will ensure the developer makes them accessible. This will help create sustainable communities where people are able to "live local, work local and buy local".

2.16 LTP policy needs to reinforce and help deliver the approach set out in the forthcoming LDF – there are two strands of influence: the first is guiding new development to locations with good existing levels of accessibility, the second relates to mitigating the impact of development and provision of high quality sustainable transport options. This chapter, on sustainability and future needs, focuses on the first element and seeks to influence spatial considerations within the LDF.

2.17 The policy on mitigating the transport impact of development is in **Chapter 3: Business.**

2.18 It should be noted that general accessibility issues (such as access to services in rural communities or from areas of deprivation) are considered in more detail in **Chapter 5: Communities.**

PRIORITY POLICY

Policy S1 Spatial Planning: Seek to minimise the future need to travel through a strategy in the Local Development Framework that focuses most new developments in larger settlements where there is a good range of housing, jobs, shops and services already accessible by public transport, cycling and walking.

2 Ensure a Sustainable Future

S1 Policy Initiatives

2.19 **Transport assessment of strategic site proposals:** Assess the likely cumulative impact of development proposals on the highways and transport network, and inform the LDF process by producing public transport accessibility mapping of all strategic sites proposals.

2.20 **Neighbouring authority developments:** Work with neighbouring authorities to test the transport impact of adjacent developments on Cheshire East highways and transport network and ensure appropriate mitigation is provided.

S1 Related Initiatives	Policy
Key service locations	C2 Accessibility of Services
Access to employment, skills & education	C2 Accessibility of Services
Transport & Regeneration	B2 Enabling Development
Developer contributions	B2 Enabling Development

Climate Change - Mitigation & Adaptation

2.21 Climate change is nationally recognised as one of the most important challenges facing our society. Transport accounts for 25% of our carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions in the UK and personal car travel is the single biggest contributor to individual CO2 emissions[b].

2.22 Residents of Cheshire East have higher than average carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions at 10.3 tonnes per person, compared to the national average of 8.4 tonnes per person. In addition, transport accounts for an average of 35% of these emissions, rising to as much as 41% in the Macclesfield area[c].

2.23 A partnership of all the public sector bodies in Cheshire & Warrington has come together to jointly tackle carbon management issues within their own estate. This group includes the 3 local authorities, health care providers, universities and colleges, Cheshire Constabulary and Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service. Projects include joint campaigns, research and communications.

2.24 In addition, the Cheshire & Warrington Climate Change & Sustainability Commission (C&WCCSC) consists of organisations from the public sector, as well as business and voluntary groups. Its aim is to champion and drive forward the climate change and sustainability agendas in the Cheshire and Warrington area through joint working. Three main areas for projects have been agreed around adaptation, mitigation and communication programmes.

2 Ensure a Sustainable Future

2.25   The possibility of hotter summers, wetter winters and more frequent climatic events will not only affect our weather, but also the health of local residents and the growth of the economy. In relation to transport, this could mean more frequent flooding or snow causing road closures, reduced durability of road surfaces, heat buckling the railways, or fog and high winds affecting air travel.

POLICY

Policy S2 Climate Change – Mitigation & Adaptation: Ensure that transport policies support wider climate change objectives and adaptation needs.

S2 Policy Initiatives

2.26   **Strategic joint working:** Support strategic partners across all sectors to develop, implement and monitor initiatives to reduce CO2 emissions from transport.

2.27   **Carbon Management Plan:** Implement the Council's internal plan which seeks to reduce CO2 emissions from its buildings, transport and service delivery. The plan has been produced alongside the Carbon Trust and will be published in 2011.

2.28   **Influence travel behaviour:** Support initiatives to reduce the need to travel by private vehicle and promote the use of sustainable modes of transport. Initiatives include greater use of technology, provision of personalised journey planning and encouraging increased levels of walking, cycling and public transport use.

S2 Related Initiatives	Policy
Sustainable communities	C2 Accessibility of services
Community groups	C2 Community
Prepare for climate change	B3 Network Management
Broadband infrastructure	B7 Business Innovation
Travel plan initiatives	B7 Business Innovation
Council travel	B7 Business Innovation

Public Transport

2.29   Public transport has an important role to play in planning for sustainability and future needs by encouraging a shift towards low carbon transport. It is also a cross-cutting theme supporting the delivery of many of the policy objectives within the transport strategy for Cheshire East, including improved accessibility to services, helping older people live independently and supporting regeneration.

2 Ensure a Sustainable Future

2.30 A Passenger Transport Strategy will be developed as a daughter document to the LTP, identifying specific policies for public transport, home to school transport and adult services transport. The strategy will investigate the opportunity to integrate transport assets to maximise benefits across communities, reduce duplication and achieve efficiencies on the supported network (e.g. integrate home to school and community transport services).

Integration & Facilities

2.31 A lack of integration between transport services has been identified as a significant barrier to greater use of bus and rail services, causing significant increases in journey time and discouraging multi-modal travel. Any initiatives to overcome this (e.g. timetable modifications which facilitate interchange) should increase the appeal of travel by public transport and provide an attractive alternative to the private car.

2.32 Stakeholder consultation identified widespread support for working with stakeholders to influence rail and bus station improvements and providing parking at public transport hubs to reduce congestion in urban areas. It is recognised that Crewe railway station is in great need of upgrading due to unsatisfactory facilities and poor maintenance[d]. Indeed, the improvement of the station is a key component of 'All Change for Crewe' – Crewe's strategic framework for economic growth 2010-2030.

2.33 The provision of additional facilities will also enhance users' safety (both actual and perceived) whilst waiting at bus stops and railway stations. Better communication (e.g. real-time information) would help ensure that users who have just missed a connection do not wait unnecessarily, but are aware of the next service available. The provision of raised kerbs can improve accessibility for wheelchair users, parents with buggies and people with mobility constraints.

Bus stop facilities

2.34 The borough's integrated transport forum will bring together bus, rail and community transport operators at a strategic level to explore opportunities to co-ordinate and integrate travel by different modes of transport, ensuring ongoing liaison and positive dialogue with operators.

POLICY

Policy S3 Public Transport (Integration & Facilities): Work with passenger transport providers (bus, rail and community transport) to improve public transport integration and facilities.

S3 Policy Initiatives

2.35   **Encouraging multi-modal travel:** Support initiatives to improve integration between different modes of transport, such as timetable modifications to reduce interchange times.

2.36   **Railway station improvements:** Work with train operating companies to identify improvements and secure investment in Cheshire East railway stations – especially Crewe. This may include securing developer contributions to upgrade facilities or services.

2.37   **Facilities at public transport hubs:** Examine the potential for improved car parking and cycle parking at bus and railway stations across the borough, particularly those which improve access into Manchester.

2.38   **Access to public transport hubs:** Support initiatives to increase access to bus and railway stations through improved signing and improvements to walking routes. Directional signing will also seek to provide information on the distance to facilities.

2.39   **Bus stop condition:** Support improvements to the quality and safety of bus stops, including the provision of raised kerbs and dropped crossings, lighting, CCTV, shelter, seating, litter bins and real-time information.

2.40   **Green fleet:** Encourage the use of low energy, hybrid and electric vehicles by building incentives and disincentives into the procurement process, particularly in Air Quality Management Areas. Promote driver training to operators to reduce emissions and support cleaner operation of the fleet.

S3 Related Initiatives	Policy
Developer Contributions	B2 Enabling development
Retail parking	B6 Parking
Social care transport options	C3 Access for all
Accessibility Audits	C3 Access for all
Accessible vehicles	C3 Access for all
Manchester Airport Group (MAG)	B1 Strategic Partnership

Service Levels & Reliability

2.41   Service levels and reliability have been identified by local residents as a disincentive to greater use of public transport services. The issues are particularly acute in rural areas where there is more limited access to conventional fixed route public transport services.

2 Ensure a Sustainable Future

Bus Services

2.42 Currently 80% of the bus network is run by commercial operators. The commercial network consists of fixed route services where there is a concentration of passenger demand along a defined route corridor. The network is most dense in the principal towns of Crewe and Macclesfield. Not surprisingly, commercial fixed route services are more limited in the rural areas of the borough, except on roads serving the main towns.

2.43 The Council will work with commercial operators to increase patronage, particularly on marginal services which are 'at risk' of withdrawal, through increased promotion and marketing in order to improve the viability of services. Ultimately the aim is to encourage modal shift from the private car to public transport and expand the commercial bus network in the borough. New developments provide the opportunity to explore new commercial opportunities where there is likely to be a concentration of passenger demand.

2.44 The remaining 20% of the bus network is subsidised by the Council as part of its statutory duty to identify the transport needs of the area and consider financial and other support for public and community transport services where deemed to be socially necessary.

2.45 As part of the Passenger Transport Strategy, the Council will review the existing bus support criteria in order to prioritise the most socially necessary services and target investment based on need through locally determined criteria in line with strategic objectives for transport contained within this LTP.

2.46 In reviewing the criteria there will be a need to balance a range of competing priorities (e.g. rural accessibility, urban areas of deprivation, congestion hotspots) and explore innovative solutions to improving service levels through the commercial and subsidised transport networks, as well as community based solutions.

2.47 In addition, the Passenger Transport Strategy will explore the opportunity to integrate the Council's transport assets to reduce duplication and achieve efficiencies, which could release capacity to improve service levels and better meet the needs of local communities (e.g. integrate home to school and community transport services).

2.48 In terms of reliability, data provided by bus operators identified that 84% of services ran on time in 2008/9 and targets have been set to increase this to 87% in 2011/12. Ongoing liaison between operators and the Council's highways service will ensure a co-ordinated approach to highway management issues (e.g. congestion) and a shared understanding of the effects of highway works on passenger transport operators and users.

2.49 Through the Council's Network Management Plan there may also be opportunities to develop bus priority measures on the highway network to reduce delays and improve reliability of services (see **Chapter 3: Business**).

2 Ensure a Sustainable Future

Rail Services

2.50 The number of passengers carried by rail services serving Cheshire East continues to show strong growth. For example Alderley Edge, Sandbach, Holmes Chapel, Chelford, and Disley stations have all seen passenger numbers grow by over 30% in the past two years. Currently a number of rail lines through Cheshire East are operating at or over capacity, including the West Coast Main Line, the Crewe to Manchester line and the Buxton to Manchester line.

Crewe Station

2.51 There are clear benefits associated with increased rail connectivity and capacity both within the North West and with other parts of the country and railway stations have an important role to play as public transport interchanges. The Northern Hub proposals aim to address rail congestion and overcapacity in central Manchester, which will be important in unlocking improvements in the speed, frequency and reliability of train services across Cheshire East. In addition, national proposals to build a High Speed railway line will encourage modal shift for long distance journeys, as well as releasing capacity on local rail networks (also see **Chapter 3: Business**).

2.52 Manchester airport has developed as an important public transport hub, well connected by bus, road, rail and air. In addition, there are well developed proposals to extend the Manchester Metrolink service to the airport. However, rail services to the airport from Crewe require improvement to take full advantage of these interchange possibilities with Sunday services and weekday peak hour services of particular concern.

2.53 The specification of rail services is decided nationally by the Department for Transport, who periodically let franchises to rail operators to run services. The two main franchise agreements serving Cheshire East are due for renewal in the short term – including the West Coast Franchise (currently Virgin Trains) in 2012 and the Northern Franchise (currently Northern Trains) in 2013. The Council recognises the importance of influencing this process to achieve the best possible service provision and investment into the local rail network.

2 Ensure a Sustainable Future

2.54 Cheshire East's membership of national rail lobby groups (e.g. West Coast 250, North West Rail Campaign) helps to ensure that Cheshire East has a voice at a national lobbying level. The importance of working with sub-regional partners and stakeholders is also recognised, as well as the role of Community Rail Partnerships and local user groups in understanding local needs and developing grassroots initiatives.

2.55 Through the consultation, local stakeholders expressed support for re-instating passenger services on railway lines, particularly the Middlewich to Sandbach line which is currently freight only. Re-opening this line for passenger services would increase travel choice and improve accessibility.

PRIORITY POLICY

Policy S4 Public Transport (Service Levels & Reliability): Work with passenger transport operators (bus, rail, community transport & taxis) to explore improvements to service levels and reliability.

S4 Policy Initiatives

Bus Services

2.56 **Supported services**: Consider the options for revised support criteria and aim to integrate transport assets to reduce duplication, achieve efficiencies and seek opportunities to improve service levels.

2.57 **New commercial opportunities**: Work with operators to explore opportunities for new commercially viable bus routes where there is likely to be a concentration of demand, particularly in relation to new development.

2.58 **Bus driver training**: Support the provision of additional training for drivers to improve the journey experience for users and reliability. This could include training on driving style, as well as general customer service.

Rail Services

2.59 **Rail service specifications**: Work with strategic partners (e.g. GMPTE, Welsh Assembly Government) and rail investment lobby groups to influence rail service specifications and seek improvements to services levels and reliability.

2.60 **Reinstate passenger services**: Work with stakeholders to seek improvements to the local rail network, including support for the re-opening of Middlewich to Sandbach railway line to passenger services.

2 Ensure a Sustainable Future

S4 Related Initiatives	Policy
Rail Infrastructure (National)	B1 Strategic partnership for economic growth
Developer contributions	B2 Enabling development
Manage network disruption	B3 Network Management
Junction efficiency	B3 Network Management
Bus priority measures	B4 Network improvement
Highway capacity improvements	B4 Network Improvement
Community engagement	C1 Community
Community-led initiatives	C1 Community
Community groups	C1 Community

Information & Marketing

2.61 55% of National Highways & Transportation (NHT) survey respondents had used public transport information over the last 12 months. 67% used bus service timetables, 52% used bus stop displays, 28% used the internet, 22% used bus stop information and 18% used Traveline.

2.62 The Council will develop an Information Strategy as part of the Passenger Transport Strategy to consider how new technologies will change the way in which public transport information and publicity is accessed and disseminated in the future. It is important to ensure that methods are consistent with people's lifestyles over the next 15 years.

2.63 Promotional initiatives will aim to encourage greater use of bus and rail services in borough. To achieve this objective, the Council will work with commercial operators to increase the quantity, quality and accuracy of information provided in a variety of different formats.

2.64 The Council will seek to support the commercial bus network through targeting promotion and publicity where it is needed most. For example, at marginal services which are 'at risk' of withdrawal and to relieve congestion in urban areas. The aim is to encourage modal shift and ensure that communities are aware of the services available.

2.65 There are also opportunities to utilise personalised journey planning techniques that provide individualised travel advice to people based on their journey making characteristics, with the aim of achieving modal shift.

2 Ensure a Sustainable Future

2.66   Initiatives to extend the coverage of real-time information at bus stops (and via mobile devices) to educate car drivers about the true cost of their journey, in terms of both carbon emissions and financial cost (e.g. fuel, tax, maintenance, depreciation), and promote public transport alternatives will be explored.

POLICY

Policy S5 Public Transport (Information & Marketing): Work with passenger transport operators to promote the use of public transport through improved information and marketing.

S5 Policy Initiatives

2.67   **Targeted Promotion:** Support initiatives to target information and marketing towards commercial services which are 'at risk', services with the greatest potential for mode change, high frequency routes and new or amended services (fixed route or flexible). This could include the 'branding' of public transport routes and publication of positive reliability data.

2.68   **Multi-media information:** Promote the use of public transport and communicate with passengers through a variety of channels, including traditional time tables, real time information, mobile phones and other media as they emerge. This could also include a multi-modal travel website providing a "one-stop-shop" for travel information.

2.69   **Computerised booking systems:** Support initiatives to provide a computerised booking system for flexible transport services to improve the efficiency and facilitate scheduling of services.

S5 Related Initiative	Policy
Travel plan initiatives	B7 Business innovation

2 Ensure a Sustainable Future

CASE STUDY

Beartown Bus

A simplified and co-ordinated network of services, introducing new wheelchair accessible buses has been introduced on town services within Congleton. The "Beartown Bus" theme was used and developed providing a high profile and strong link with the town's history. Infrastructure improvements have also been made to maximise the impact of the accessible buses.

"Beartown Bus" has consistently achieved a progressive increase of the number of passenger trips, peaking at over 100% in comparison to the number recorded prior to its introduction in August 2007. "Beartown Bus" has also generated a significant increase in bus fare revenue.

Fares & Ticketing

2.70   Issues relating to the cost of travel by public transport are identified as a significant barrier to greater use of bus and rail services, particularly for young people. It is often cited as the reason why many people choose to travel by private vehicle.

2.71   In seeking to reduce carbon emissions associated with transport and encouraging increased use of more sustainable modes, there is a need to tackle the actual and perceived barriers to use. This may include educating users on the cost of travel by public transport relative to the total cost of travelling by car.

2 Ensure a Sustainable Future

2.72   A high level of support was shown to a number of fare and ticketing initiatives. Stakeholders expressed the greatest support for developing cross-boundary, multi-operator and multi-modal ticketing solutions to reduce the cost and journey times of public transport. This is a particular issue in the north of the borough where there are a significant number of commuters travelling to and from Manchester.

2.73   In terms of multi-operator ticketing issues, in 2010 there were approximately 50 operators of registered bus services in Cheshire East. Passengers often find that they cannot take advantage of return and day tickets because their best return or onward journey is by a different operator.

2.74   The disparity in the cost of rail fares between the area served by the Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Executive (GMPTE) and areas geographically close to the border in Cheshire East has been identified as an issue. Through a local levy on constituent local authorities and higher council tax the GMPTE area is able to offer reduced rate rail fares. A consequence of this is 'rail heading' – whereby many commuters from outside the GMPTE area travel to the closest rail station within the reduced price ticketing zone – often passing closer local stations on the way, travelling further by car and adding to local congestion and carbon emissions.

PRIORITY POLICY

Policy S6 Public Transport (Fares & Ticketing): Work with passenger transport operators to develop fare initiatives and simpler ticketing solutions.

S6 Policy Initiatives

2.75   **Intelligent ticketing solutions:** Work with public transport operators and cross boundary partners (e.g. GMPTE) to investigate the potential to develop multi-operator, multi-modal, cross boundary ticketing. This will include developing smart card initiatives and exploring opportunities to expand the functionality of smart cards to include car parks.

2.76   **Monitor and review the fare structure:** Undertake a review of public transport fares to identify any issues associated with the cost of travel by public transport – where appropriate support initiatives to overcome any identified issues.

S6 Related Initiatives	Policy
Concessionary bus travel	C3 Access for all
Concessionary rail cards	C3 Access for all
Fare and ticketing initiatives	Y2 Young People

2 Ensure a Sustainable Future

Walking

2.77   The 2009 National Highways & Transportation (NHT) survey found that public satisfaction with walking facilities in Cheshire East is low compared with other authorities[e]. The most notable issue discouraging travel on foot was the lack of provision of footways (paved areas alongside roads) where they are needed.

2.78   Only 43% of respondents were satisfied with the footways provided within their local area, which was the lowest level of satisfaction across all local authorities[f]. The provision of footways was felt most acutely in village locations, with HGV movements found to further discourage pedestrian movement due to safety concerns.

2.79   The condition of the footways was also considered to be poor compared to other local authorities[g]. However, the perception of the overall condition of the public rights of way network was much higher[h], highlighting that significant variation exists between the quality and condition of footways alongside roads and off-road footpaths commonly associated with the public rights of way network; although it should be recognised that respondents may have distinguished between utilitarian and leisure uses of the two types of facility, and have different expectations of quality.

2.80   Clarity of warning and direction signs, particularly for pedestrians, has also been identified as an issue, alongside a lack of safe crossing points on the highway network.

2.81   An increase in the number of shorter journeys made by foot will contribute towards sustainability by reducing carbon emissions, as well as being beneficial for health and tackling congestion.

POLICY

Policy S7 Walking: Work with stakeholders to improve facilities for walking so that it is attractive for shorter journeys.

S7 Policy Initiatives

2.82   **Footway and footpath improvements:** Promote improvements to the condition of highway footways, footpaths and public rights of way. This will include resurfacing, removal of litter and other environmental health issues, provision of lighting and seating, where appropriate, and the removal of barriers and obstacles such as A-frame advertising, street clutter, stiles, narrow gaps and chicane barriers, to open up more routes for more people, particularly those with pushchairs and disabled people.

2 Ensure a Sustainable Future

2.83 **New walking routes:** Support the development of new routes where required but not currently provided and support initiatives to connect up the highway footway and public rights of way networks for greater pedestrian movement.

2.84 **Pedestrian crossing points:** Support the provision of safe crossing points, wide pavements, dropped kerbs and other facilities where necessary to encourage travel on foot, improve perceptions of safety along routes and make routes more accessible to disabled people.

2.85 **Route signing:** Promote the signing of dedicated on- and off-road pedestrian routes to encourage greater use by pedestrians. Initiatives will include the provision of signs relaying destination, distance and time information.

S7 Related Initiatives	Policy
Developer contributions	B2 Enabling Development
Sustainable infrastructure in new development	B2 Enabling Development
Highway clutter	B3 Network Management
Transport Asset Management Plan	B8 Maintenance
Local minor infrastructure improvements	C1 Community
Promote opportunities and facilities	H2 Promotion of active travel & healthy activities
Organised walks, rides and activities	H2 Promotion of active travel & healthy activities
Encourage sustainable travel	Y1 Travel to Education
Safer routes to schools	Y1 Travel to Education

CASE STUDY

Footpath Improvements

During the year 2009/10, the Council resurfaced a number of routes within the town of Macclesfield. The before and after photos speak for themselves in demonstrating the improvements made which make footpaths much more attractive to

users.

Footpaths in Macclesfield before and after improvement works.

Cycling

2.86   Cycling is an ideal mode of transport for short local trips, particularly in urban areas. Encouraging increased levels of cycling will support many of the policy objectives within the LTP, including reduced congestion, better air quality, lower carbon emissions and improved health and wellbeing.

2.87   The 2009 National Highways & Transportation (NHT) survey suggested that the availability of cycling routes was the area with the greatest potential for improvement when compared with other local authorities. In addition, provision of cycle signage was also identified as an issue with potential for improvement.

2 Ensure a Sustainable Future

2.88 On-road cycling facilities within the borough are limited, yet the highway network is extensively used for cycling. The stakeholder consultation identified the lack of dedicated cycle crossing facilities at road junctions and traffic signals as a barrier to greater use of bicycles, leading to safety concerns for cyclists.

2.89 A small number of off-road cycle routes exist within the borough, such as the Crewe to Nantwich Greenway developed as part of the Connect 2 initiative. Although these routes provide a good level of facilities along their length, the lack of connectivity between the routes restricts their use for longer journeys. This may, in part, explain why a low percentage[i] of respondents are satisfied with the quality and provision of cycle ways and cycle routes within the borough.

2.90 At present, 3.4% of the borough's population travel to work by bicycle, increasing to 8.2% of residents in Crewe. A lack of cycling facilities at employment destinations may be contributing towards this low cycling rate[j].

2.91 Concerns regarding safety and perceptions of safety were identified in a North West behavioural change study as a barrier to additional cycling demand[k]. This issue is partly due to the lack of dedicated cycling infrastructure. Cycle training can also play a role, with estimates suggesting that the cost benefit ratio achieved through cycle training can be as much as 7:1 [l].

2.92 The aim will be to improve facilities for cycling to make routes and destinations as attractive as possible to users. This means developing routes which will usefully link destinations and services, removing obstacles which may act as a barrier to users and providing signage to give confidence of direction, destination and journey time or distance.

POLICY

Policy S8 Cycling: Work with stakeholders to improve facilities for cycling so that it is attractive for shorter journeys.

S8 Policy Initiatives

2.93 **New cycle routes:** Seek to provide more on-road cycle lanes and off-road routes to make commuter cycling a safe and quick alternative to car use. Focus will be on creating a network of joined-up routes catering for a range of cycle skill levels.

2.94 **Junction and route improvements for cyclists:** Promote the provision of filter lanes, advanced stop lines and toucan crossings, where applicable, to prioritise and enhance the safety of cyclists at junctions. Undertake surfacing and lighting improvements on existing key links. Such measures will be incorporated into the design of new or amended highways, as well as retrospectively to existing road junctions, where possible.

2 Ensure a Sustainable Future

2.95   **Cycling facilities:** Work to provide greater access to cycling facilities (e.g. cycle parking, changing facilities, showers) in town centres, at community facilities (e.g. libraries) and service and employment locations.

2.96   **Route signing:** Greater uptake of cycling can be encouraged through the provision of route signs which state the destination, distance and journey time to selected destinations, to complement other sources of information (see **Chapter 4: Health**).

S8 Related Initiatives	Policy
Developer contributions	B2 Enabling Development
Sustainable infrastructure in new development	B2 Enabling Development
Transport Asset Management Plan	B8 Maintenance
Travel plan initiatives	B7 Business Innovation
Promote opportunities and facilities	H2 Promotion of Active Travel & Healthy Activities
Encourage sustainable travel	Y1 Travel to Education
Safer routes to schools	Y1 Travel to Education

2 Ensure a Sustainable Future

CASE STUDY

Connect2 Crewe to Nantwich Greenway

Working together with Sustrans, Cheshire East is developing a traffic-free cycle route between Crewe and Nantwich. Under the Connect2 initiative, external funding was secured to improve existing paths and create new paths. The route will offer cyclists and walkers a safe route between the two towns whilst avoiding the congested Nantwich Road in Crewe. Part of the route is also available to horse riders. A stakeholder group of local representatives was formed to monitor the project.

Connect2 Sign

Technology & Energy Efficiency

2.97   Innovations in vehicle manufacturing such as new materials, more efficient engines and hybrid technology are helping to reduce CO2 emissions, as are alternative fuels. There are a number of alternative fuels available now and on the horizon which can help to reduce vehicle emissions.

2.98   However, their contribution to reducing CO2 can vary widely depending on where they are sourced from and how they are manufactured. For example, biodiesel, LPG, electric vehicles and the hydrogen fuel cell are currently available and in development.

2.99   By making changes to Council practices related to transport (such as fleet procurement, street lighting and traffic signals) and being actively involved in business and community initiatives to save energy, the Council can reduce the carbon foot print of the authority.

2 Ensure a Sustainable Future

2.100   The aim of this policy is to make it clear that the Council is fully supportive of wider changes in transport that make it possible to reduce carbon emissions by technology and energy efficiency initiatives.

POLICY

Policy S9 Technology & Energy Efficiency: Encourage technological development in transport services in partnership with operators and will improve energy efficiency of transport infrastructure.

S9 Policy Initiatives

2.101   **Hybrid and electric vehicles:** Investigate hybrid and electric vehicle options for fleet vehicles and seek to promote their use more widely in Cheshire East, including provision of charging points where possible, particularly in new developments.

2.102   **Street Lighting:** Investigate the dimming or removal of unnecessary street lights at certain times to help reduce the Council's carbon emissions.

2.103   **Low energy technology:** Reduce the level of energy required by our street furniture (e.g. replace traditional illuminated bollards with reflective technology).

2.104   **Sustainable Materials:** Utilise materials from sustainable and recycled sources. For example, aggregates in highway maintenance projects.

S9 Related Initiatives	Policy
Junction efficiency	B3 Network Management & Improvement
Transport Asset Management Plan	B8 Maintenance
Broadband infrastructure	B7 Business Innovation
Council travel	B7 Business Innovation

2 Ensure a Sustainable Future

End Notes

a. JMP Review of Corporate Business Travel, 2009
b. DECC website
c. DECC website
d. The Station Champions report 2008 ranked Crewe Station as the 3rd worst in the Country.
e. NHT ranking for CE satisfaction with pavements and footways was 70th out of 76 local authorities
f. NHT score for the existing pavement network was 60.66 out of 100, ranking it 76th out of 76 local authorities
g. NHT Survey allocated a score of 46.05 out of 100 to the condition of footways, ranking it 71 out of 76 local authorities.
h. NHT Survey allocated a score of scored 55.37, ranking it 33rd out of 76.
i. The Community Survey 2008 identified that 32% of respondents were either very or fairly satisfied with the quality and provision of cycle ways and cycle routes within the borough.
j. IHT ranking for the provision of cycling facilities at employment destinations was 61 out of 76.
k. 4NW Behavioural Change Study (June 2010) Evidence Review – 2nd Edition
l. Cycling Demonstration Towns – Development of Benefit-Cost Ratios; DfT February 2010 / The Effects of Smarter Choices Programmes in the Sustainable Travel Towns; DfT February 2010 / Valuing the benefits of cycling – SQW / Cycling England (2007).

3 Create Conditions for Business Growth

Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) Priorities

3.1 The SCS has identified four priorities for action to create the conditions for business growth in Cheshire East. These are:

- Harness emerging growth opportunities
- Provide a leading broadband infrastructure
- Make the most of our tourism, heritage and natural assets
- Create a climate attractive to business investment

3.2 The SCS explores how transport can, in part, help to deliver these priorities – for example; by ensuring that employment sites are well connected with good transport links and that there is a good standard of accessibility for people to get to work. Also through supporting sustainable access to key visitor attractions, through adequate maintenance of the highway network and providing the targeted relief of congestion.

3.3 Cheshire East's emerging Local Development Framework (LDF) sets out a strategy to deliver the Council's ambitious plans for growth to deliver economic prosperity. It will also provide a framework for the Council's Economic Development Strategy (EDS).

3.4 The draft EDS sets out the local determinants for economic growth, along with the key transport requirements. It also highlights the principal towns of Crewe and Macclesfield as spatial priorities alongside a focus on "Sustainable Towns".

3.5 The EDS and LDF will require a locally responsive approach to transport in the principal towns and keys service centres. The LTP will enable this responsive approach by setting out a process to deliver a series of "Transport Frameworks for Towns" – full details of this process are discussed in **Chapter 8: Towns.**

Evidence Overview

3.6 Good transport is fundamental to the success of the Cheshire East economy. For example it:

- Supports business interaction and access
- Creates the conditions for the formation of new companies and inward investment
- Connects people to jobs and widens the labour market
- Opens up new markets for existing companies
- Increases competition leading to higher levels of business productivity

3.7 The Cheshire East economy is worth £7.8 billion per annum (2007 data) with Cheshire accounting for some 18% of the productivity of the entire North West Region[a]. The area's key strengths are its knowledge economy, a high quality

3 Create Conditions for Business Growth

of life, its geographical location with train journey times of under two hours to London from its key towns, as well as good connections to international airports and the key centres of Manchester & Liverpool.

3.8 The Connecting Cities: Northwest study (2010)[b] identified Cheshire East as the third most significant employment centre within the North West, after Manchester and Liverpool. It also identifies Cheshire East as a preferred location for highly-skilled labour to live. Many of these employees do not live locally to their place of work, putting pressure on the demand for housing and transport within and between local authority areas.

3.9 The towns of Crewe and Macclesfield combined account for almost 66% of all employment opportunities within the borough. The towns of Wilmslow, Congleton, Knutsford, Nantwich, Sandbach, Handforth and Middlewich between them supplied a further 23.5% of the available employment[c]. The borough is also home to regionally significant employment sites such as Alderley Park and Basford.

3.10 The visitor economy is an important contributor to businesses and communities within Cheshire East, generating over £600 million per annum for the local economy. The majority of the borough's visitor attractions are located in rural areas with the result that public transport access is often poor.

Stakeholder Opinion

3.11 Attendees at the final stakeholder consultation workshop identified creating the conditions for business growth as one of the two key priority themes, alongside the need to create a sustainable future.

3.12 They also identified the following priority policy areas:

- Maintenance – Adopt a robust and efficient approach to maintenance to minimise deterioration in the highway network and associated infrastructure assets (e.g. lighting, street furniture etc.).
- Network Management – Effectively manage the highway network to reduce the level of delay and provide for the needs of all road users including pedestrians, cyclists and motorists.
- Enabling Development – Seek to enable appropriate new development by supporting transport infrastructure, regeneration and/or behaviour change initiatives that will mitigate the potential impact of development proposals.

3.13 In workshop discussions of the transport challenges related to **creating the conditions for business growth**, stakeholders made numerous suggestions as to the possible initiatives the Council and its partners could introduce to meet these challenges. These ranged from road capacity improvements and bypasses, through to development planning policy, working with neighbouring authorities and improving co-ordination of utilities companies and highway works. Policies and initiatives included in the LTP reflect this consultation feedback wherever possible.

3 Create Conditions for Business Growth

3.14 Overall, there was consistently strong stakeholder support for improving highway maintenance, tackling congestion, improving the accessibility of employment sites, and improving cross-boundary linkages.

LTP Objectives

RELEVANT OBJECTIVES

Objective 1 (Congestion): Minimise congestion and improve the overall efficiency of the highway network.

Objective 2 (Accessibility): Improve accessibility to key services (employment, education, health, shopping and leisure) and reduce the need to travel.

Objective 3 (Maintenance): Improve maintenance of the highway and transport network.

Objective 6 (Environment): Protect and enhance the local and global environment.

Transport Challenges & Policy Solutions

Strategic Partnerships

3.15 The objectives of the LTP can be supported by a wide range of partnership working, both existing and potential. Discussion here is centred on partnership working to support strategic connectivity and business growth – on the strategic road and rail network, air travel through Manchester Airport, and across administrative boundaries.

3.16 Other specific areas of partnership working are covered in the related chapter – for example, partnerships for road safety are discussed in **Chapter 4: Health**.

Strategic road and rail network

3.17 The Highways Agency is responsible for the management of the strategic road network in the UK, including most motorways and trunk roads. The key routes through Cheshire East are the M6, M56 and A556 (T) between M6 J19 and M56 J8.

3.18 The M6 and M56 are the most heavily trafficked routes in Cheshire East and experienced a growth of between 6 and 7% between 2005 and 2009. Congestion along these routes causes disruptions to freight, business, commuter and visitor travel, and may pose a threat to the future economic growth of the borough. Much of this growth originates beyond the borough and the Council needs to work with strategic partners to influence the management of traffic along these routes.

3 Create Conditions for Business Growth

3.19 There are existing issues around road safety and congestion at the interface of the Highway Agency's network with the local authority road network. Junction 17 at Sandbach is of particular concern.

3.20 The A556 (T) between the M6 and M56 has been identified as a key congestion corridor in the Connecting Cities: Northwest study (2010) resulting in poor air quality (at Mere Crossroads) and noise issues for local residents. The Highways Agency has identified this link as a priority in its investment programme and is currently developing proposals for the upgrade of the road subject to funding availability.

3.21 The provision of additional housing and employment in Cheshire East will lead to further pressure at these key junctions and links.

3.22 The number of passengers carried by rail services serving Cheshire East continues to show strong growth. For example Alderley Edge, Sandbach, Holmes Chapel, Chelford, and Disley stations have all seen passenger numbers grow by over 30% in the past two years. Currently a number of rail lines through Cheshire East are operating at or over capacity, including the West Coast Main Line, the Crewe to Manchester line and the Buxton to Manchester line.

3.23 Government proposals to build a high speed railway line from Birmingham to London, and then onto Manchester and the North, will be a catalyst for economic growth and encouraging modal shift for long distance journeys, as well as releasing capacity on local rail networks. Studies show that an hourly high speed service calling at Crewe would result in a direct boost of £17m to the local economy with a further £20m of wider economic benefits generated[d]. On the other hand, there will inevitably be environmental impacts of the scheme which will have to be effectively mitigated.

3.24 There are clear economic benefits associated with increased rail connectivity and capacity both within the North West and with other parts of the country. Dealing with congestion and limited capacity in central Manchester (through the Northern Hub proposals) will be important to unlock improvements in the speed, frequency and reliability of train services across Cheshire East[e].

Manchester Airport and aviation

3.25 Manchester Airport is an important international gateway for Cheshire East's businesses. In 2009 the airport facilitated over 215,000 business trips and 570,000 leisure trips that originated in Cheshire East. Additionally, almost 10% of the airports employees live in the borough[f].

3.26 Manchester Airport is a major hub for international freight traffic; its World Freight Terminal accommodates 170,000 tonnes of cargo per year, making it the UK's fourth-largest airport in terms of flown cargo volume. By 2015, the volume of freight traffic through Manchester Airport is expected to increase to 250,000 tonnes per annum – an increase of 47%[g].

3 Create Conditions for Business Growth

3.27 Whilst acknowledged as an economic driver for the area, the growth of the airport must be carefully measured against wider criteria, including environmental concerns and the impact of congestion and freight on the borough's roads. Proposals for the expansion of the airports facilities are currently being considered within the Manchester LDF.

Cross-boundary

3.28 Cheshire East has strong travel to work links with neighbouring authorities (particularly with Greater Manchester) and it is important for the Council to examine transport across all modes without the constraints of administrative boundaries.

3.29 The South East Manchester Multi Modal Study (known as SEMMMS) examined the key cross boundary movements between Cheshire East and Greater Manchester.

3.30 The area of the study contains a large proportion of high-skilled labour, commuting to high-productivity jobs in Manchester and along the south Manchester corridor between Cheshire East, Stockport and Manchester Airport. The congestion that occurs lengthens the effective distance between labour markets and businesses, placing a limitation on the skills available, increasing cost and reducing the potential for business-to-business activity.

3.31 The study concluded that reducing congestion in and around the study area is an integral component for unlocking economic growth. This includes congestion on the A6 through Disley and local road links in Wilmslow and Handforth. A further recommendation of the wider SEMMMS strategy was the provision of a bypass for Poynton which, along with improvements to the A523, will be crucial in improving north-south links to/from the Macclesfield area.

3.32 One of the barriers to improving public transport access within the study area is the heavy congestion causing lengthy and unreliable journey times on the local road network.

3.33 The study recommended the construction of new road capacity to relieve congestion and allow existing road space to be re-allocated for sustainable modes such as public transport. Work to date has concentrated on the provision of a new relief road linking the A6 at Hazel Grove to the M56 Manchester Airport Spur (the SEMMMS major road scheme).

3.34 This scheme would improve access to Manchester Airport from the east and south, enhance access to jobs and opportunities and remove congestion – particularly in Poynton, Handforth and Wilmslow. It would also remove unnecessary freight traffic from local roads, improve public transport operations, reliability and services, and facilitate the future provision of a bypass for Poynton.

3.35 An assessment of the wider economic benefits of the scheme predicts that the scheme would generate an additional £10m of value to the Cheshire East economy.

3 Create Conditions for Business Growth

3.36 Other important cross-boundary partnerships will develop through the emerging Local Enterprise Partnerships. These will be important in securing inward investment into key infrastructure projects that unlock economic growth.

3.37 Working with public transport operators across the borough will also be important to ensure that opportunities to link areas of high job growth with areas of high unemployment are not missed. Public transport operations are discussed in **Chapter 2: Sustainability**.

POLICY

Policy B1 Strategic Partnerships for Economic Growth: Work with neighbouring authorities, appropriate regional/sub-regional organisations, public transport operators and providers to enhance cross-boundary and strategic investment opportunities in transport.

B1 Policy Initiatives

3.38 **Strategic road network**: Work with the Highways Agency to improve the management of traffic on the motorway and trunk road network in Cheshire East through supporting proposals for 'Active Traffic Management' and by taking a partnership approach to solving safety and congestion problems at motorway junctions. Also seek to ensure that the local communities concerns are captured and reflected in the Highways Agency's designs (e.g. for the proposed improvements to the A556 (T)).

3.39 **Strategic rail infrastructure**: Support national initiatives to improve rail connectivity. This includes the Northern Hub capacity improvement scheme and a high speed rail network serving the North West. Explore with Government and scheme promoters the opportunities for high speed services to call at principal Cheshire East stations.

3.40 **South East Manchester Multi Modal Study (SEMMMS)**: Continue to work with local authority partners to investigate affordable ways of delivering the SEMMMS major road scheme.

3.41 **Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEP)**: Seek to gain support through the Cheshire & Warrington LEP for its emerging transport priorities that unlock economic growth, such as the Crewe Green Link Road scheme and Middlewich Eastern Bypass.

3.42 **Manchester Airport Group (MAG)**: Co-ordinate ongoing liaison and partnership working with MAG to agree areas of common interest. This will include the airport's Ground Transport Strategy and its emerging role as a transport hub.

3 Create Conditions for Business Growth

3.43   **Visitor economy partnerships**: Work with partners such as the Peak District National Park and the Visit Chester and Cheshire Tourist Board to develop and promote sustainable transport options for accessing the borough's tourist attractions.

B1 Related Initiatives	Policy
Transport assessment of strategic site proposals	S1 Spatial Planning
Neighbouring authority developments	S1 Spatial Planning
Strategic joint working	S2 Climate Change – Mitigation & Adaptation
Partnership working (public transport)	S3 Public Transport (Integration & Facilities)
Rail service specifications	S4 Public Transport (Service Levels & Reliability)
Reinstate passenger services	S4 Public Transport (Service Levels & Reliability)

Enabling Strategic Development

3.44   Housing, employment sites and infrastructure have vital roles to play in supporting economic growth. The capacity and suitability of transport links (in relation to housing demand and access to markets and labour) will be important factors for investment choice. As such, in order for economic development aspirations to be achieved, it is equally important for the Council to fully understand the transport implications of proposed strategic site allocations.

3.45   The long term spatial development of the borough will be defined within the LDF and – as described in **Chapter 2: Sustainability**, Policy S1 Spatial Planning – the Council will seek to minimise the future need to travel by focusing most new developments in larger settlements where there is a good range of housing, jobs, shops and services already accessible by public transport, cycling and walking.

3.46   To complement Policy S1 *Spatial Planning,* developers are often required to prepare and implement travel plans. These aim to demonstrate how the impact of a development can be reduced by encouraging individuals to travel in a more sustainable way – such as by car sharing, using public transport, walking and cycling.

3.47   The majority of new employment and housing developments will require new transport infrastructure (ranging from new road links and improved junctions through to pedestrian or cycling facilities) to deliver them sustainably and avoid causing traffic problems on the highway network.

3 Create Conditions for Business Growth

3.48 A small number of strategic sites will require significant major scheme infrastructure improvements to unlock the full potential of the sites. For example, Crewe's "Strategic Framework for Economic Growth 2010-2030" identifies as a priority measures to unlock the full potential of the Basford East strategic development site. The provision of the Crewe Green Link Road Scheme and capacity improvements to Crewe Green Roundabout and the A500 Barthomley link will be necessary to achieve this, along with improvements in public transport provision. Similarly, proposals for the South Macclesfield Development Area will also require significant infrastructure investment to fully release their potential.

3.49 In the past, development sites have been assessed on their individual impact on the transport network. This can leave smaller developments contributing very little to the upgrade of the transport network – though the cumulative impact of many small developments over time will be significant. To address this issue, a new approach is needed that enables the Council to understand the cumulative impact of all development across a defined area and adopt appropriate contributions (dependent on the development size, location etc.) that enable the overall costs of improved accessibility and connectivity to be fairly shared between developers.

3.50 The development plans of neighbouring local authorities also need to be fully understood – to consider and plan for the transport impact of developments that may be outside the Cheshire East boundary.

3.51 The LDF will consider the options for appropriate development opportunities and ensure that the transport implications are assessed - LTP policy will support this process.

3 Create Conditions for Business Growth

CASE STUDY

Enabling Development: Middlewich Eastern Bypass

Midpoint 18 is a 320 hectare sub-regional employment site located to the east of Middlewich town centre. A development brief and supplementary planning guidance have been adopted by the Council to guide the future development of the area. The Council commissioned an Appraisal and Delivery Strategy for the site in 2009.
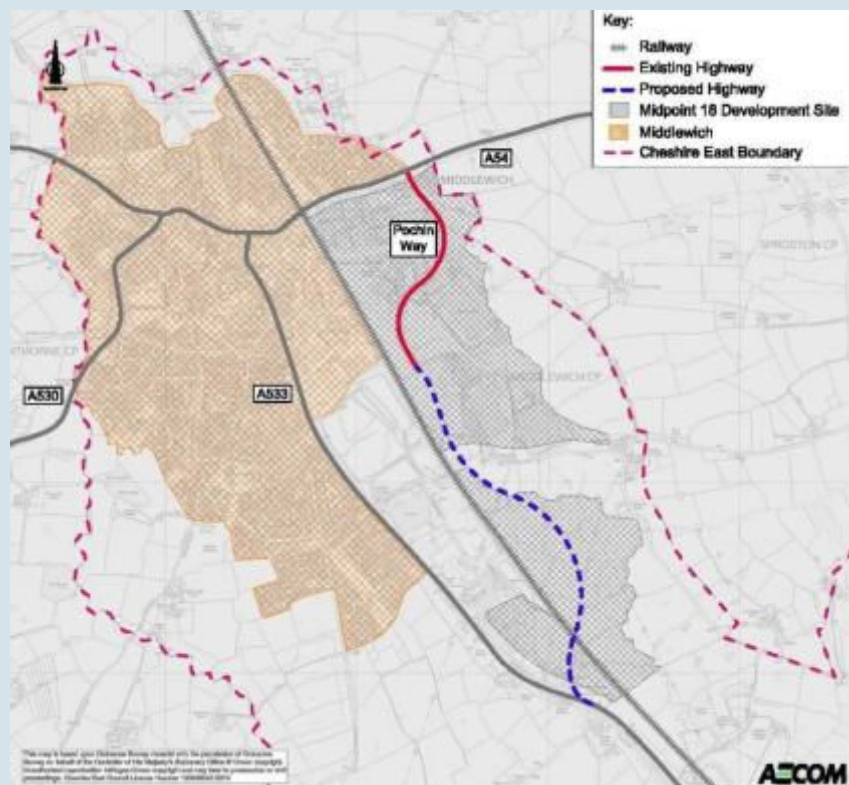
Middlewich Eastern Bypass

The development site would be accessed via an extension to Pochin Way as a 2.2 km section of road passing through the site extending to Booth Lane to the South.

The scheme would provide economic and transport benefits to Middlewich and the wider area, including:

- Creation of 143,000m2 of business development and around 2800 jobs
- Environmental benefits as traffic routes away from Middlewich Town Centre, improving conditions for residents and visitors and enhancing the retail experience
- Reduction in congestion on the A54 link to the M6

The scheme is important to the delivery of the economic growth of Middlewich as a sustainable town and key service centre.

3 Create Conditions for Business Growth

CASE STUDY

Enabling Development: Crewe Green Link Road (South)

For the full strategic potential of the Basford sites to be realised, the completion of the Crewe Green Link Road (CGLR) will be necessary. The first phase (North) was completed in 2004 and has played an important role in facilitating employment growth east of the town centre. Completion of CGLR South is an important component in delivering Crewe's vision for economic growth to 2030 - the aim of which is to see Basford East firmly established as one of the UK's largest science-focused business parks.

Basford development site & Crewe Green Link Road proposals:
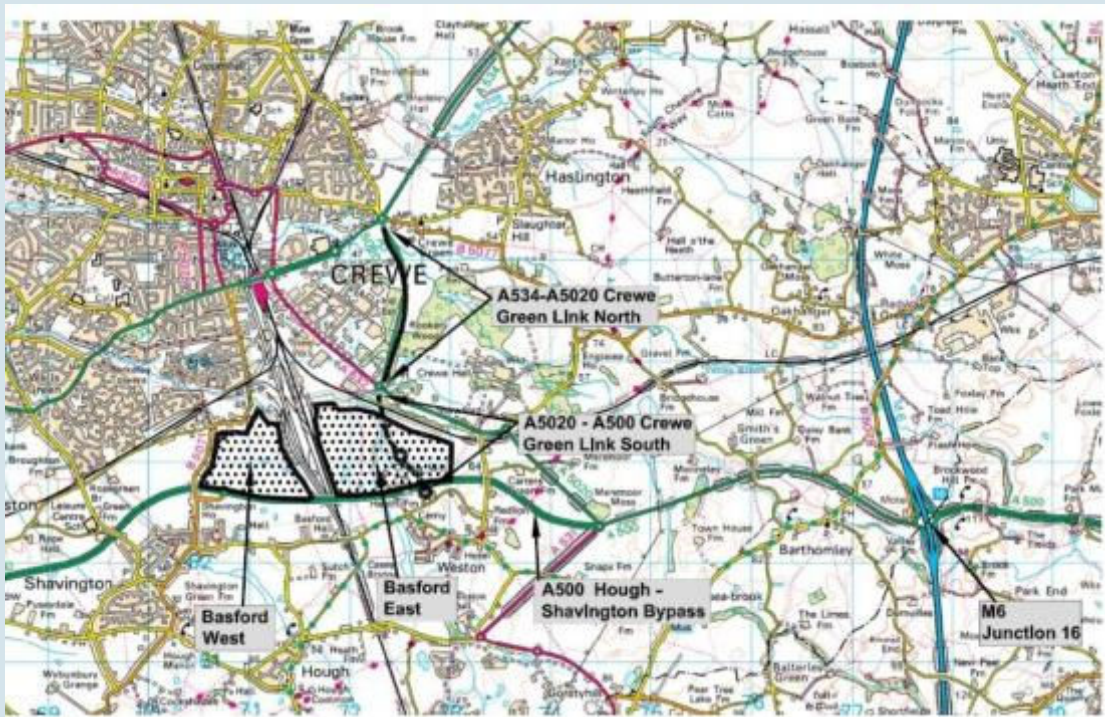
Basford East and Crewe Green Link Road

The CGLR South will support sustainable economic growth and ensure that Crewe has the infrastructure needed as a key regional transport gateway. It will provide a link between areas of deprivation to the north of Crewe and employment opportunities to the south east. It will reduce traffic congestion, increase freight efficiency and reduce the impact of traffic on the local environment and local community.

3 Create Conditions for Business Growth

> **PRIORITY POLICY**
>
> **Policy B2 Enabling development:** Seek to enable appropriate new development by supporting transport infrastructure, regeneration and/or behaviour change initiatives that will mitigate the potential impact of development proposals.

B2 Policy Initiatives

3.52   **Facilitate sustainable development:** Provision for walking, cycling, public transport and recharging points for hybrid or electric vehicles will be encouraged for large new developments in order to reduce carbon emissions. This will be complemented by requiring developers to produce, implement and monitor travel plans.

3.53   **Developer contributions:** Develop an appropriate approach to developer contributions that enables improvements to both local and strategic transport provision. The approach will consider highways, public transport, walking, cycling, rights of way, air quality and noise implications. It will be linked to an assessment of likely traffic and transport impact of strategic site proposals and the estimation of cost of transport infrastructure/initiatives required to mitigate impact. The process of developing the tariff will also consider the economic viability of development and the amount of contributions that will be sought for this and other requirements - such as affordable housing and community facilities.

3.54   **Major infrastructure for new development:** Work with developers, land owners and funding bodies to deliver the infrastructure that unlocks new development opportunities. Current infrastructure requirements include the Crewe Green Link Road, capacity improvements on the A500 Barthomley link, Crewe Green Roundabout and the provision of Middlewich Eastern Bypass, along with a suitable highway link between the A536 and A523 to open up the South Macclesfield Development Area.

3.55   **Transport & regeneration:** Consideration of transport initiatives that would help support proposals for area improvement and regeneration as set out in the LDF, such as upgraded transport facilities and public realm improvements.

B2 Related Initiatives	Policy
Transport assessment of strategic site proposals	S1 Spatial Planning
Influencing travel behaviour	S2 Climate Change – Mitigation & Adaptation
Bus stop condition	S3 Public Transport (Integration & Facilities)

3 Create Conditions for Business Growth

B2 Related Initiatives	Policy
New commercial opportunities	S4 Public Transport (Service Levels & Reliability)
Footway and footpath improvements	S7 Walking
New walking routes	S7 Walking
Pedestrian crossing points	S7 Walking
New cycle routes	S8 Cycling
Junction and route improvements for cyclists	S8 Cycling

Network Management & Improvement

3.56 If Cheshire East is to grow its economy sustainably and improve productivity, it will be important to ensure that places are well connected and that the transport network operates as efficiently as possible. The Traffic Management Act 2004 places a network management duty on local authorities to ensure the expeditious movement of traffic, and to co-operate with other authorities to the same end.

3.57 In order to consider the requirements for network management and network improvement, an understanding of how the network functions in terms of commuting, congestion, roadworks and risk is needed.

Commuting Patterns

3.58 Data extracted from the 2001 Census gives an understanding of the key travel to work movements within and outside of the borough. Data will be reviewed when the outputs of the 2011 Census become available.

3.59 At the time of 2001 census, Cheshire East experienced a net outward flow of over 7,500 trips per day[h], with the most common employment destinations outside of the borough being Manchester centre, Manchester Airport, Stockport centre and Stoke-on-Trent.

3.60 Of those travelling into the borough to work, the most common origins were Northwich and Winsford, Stockport and Newcastle-under-Lyme. There were significant two-way flows to Cheshire West and Chester, Newcastle-under-Lyme and Stoke-on-Trent, whilst Cheshire East offered significant employment opportunities to the population of Staffordshire Moorlands.

3.61 Within Cheshire East, journeys between Congleton and Macclesfield, and Nantwich and Crewe key centres had the greatest number of movements. A number of significant employment sites also generated a high number of 'local' commuting trips, though many also have wide employee catchment areas. Astra Zeneca at Alderley Edge, for example, draws high numbers of employees from Macclesfield, Wilmslow, Handforth and Congleton.

3 Create Conditions for Business Growth

Congestion

3.62   The 2001 Census indicated that car ownership in Cheshire East was high, with 89% of households having access to at least one vehicle and 12% of households having access to three or more vehicles. It also identified that the most common mode of transport to employment was the private car (either as the driver or passenger).

3.63   The number of vehicles using the boroughs roads has remained relatively stable since 2004. However, the majority of the road network was not designed to accommodate the current number of vehicles competing for its use and congestion occurs when the demand for road space exceeds supply – particularly within town centres. In addition, parts of the borough suffer from limited route and mode choice.

3.64   Public perception of road congestion in Cheshire East is high. However, the degree of congestion is far less than that experienced elsewhere, with an average delay (during the morning peak period) of approximately 2 minutes. This is a global figure and masks a small number of congestion 'hotspots' within the borough.

3.65   The level of 'stress' on the road network is a measure of how much traffic a road is carrying compared to its maximum capacity. As roads approach and exceed their capacity, the reliability of journeys decrease and the number of accidents and delays increase. Network stress generally occurs between the 8-9am and 5-6pm peak commuting hours, however, major events in the tourism calendar can also cause congestion on the road network – such as the RHS Flower Show at Tatton Park or the Cheshire Show at Tabley.

2010 Highway Network Stress in Cheshire East

3.66   Evidence shows that that the most congested parts of the road network are in the town centres. However, notable key 'hotspots' on the inter-urban network include:

- Crewe Green Roundabout, Crewe
- A500 Barthomley Link, Crewe
- Parts of the A530, including Alvanley Roundabout
- Parts of the A523 from the end of the Silk Road through to Poynton
- The A34 around Congleton

3.67   Town centre congestion will be addressed at a local level through the development of a series of Transport Frameworks for towns, as set out in **Chapter 8: Towns**.

3 Create Conditions for Business Growth
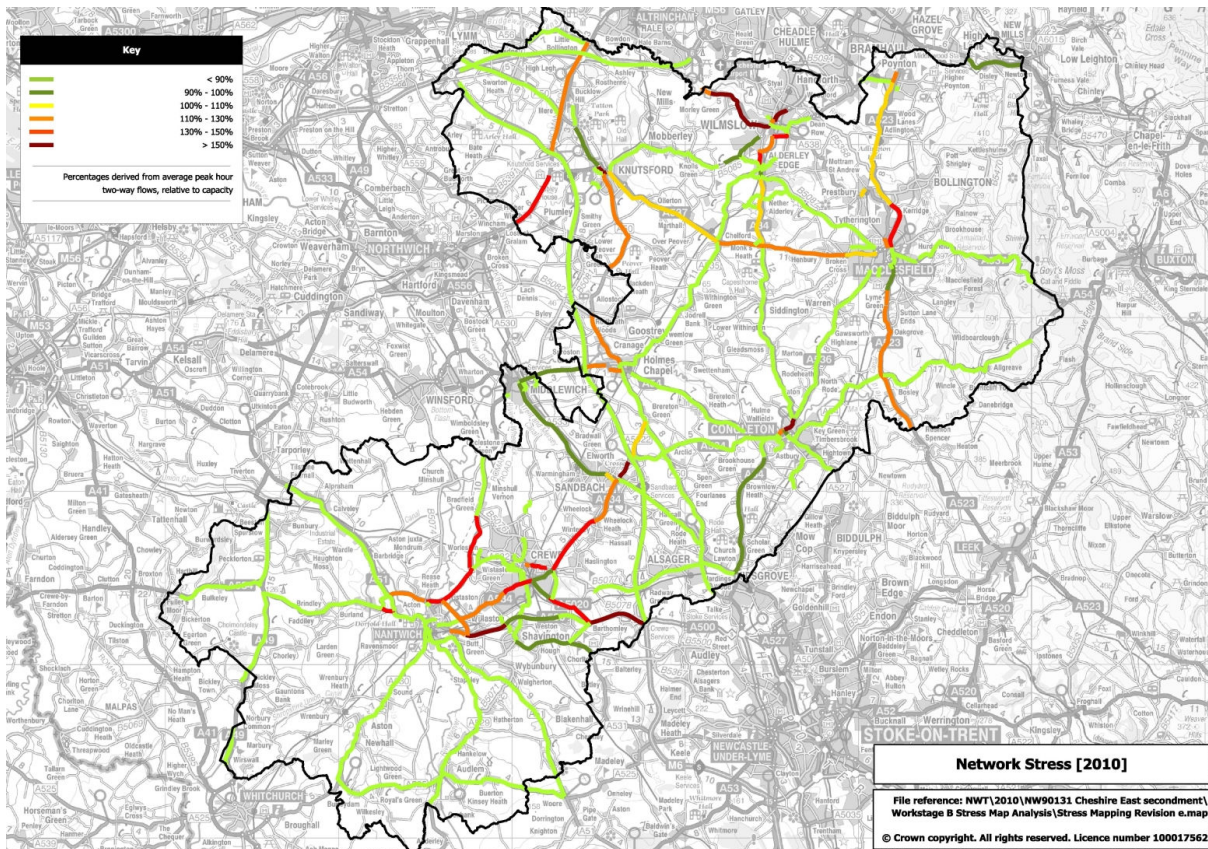
Network Stress

3.68 Congestion results in people spending 'unproductive' time queuing; it has a real impact on business efficiency and productivity, and causes unreliability and poor performance of public transport. Furthermore, congestion has been shown to increase the levels of pollutants emitted by vehicles.

3.69 Before new highway capacity is created there is a need to demonstrate that the existing highway network is operating as efficiently as possible through cost-effective improvements – for example, by altering traffic signal timings or instigating minor changes to the design of a junction. It will also be important to demonstrate that the level of demand for additional road capacity has been minimised – for example by encouraging the use of public transport, car sharing, walking or cycling.

3.70 Changes to the highway network, however minor, have the potential to cause, or to exacerbate air quality and noise issues associated with transport. In particular, any changes which affect traffic volumes, traffic patterns, or increase congestion could have an impact.

Management of roadworks and traffic

3.71 The New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 (NRSWA) places a duty on local authorities to co-ordinate works on the highway, with the aim of minimising disruption to traffic. This is currently achieved through a system of "Street Works Notices" whereby the utility companies inform the Council of their intention to work, and the Council then responds to co-ordinate their works accordingly.

3 Create Conditions for Business Growth

3.72 The Council also works to ensure that users of the highway are informed about forthcoming roadworks (i.e. through an internet based mapping tool which provides users with a graphical display of current and planned works on the highway network) and that strategic diversion routes are agreed in advance with the Highways Agency and emergency services (e.g. alternative local road routes to be used when there are incidents on the motorway).

Road resurfacing

3.73 Across the Borough in 2009/10, our records show that there were 596 'Emergency Works' and 2,626 'Urgent Works' undertaken by Utility companies. This accounts for approximately 1/3rd of all works that occur on our road network.

3.74 Travel to work and freight flows on the highway network do not respect local authority highway boundaries and changes made on a route will only pay dividends if supported with complementary action by neighbouring local authorities. A route management approach, whereby local authorities together agree common strategies for key corridors, can overcome this problem (see case study).

3 Create Conditions for Business Growth

CASE STUDY

Route Management

In order for the 'Route Management' approach to be effective it is necessary that a standard approach to understanding and assessing the performance of highway corridors is followed by highway authorities, including methods for identifying any challenges to their current and future operation. To assist with this Cheshire East and Cheshire West and Chester Councils undertook a pilot study in 2009 to test and refine regional guidance on route management studies.

The focus of the study was the A51/A500 route, which links Chester to the north-west, at the junction with the A55, to the M6 Motorway in the south-east at Junction 16. The route is primarily rural and passes through or around a number of villages along its route, before passing Nantwich to its east and Crewe to the south.

The study concluded with identifying six route outcomes for which joint local authority action will be required over the coming years:

1. Improved understanding of existing travel on the route and the potential for change in the future
2. Reduced carbon emissions from the use of the route
3. Reduced collision rates and severity on the route
4. Improved management of freight movements on the route
5. Reduced congestion on and across the route
6. Reduced congestion on the Barthomley Link

Network Risk

3.75 Projections show that by 2050, the Northwest region will have wetter and warmer winters and drier and warmer summers. This will require an element of pre-planning for the transport network in order to maintain effective network links. For example, there may be a need to review the materials and drainage systems required for the roads, or the type of fleet vehicles used on public transport routes (e.g. improved air conditioning or heating). Sections of the transport network already suffer from weather related issues. As routes become unavailable for the passage of vehicles, journeys are disrupted and the level of congestion on the wider network is increased. Existing locations at risk include:

Location	Weather related issue	Frequency
A51 Alpraham	Flash Flooding (river)	Once or twice per year on average.
A34 Scholar Green	Flash flooding (river)	Once per year on average

3 Create Conditions for Business Growth

Location	Weather related issue	Frequency
A537 Cat and Fiddle	Snow and Ice	Two or three times per year on average
A54 Wildboarclough	Snow and Ice	Two or three times per year on average

Locations of flash flooding, snow and ice risk

3.76   A separate risk issue relates to "road-rail incursions" – there are 12 locations identified in Cheshire East where there is a high risk of vehicles leaving the carriageway and entering the railway with potentially fatal consequences[i].

PRIORITY POLICY

Policy B3 Network Management: Effectively manage the highway network to reduce the level of delay and provide for the needs of all road users including pedestrians, cyclists and motorists.

B3 Policy Initiatives

3.77   **Network and route planning:** Develop a functional hierarchy of roads based on road-user need (e.g. consider the requirements of emergency services, public transport, heavy goods vehicles (HGVs), commuters, pedestrians, cyclists, residents, etc.) to help determine priorities for network management; and work with neighbouring local authorities to ensure consistent cross-boundary "route management" of freight and commuter routes. Monitor the level of traffic and congestion on the network to inform development control policy and influence spatial planning.

3.78   **Junction efficiency:** Seek to improve the operation of existing signalised and un-signalised junctions to smooth traffic flow, enable provision for pedestrians and reduce CO_2 impact of stop-start driving, through minor alternations to signal timings or junction geometry.

3.79   **Manage network disruption:** Effectively co-ordinate and manage roadworks, minimise disruption from major events, and plan effective strategic diversion routes, in co-operation with the police, Highways Agency and neighbouring authorities. Arrangements for managing network disruption will be set out, in detail, within the Network Management Plan.

3.80   **Highway clutter:** Undertake a review of existing highway signage and pedestrian guard railing across the borough with the aim to reduce the amount of unnecessary signage and associated clutter.

3 Create Conditions for Business Growth

3.81 **Driver information:** Seek to provide further functionality and continue to develop the range of information on roadwork's and delays that is provided electronically. Including making this information available to 3rd party developers to develop commercial software.

3.82 **Road-rail incursion:** Develop a programme of remedial work at high risk sites across the borough and seek appropriate developer contributions where proposals are close to high risk sites.

3.83 **Prepare for climate change:** Examine the elements of the highway network most susceptible to climate change (and extreme weather conditions) and develop suitable mitigation or contingency plans where possible.

POLICY

Policy B4 Network Improvement: Work to improve the operation of the highway network for all users through provision of new and enhanced infrastructure.

B4 Policy Initiatives

3.84 **Highway capacity improvements:** Investigate highway widening and new road building where alternative options are unable to deliver the aspirations of the community to alleviate traffic and congestion problems in key locations. This may include working with the private sector to offset the cost of providing new infrastructure against the value of new developments and with the Highways Agency to offset the cost of solving existing junction problems.

3.85 **Junction upgrades:** Investigate potential capacity enhancements and the need for upgraded facilities for pedestrians and cyclists at key junctions, both where design of junction is out-dated and where new developments will impose additional traffic pressure at junctions.

3.86 **Bus priority measures:** Explore opportunities to develop bus priority measures on the highway network to reduce delays and improve reliability of services.

B3 & B4 Related Initiatives	Policy
Multi-media information	S5 Public Transport (Information & Marketing)
Footway and footpath improvements	S7 Walking
New walking routes	S7 Walking
Pedestrian crossing points	S7 Walking

3 Create Conditions for Business Growth

B3 & B4 Related Initiatives	Policy
New cycle routes	S8 Cycling
Junction and route improvements for cyclists	S8 Cycling
Low energy technology	S9 Technology & Energy Efficiency

Freight

3.87 For Cheshire East to continue to be an attractive place for business investment the ease by which freight traffic can move around the borough will be an important issue – however, freight traffic potentially has a negative impact on communities (poor air quality, noise, community severance and visual intrusion). An appropriate balance between quality of life issues and economic prosperity needs to be struck.

3.88 The roads with the highest HGV flows in the borough are illustrated below:
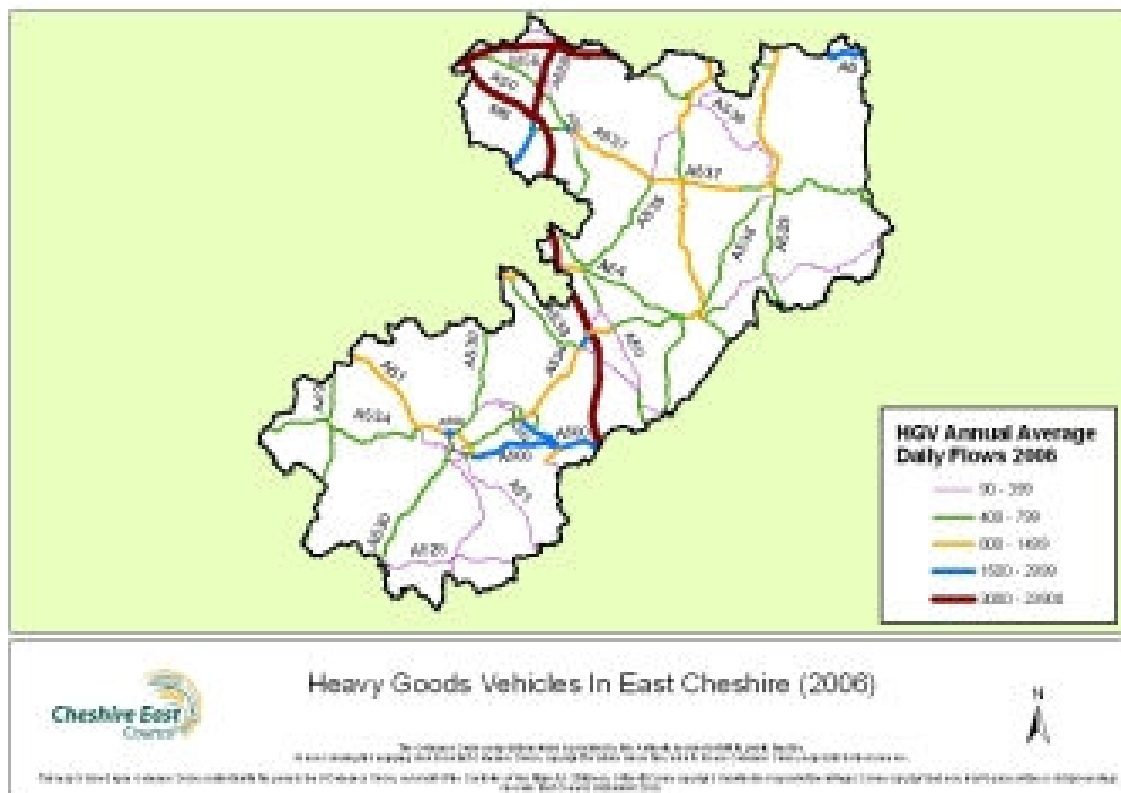
Routes with highest HGV flows

3.89 Crewe acts as a major 'hub' for road freight traffic – this mirrors the recent economic development of Crewe as a major regional distribution centre (due, in part, to Crewe's excellent road links to the national transport network).

3 Create Conditions for Business Growth

3.90 In recent years there has been strong growth in the use of the rail network to transport freight. Transport of freight by rail is more sustainable than by road and can lead to a reduction in the total number of miles travelled by HGV. The potential exists to capitalise on the growth in rail freight and the rail connectivity of Crewe. Similar opportunities exist in Middlewich.

3.91 Commercial operators are best placed to inform the Council of freight industry markets and logistics – partnership working is required to determine the most appropriate routing for HGVs whilst taking into consideration quality of life issues for residents.

3.92 Many freight transport operators rely on satellite navigation systems to inform their route choices. These systems are fed information via digital datasets which contain details of all local highway authority roads and restrictions. The Council has a role to play to ensure that these navigation datasets are accurate.

3.93 Levels of congestion are also a key issue for the road freight induction and – through its network management obligations – the Council is responsible for planning and implementing diversion routes in the event of an incident (e.g. motorway closure) or planned maintenance. As such a number of other policy areas within this chapter will be relevant for freight, particularly Policy B3 Network Management and Policy B4 Network Improvement.

POLICY

Policy B5 Freight: Work with freight operators and organisations to establish appropriate freight routes, delivery routines and driver practices to minimise congestion and pollution.

B5 Policy Initiatives

3.94 **Freight partnership:** Set up and promote a freight partnership for road hauliers to address concerns around routing, driver behaviour and delivery times.

3.95 **Freight routes and delivery access:** Ensure routes and access arrangements are appropriately maintained and signed.

3.96 **Rail freight transfer:** Support initiatives by developers, businesses, Network Rail and operators, to promote integration of road and rail freight.

B5 Related Initiatives	Policy
Strategic joint working	S2 Climate Change – Mitigation & Adaptation
National behavioural campaigns	H6 Road Safety (Education)
Driver technique	H4 Air Quality

3 Create Conditions for Business Growth

Parking

3.97 The Council operates and manages all on-street car parking and a large number of off-street car parks across the borough. In addition, there are a number of commercially operated car parks that have an important role in town centre provision.

3.98 Parking policies can influence the prosperity of town centres by acting as an attractor, or deterrent, to car access for shopping, leisure, or employment. Town centres face increasing competition from out-of-town retail and business parks and other towns that offer high levels of free parking – this means that a careful balance has to be achieved with pricing and timing of parking policies to ensure that town centres continue to remain attractive.

3.99 Effective management will help support a town's economy by ensuring efficient use and appropriate supply of car parking spaces; whereas, ineffective management or over-provision can exacerbate problems of town centre congestion. For example, excessive parking charges in town centres may result in motorists searching for free on-street parking in adjacent residential areas – resulting in increasing traffic circulation and problems for residents.

3.100 From the perspective of the user, parking space availability is also related to the level of "turnover" achieved – i.e. the number of people who use the space during a day. Employees often require long-stay parking for the full duration of the day, whereas shoppers may only require parking for a few hours, and deliveries may only need the ability to park for 5 minutes. In many circumstances, the prime parking locations are those in the heart of the town centre, which means that the demand for parking spaces can be very high. The mechanisms used to regulate and balance these competing needs include parking restrictions, enforcement, time limits, and charges.

3.101 Park and ride services may also have a role to play in locations where demand for parking is very high, space is limited, and where congestion is a factor.

3.102 The national policy framework for the development of parking strategy recognises the need to move away from the current dependence upon the car and the importance of promoting alternative modes of travel, particularly walking, cycling and public transport. Parking management (availability, cost, and quality) is recognised as an important factor that influences mode and destination choice.

3.103 The way in which parking control and management is provided needs to reflect the likely demand for parking in the centres and should follow a consistent methodology across the borough which considers issues such as traffic circulation, congestion and air quality.

3.104 There are currently different approaches to the management of off street car parking associated with the three former borough councils – however, a LTP Parking Strategy "daughter document" is to be prepared in the first implementation plan period that will unify the Council's approach to parking.

3 Create Conditions for Business Growth

POLICY

Policy B6 Parking: Adopt a consistent and structured approach to parking supply, management and tariffs, seeking to balance the issues of sustainability, quality of life and economic vitality.

B6 Policy Initiatives

3.105   **Provision of high quality parking:** Invest in the quality, safety and security of off-street car parks in appropriate locations. Balance the needs of a range of users including local residents, disabled people, businesses and suppliers of goods and services.

3.106   **Retail parking:** Maximise the availability of short-stay car parking spaces in central locations and encourage long-stay business parking in areas less crucial for retail customer access. Examine the potential for Park and Ride provision to reduce town centre congestion in the principle towns of Crewe and Macclesfield.

3.107   **Resident parking:** Consider the needs of local residents and support the introduction of Residents Parking Zones, where appropriate. Parking solutions for residents may also help address wider issues associated with car parking management at businesses, schools and in town centres.

3.108   **Parking management:** Ensure a consistent charging and enforcement framework across the borough which includes flexibility to reflect local pressures (e.g. congestion or air quality) and which encourages sustainable travel choices (e.g. public transport, walking and cycling).

B6 Related Initiatives	Policy
Facilities at public transport hubs	S3 Public Transport (Integration & Facilities)
Intelligent ticketing solutions	S6 Public Transport (Fares & Ticketing)
Low energy technology	S9 Technology & Energy Efficiency
Accessibility audits	C3 Access for All
Car park security	C4 Crime& Terrorism

Business Innovation

3.109   Businesses rely on efficient access to suppliers, markets and workforce. Travel is a fundamental aspect of operations within many organisations. Through business innovation, there are opportunities to realise financial, productivity and carbon efficiencies by reducing the need to travel and influencing the travel behaviour of employees.

3 Create Conditions for Business Growth

3.110 In Cheshire East the average distance travelled to work is 10.4km and between 59.6% and 69.3% of total trips to work are undertaken by car, illustrating significant scope to influence the travel behaviour of employees.

3.111 The public sector has committed to be at the forefront of the transition to a low carbon economy and local authorities have a pivotal role to play. Cheshire East Council has committed to be a leader in reducing carbon emissions from its own operations, and business and staff commuting practices are a visible symbol of the Councils commitment to achieving these aims.

3.112 Travel plans provide a mechanism to manage both business travel and commuting. A travel plan is a strategy to manage access in a sustainable way and seek opportunities to reduce the need to travel. Measures might include car share schemes, improvements to cycling facilities and promoting flexible working practices, such as remote access and video conferencing.

3.113 Global companies view access to high-speed telecommunications as a critical factor in determining new investment. The opportunity cost of businesses failing to effectively deploy ICT in the North West is estimated to be 3% of GVA per annum, between £3 billion and £4 billion per annum.

POLICY

Policy B7 Business Innovation: Support businesses to reduce carbon emissions from transport and minimise car use.

B7 Policy Initiatives

3.114 **Broadband infrastructure:** Work in partnership with the private sector to promote next generation broadband throughout all parts of the borough so that it is easier to do business anywhere and provide a greater range of services on-line.

3.115 **Travel plan initiatives:** Work to encourage existing employers to develop travel plans to encourage more sustainable business and staff commuting practices. This may include working with neighbouring organisations to develop area-wide initiatives (e.g. business parks).

3.116 **Council travel:** Set an example to other large employers by developing initiatives to reduce the need to travel and influence the travel behaviour of employees for both business travel and the journey to work.

B7 Related Initiatives	Policy
Strategic joint working	S2 Climate Change – Mitigation & Adaptation

3 Create Conditions for Business Growth

B7 Related Initiatives	Policy
Influencing travel behaviour	S2 Climate Change – Mitigation & Adaptation
Access to employment, skills and education	C2 Accessibility of services

Maintenance

3.117 The highway network underpins the safety, efficiency and reliability of movement of goods and people. The SCS recognises the importance of the condition of the highway network by promoting the production of a Transport Asset Management Plan.

Street light maintenance

3.118 The highways network in Cheshire East is an asset worth more than £2.2 billion. The network encompasses 1,686 miles of roads, 494 bridge structures, 28,000 signs and 37,000 street lights.

3.119 The Council has a legal duty to maintain and repair the condition of the highway network and it undertakes this duty across two broad areas:

- Structural maintenance – concerned with preserving the integrity of the infrastructure and improving it to meet changing demands.
- Operational maintenance – a more reactive response focussed on maintaining the highway in a safe and sound condition suitable for the use of vehicles, cyclists, pedestrian, equestrians and all other road users; and to ensure that the highway is kept in an acceptable condition environmentally.

3.120 The current maintenance backlog inherited from the former Cheshire County Council is put at £88m for roads and £22m for footways. Based on current funding levels, roads in Cheshire East can be expected to be renewed every 122 years and footpaths every 277 years.

3.121 The condition of the road network relates closely to the level of damage and injury compensation claims the Council is liable for. The number of successful compensation claims will increase as the network deteriorates resulting in even less finance to invest in the network. In 2009/10 the council received 546 claims relating to highway condition. Typically, 90% of these claims are successfully defended by the council.

3 Create Conditions for Business Growth

3.122 In additional to regular network inspections, the Council's response to public reporting of 'defects' to the highway network is important for good customer service, to reduce accidents and to reduce the number of successful compensation claims against the authority. The Council has developed an online system to make reporting of highway defects easier.

3.123 The durability of reactive and temporary road repairs to 'potholes' is often poor. The Council has recently trialled the use of a 'jet patching' technique to provide a more cost effective and longer lasting solution.

PRIORITY POLICY

Policy B8 Maintenance: Adopt a robust and efficient approach to maintenance to minimise deterioration in the highway network and associated infrastructure assets (e.g. lighting, street furniture etc).

B8 Policy Initiatives

3.124 **Transport Asset Management Plan:** Develop a 'whole' life cycle asset management plan approach to consider both the initial infrastructure cost and subsequent maintenance (based on the "Well Maintained Highways" National Code of Practice). The plan will apply to all of the key transport assets which the Council is responsible for including footways, carriageways, highways drainage, street lighting, bridges, traffic signals, signs and public rights of way.

3.125 **Defect reporting and response times:** Adopt relevant new technologies for the reporting of highway network defects and develop standards/policies to deliver a timely and effective response to defects, to reduce the number of claims and improve customer service.

3.126 **Temporary road repairs:** Increase the durability and lifespan of temporary road repairs through the use of innovative technologies and materials.

B8 Related Initiatives	Policy
Sustainable materials	S9 Technology & Energy Efficiency
Quiet surfacing systems	H5 Noise
Street and footpath lighting	C4 Crime & Terrorism
Targeted access improvements	O1 Targeted Action for Older People

3 Create Conditions for Business Growth

End Notes

a.   Aecom & Ecogen, Connecting Cities Northwest, 2010
b.   Aecom & Ecogen, Connecting Cities: Northwest, 2010
c.   NOMIS Annual Business Enquiry 2008
d.   Steer David Gleave, High Speed Rail Evidence Review and Implications for the Northwest, June 2010
e.   Network Rail, The Northern Hub Transforming Rail in the North March 2010.
f.   Manchester Airport Employee data, 2008/9.
g.   Atkins, A6 to Manchester Airport Relief Road, Major Scheme Business Case, September 2010.
h.   Aecom & Ecogen, Connecting Cities: Northwest, 2010
i.   Road Rail Incursion Report, 2010

4 Drive Out the Sources of Poor Health

Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) Priorities

4.1 The SCS highlights three priorities for action to improve the health of communities in Cheshire East:

- Target actions to reduce heart disease and cancer
- Tackle the impact of alcohol misuse on individuals and society
- Focus local actions on the wider determinants of health

4.2 These priorities aim to tackle the main causes of poor health in Cheshire East. They seek to both address existing problems and develop preventative health solutions for the future.

4.3 Transport can have a significant influence on residents' health, well-being and quality of life, by presenting opportunities to engage in healthy activity, minimise pollution levels and improve road safety.

4.4 Accessibility of healthcare and leisure opportunities also has the potential to be a wider determinant of health (although it should be noted that accessibility issues are addressed in **Chapter 5: Communities**).

Evidence Overview

4.5 The SCS states that residents in Cheshire East have a higher life expectancy than the national average. Circulatory disease remains one of the main causes of premature death, accounting for 41% of deaths under 75 years old and there are health inequalities across the borough, with life expectancy being lowest in Crewe[a].

4.6 A clear link between a lack of exercise and certain diseases has been identified – those people with an 'unhealthy' lifestyle being more at risk from heart disease and cancer[b]. Estimates suggest that physical activity reduces the risk of premature death by 20-30% and gives up to a 50% reduced risk of major chronic diseases, such as heart disease, cancer, stroke and type 2 diabetes[c].

4.7 The Department of Health have estimated that the average cost to each existing Primary Care Trust (PCT) area of treatment for long-term illnesses is £5 million per annum. The cost of absenteeism, premature death and treatment nationally is between £8 and 10 billion[d].

4.8 Data collected through the National Travel Survey 2006, concluded that the distance that people walk and cycle has declined significantly in the last 3 decades[e]. Reversing this trend will help to achieve the priorities of the SCS in terms of health, wellbeing, and community cohesion.

4.9 The Chief Medical Officer for England stated that "for most people, the easiest and most acceptable forms of physical activity are those that can be incorporated into everyday life. Examples include walking or cycling instead of travelling by

4 Drive Out the Sources of Poor Health

car"[f]. This is supported by a Health Select Committee report which concluded that "of these lifestyle changes, perhaps the single most important concerns transport"[g].

4.10 Air pollution harms human health, particularly in those already vulnerable because of their age (young or old) or existing health problems[h]. In some areas of Cheshire East, emissions from road traffic have been found to be above recommended levels, and a total of 12 Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) have been declared.

4.11 Exposure to high levels of environmental noise has been shown to cause annoyance, stress, anxiety, sleep loss and has been linked to more serious conditions such as hypertension and cardio-vascular disease[i]. In addition to sites on the M6 and A556(T) (which are the responsibility of the Highways Agency), nine areas in Cheshire East have been identified as a priority for noise action, primarily along the most-heavily trafficked roads.

4.12 The repercussions of road accidents on society also have to be considered. There are obvious health and well-being implications for individuals (physical, psychological and financial). There is also a direct cost to society in terms of healthcare provision related to long-term injury and loss in productivity to the economy as a whole. Tackling the causes of road accidents (such as reckless driving, alcohol impairment, and highway design) are therefore important aspects of transport and health improvement.

Stakeholder Opinion

4.13 Stakeholders identified the following key policy areas needed to support improved health:

- Public Rights of Way & Green Infrastructure – Protect and enhance public rights of way and transport related green infrastructure and endeavour to create new links where beneficial for health or access to green spaces.
- Promotion of Active Travel and Healthy Activities – Work in partnership to promote walking, cycling and horse riding as active travel options and healthy activities.
- Road Safety (Engineering) – Improve road safety through highway design improvements at collision blackspots.

4.14 Strong stakeholder support was given to investments in public rights of way and green infrastructure to encourage active and healthy lifestyle choices. The most popular initiatives associated with this policy area were to improve routes that link to key services and seek appropriate financial contributions from developers to create quality infrastructure.

4.15 Stakeholder support was also given to promoting active travel, focusing health improvement initiatives in areas of low life expectancy and concentrating preventative health services in deprived neighbourhoods.

4 Drive Out the Sources of Poor Health

4.16   A "Road Safety Strategy" daughter document is being developed which will identify the key road safety challenges in the borough and examine the most effective measures to reduce casualties. This may result in re-assessment of policies in relation to this evidence. Analysis of the parish and town plans also indicated that road safety enforcement was a key issue in a number of communities.

LTP Objectives

RELEVANT OBJECTIVES

Objective 5 (Health): Support active and healthy lifestyles.

Objective 6 (Environment): Protect and enhance the local and global environment.

Objective 7 (Safety): Improve road safety for all users and increase personal and community safety.

Transport Challenges & Policy Solutions

4.17   Many of the initiatives set out in the chapter – to target health action, promote active travel, enhance public rights of way and tackle air quality – will be beneficial to people of all ages and will be particularly applicable to **Chapter 6: Young People** and **Chapter 7: Older People.**

Targeted Heath Action

4.18   There is a need to target health action (geographically and/or demographically) to achieve the most effective outcomes.

4.19   Geographically, the proportion of adult population classified as obese is higher in Crewe and Nantwich than both the North West and England averages. Whereas, Macclesfield had a lower level of obesity than both the North West and England averages.

4.20   The life expectancy of both males and females was lowest in Crewe and evidence suggests that there is a large inequality gap in the rate of cardiovascular disease (when analysed by deprivation index or geographical areas) in Cheshire East, which contributes towards a wide gap in life expectancy. Cardiovascular disease accounts for 41% of deaths under 75 years old and is one of the main causes of premature death within the borough[j].

4.21   Demographically, a target group for health action is the borough's increasingly older population. The incidence of disability increases with age[k], as do general restrictions in mobility. The main activity of relevance here will be walking, the

4 Drive Out the Sources of Poor Health

importance of which for recreational purposes increases as age increases; for the 45-59 age bracket, 3 times as many people participate in walking than any other activity, rising to 5 ½ times in the over 70 age group.

4.22 The level of childhood obesity in Cheshire East overall is lower than both the North West and England averages. Nevertheless, promotional activities are often particularly effective if targeted towards children as a means to attract a larger audience: "go back to the schools, talk to the children about the benefits, they'd go home and pester the parents…It's just getting them into it"[l]. Further, it is recognised that people who have been active during their working life are more likely to remain active after retirement[m].

4.23 The health agencies can help with promotion to build active travel and healthy activity into everyday lives; Let's Get Moving research found that 84% of respondents thought that it was a 'fairly good' or 'very good' idea for GPs to prescribe outdoor exercise instead of prescription drugs if the GP thought the exercise would remedy the patient's condition.

4.24 The Council and NHS (as organisations with statutory responsibility for public health) aim to tackle identified health problems through action targeted at specific groups of the population, to reduce the number of people in a poor state of health. Where possible, preventative action will be undertaken with the aim of overcoming health problems before they start.

4.25 Through this targeted health action, the Council aims to improve the health of residents in Cheshire East and so contribute towards improvements in their quality of life, helping people to retain their independence, stay healthy and have access to good quality housing, transport, leisure, entertainment and to family and friends.

POLICY

Policy H1 Targeted Health Action: Work with stakeholders to identify communities, groups or areas in most need; and seek to identify targeted solutions that lower obesity rates and increase physical activity.

H1 Policy Initiatives

4.26 **Health partnerships:** Support partner activities to improve the health and well-being of residents – e.g. work with NHS on health promotion and preventative measures, work with GPs to facilitate "prescriptions for walking".

4.27 **Target high risk groups:** Focus activity (such as active travel promotion, provision of infrastructure, facilities and training, and infrastructure improvement) on high risk groups, namely: children and young people, older people, disabled people, and geographical areas of low life expectancy.

4 Drive Out the Sources of Poor Health

H1 Related Initiatives	Policy
Transport assessment of strategic site proposals	S1 Spatial Planning
All initiatives within S7 Walking	S7 Walking
All initiatives within S8 Cycling	S8 Cycling

Promotion of Active Travel & Healthy Activity

4.28   Across Cheshire East, 12.4% of adults undertake the recommended 30 minutes of activity at least 5 days a week[n]. Levels of activity differ across the borough, being highest in the Poynton Local Area Partnership and lowest in Crewe where 79.5% of adults take no regular exercise[o].

4.29   Women are generally less active than men although again this varies geographically. There is a gradual reduction in participation rates with age. The differences in participation within Cheshire East's white and non-white populations are more evident than on a national level (although the small sample size in ethnic communities used in the assessment will have distorted these results).

4.30   The Department of Health's *Choosing activity*[p] report asserts that a culture shift is needed if physical activity levels across the country are to increase. The promotion of active travel and other healthy activities will be needed to assist in that culture shift.

4.31   Focus groups show that one of the major challenges limiting the use of the public rights of way network is lifestyle: one delegate commented "It's the way of life…people don't have the time, they come home from work and have to catch up with the jobs"[q]. The challenge is to encourage people to use walking and cycling as a daily alternative to travel by private vehicle, particularly for shorter journeys.

4.32   The lack of cycle route information is identified, by consultees and through the NHT Survey (2009), as a barrier to greater uptake of cycling in Cheshire East. Equivalent route information is also needed to promote walking.

4.33   Many people find the impetus they need by going on an organised walk, ride, volunteer conservation work or other event. Such activities are organised by the Ranger Service, through Greenleaves social enterprise, through the Walking for Health initiative, school walking buses, and community-led outings such as local rambling groups, the U3A and cycling groups.

4.34   Promotional activities will also benefit the health of visitors from the North West region, as Cheshire East "represents the countryside on the doorstep of people living in the urban centres such as Manchester"[r]. At the same time such visitors will bring benefits to the visitor economy of Cheshire East. The visitor economy

4 Drive Out the Sources of Poor Health

sector aims to attract 'non-traditional' and younger people to rural Cheshire[s], groups which are currently underrepresented in visitor numbers and therefore don't presently benefit from the healthy activities that the countryside can offer.

4.35   Whilst considering promoting the number of people partaking in healthy activity, there is a need to consider how people get to where they will walk, cycle or horse ride. There is huge scope to reduce, through promotional work, the use of the car as a means to access the countryside. In doing so, the accessibility of green space to those without a car will also be improved.

4.36   In order to promote routes to the public, the Council needs to be certain that there are public rights to use those routes. The Council is required to keep the Definitive Map and Statement, which form the legal record of public rights of way, under continuous review, updating them with changes. However, the Definitive Map and Statement have not been consolidated since they were first published after the 1949 National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act.

PRIORITY POLICY

Policy H2 Promotion of Active Travel and Healthy Activities: Work in partnership to promote walking, cycling and horse riding as active travel options and healthy activities.

H2 Policy Initiatives

4.37   **Promote opportunities and facilities:** Highlight opportunities for active travel and healthy activity by promoting new and existing facilities using appropriate media such as signage, walking and cycling maps, leaflets, events, internet sites and other technologies. This will focus on routes and sites that are accessible by modes of active travel or public transport (such as important leisure routes or key employment locations) and will involve working with health agencies to promote active travel and other activities as a lifestyle choice for all ages amongst residents and visitors.

4.38   **Organised walks, rides and activities:** Undertake and support organised walks, rides and other activities which encourage people to partake in healthy activities that they may not otherwise have the confidence or knowledge to do.

4.39   **Public information on the public rights of way network:** Enhance the accuracy of the Definitive Map and Statement and other records to provide up to date information in an accessible format.

H2 Related Initiatives	Policy
Influencing travel behaviour	S2 Climate Change Mitigation & Adaptation

4 Drive Out the Sources of Poor Health

H2 Related Initiatives	Policy
All initiatives within S7 Walking	S7 Walking
All initiatives within S8 Cycling	S8 Cycling
Facilitate sustainable development	B2 Enabling Development
Travel plan initiatives	B7 Business Innovation
Defect reporting and response times	B8 Maintenance
Community groups	C1 Community
Encourage sustainable travel	Y1 Travel to Education

4 Drive Out the Sources of Poor Health

CASE STUDY

Walks for All Leaflet

In May 2010, the Council published a new 'Walks for All' leaflet. The leaflet details 10 walking routes across the borough which are suitable for those with children, pushchairs, wheelchairs and those with limited mobility.

Details of path surfaces and gradients, gates and gaps, public transport, parking, toilets and refreshment facilities are provided for each walk.

The booklet was developed with the help of local groups and individuals who advised on the content and layout to ensure that the correct information is presented to the reader in a clear format so that they can decide if a route is suitable for them.

Photo: A wheelchair user explores Brereton Heath Country Park, featured in the Walks for All leaflet

Image: press release (Cheshire East 'Talking East' staff newsletter) promoting the new Walks for All Leaflet

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Public Rights of Way & Green Infrastructure

4.40   The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence note that "[i]t is unreasonable to expect people to change their behaviours when the environment discourages such changes"[t]. The World Health Organisation also noted that improvements to the environmental determinants of physical activity appear to have greater potential than interventions at a personal, primary care level[u].

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4.41 It is clear that there won't be a significant increase in active travel and people undertaking healthy activity if the infrastructure on which that can be done is not provided. In other words, the policy of promoting of walking, cycling and horse riding will only be effective if developed in tandem with improvements in the routes along which people will walk, cycle and horse ride. These routes may be parts of the highway network used by pedestrians and cyclists (which are addressed more specifically in **Chapter 2: Sustainability**), but they will also often consist of Cheshire East's "green infrastructure" – which includes public rights of way, canal towpaths, other pathways, parks and the countryside.

4.42 A major component of the borough's green infrastructure is the public rights of way network. In 2010, Cheshire East's network of public rights of way, shown in **Figure 4.1**, totalled 1935 km or 1202 miles, equivalent to nearly ¾ of the length of the road network.

4.43 The network, however, offers a smaller proportion of routes available for horse riding and cycling than the national average.
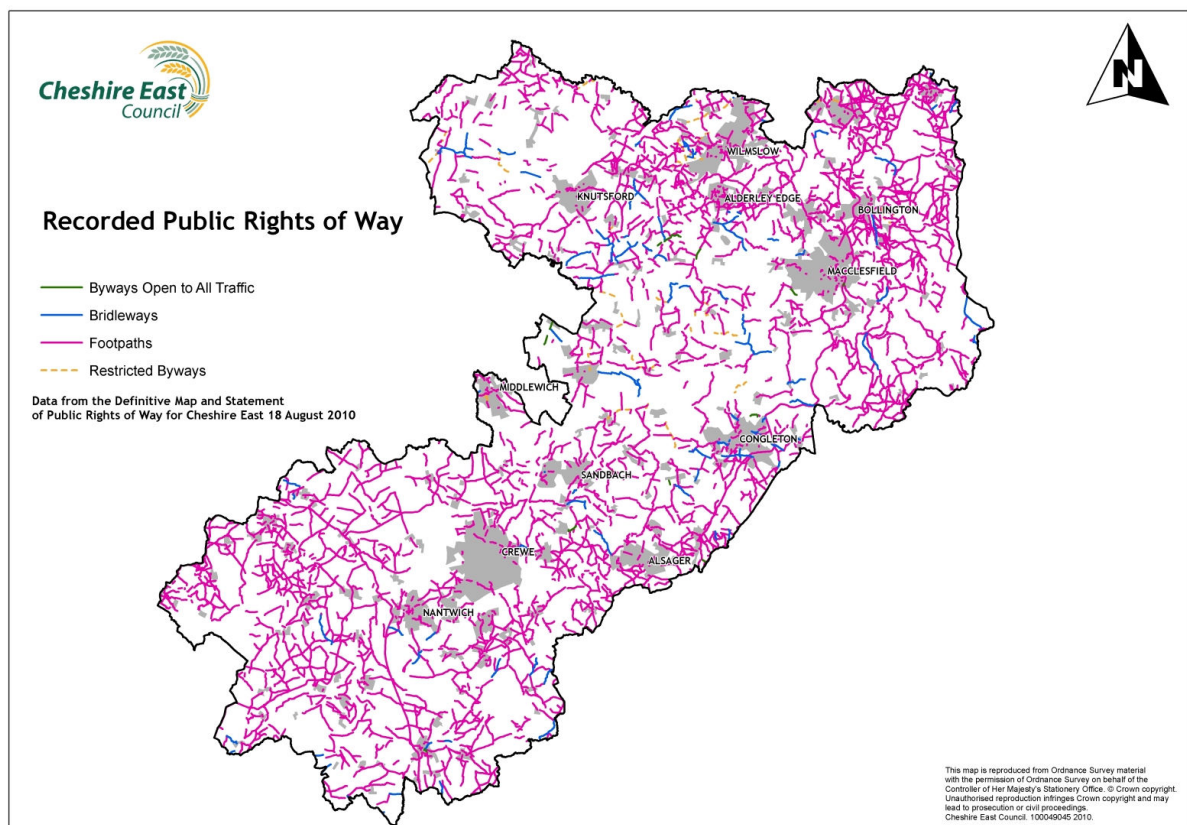
Figure 4.1: Recorded public rights of way network in Cheshire East

4.44 Further, the provision of public rights of way is not even across the borough and specific areas have limited access, such as from the towns of Crewe, Macclesfield and Middlewich in to the surrounding countryside. Overall, public rights of way and green infrastructure are less concentrated in the south of Cheshire East than elsewhere in the borough.

4 Drive Out the Sources of Poor Health

4.45   The Rights of Way Improvement Plan details further evidence of the existing network of public rights of way and green infrastructure. The degree to which the green infrastructure of the borough is accessible for disabled users is relatively unknown, however, but thought to be limited. Disabled people are recognised as amongst the 40% of the population who are 'missing visitors' to the countryside[v].

4.46   It is estimated that 18% of the UK population have a disability[w], which equates to a population of 64,926 within Cheshire East[x]. Further, it has been estimated that one in every 3 people either has a disability or has a close relative or friend who is disabled[y]. When it is considered that outings to the countryside and green spaces are most often made in groups rather than alone, it is evident that a large proportion of the population could be excluded or dissuaded from using green infrastructure if it is inaccessible to disabled users. Further, improving access for disabled people brings benefits to all users, in particular those with pushchairs or young children, those who walk with dogs and the older population.

4.47   The public rights of way network is recognised within the Cheshire East Draft Visitor Economy Strategic Framework as a valuable asset for the tourism industry[z]. Future development of the network needs to be undertaken sympathetically, taking account of location and local community aspirations.

4.48   A use and demand survey for the Countryside Agency[aa] found that only 4% of people going into the countryside used public transport to get to a site or route whereas the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) recommends that managers of green infrastructure should "[e]nsure public open spaces and public paths can be reached on foot, by bicycle and using other modes of transport involving physical activity. They should also be accessible by public transport".

4.49   The perception of safety and security has an influence on whether people use green infrastructure. It is important that the design of new and improved infrastructure takes into accounts such concerns.

4.50   Future planning for green infrastructure needs to be delivered in line with policies and everyday decisions made across the Council, in planning and in highway design. Existing green infrastructure must be protected; while new green infrastructure must be well designed and strategically planned so that it is integrated into the urban and rural environments. All routes should be maintained to a reasonable standard to encourage on-going use of the infrastructure.

4.51   The aim of this policy is to maintain and improve the provision of green infrastructure, the connectivity of the network, to improve the provision for off-road cyclists and horse riders and the network's accessibility for all users, including those with a disability. The development of routes to key destinations, including leisure and tourism sites, local services and access points to public

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transport, should encourage residents to take advantage of healthy travel within their everyday lives, as well as contribute towards a reduction in air and noise pollution.

4.52 Some projects will be based on land within the authority's ownership, others will involve working with other landowners. For example, Cheshire East boasts a network of canals that are managed by British Waterways and which offer green corridors. The towpaths of these canals are available for walking and cycling as both leisure activities and as transport options; many of the canals provide links within and between towns.

> **PRIORITY POLICY**
>
> **Policy H3 Public Rights of Way & Green Infrastructure:** Protect and enhance public rights of way and transport related green infrastructure and endeavour to create new links where beneficial for health or access to green spaces.

H3 Policy Initiatives

4.53 **Access to green spaces:** Aim to improve access for all members of society, including disabled people, to and within green infrastructure, including the public rights of way network, town parks, public open space and country parks.

4.54 **Link key services:** Seek to improve links to key services (e.g. schools, community centres and tourism destinations) by routes and green infrastructure such as canal towpaths. Investments will include improving surfacing and signage and creating links where gaps exist in the network.

4.55 **Leisure routes for cyclists and horse riders:** Endeavour to create and enhance leisure routes for cyclists and horse riders on the public rights of way network and highway network.

4.56 **Litter, environmental health, safety and security:** Encourage users to reduce litter and improve environmental health, safety and other security concerns through education and clean-up campaigns.

4.57 **Country parks, town parks and public open space:** Ensure adequate maintenance and improvements of land within the Council's ownership that is used for formal and informal public access and recreation, at a local level and sites which are tourism destinations.

H3 Related Initiatives	Policy
Various initiatives within S7 Walking	S7 Walking
Various initiatives within S8 Cycling	S8 Cycling
Facilitate sustainable development	B2 Enabling development

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H3 Related Initiatives	Policy
Developer contributions	B2 Enabling Development
Defect reporting and response times	B8 Maintenance
Local minor infrastructure improvements	C1 Community
Community groups	C1 Community

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CASE STUDY

Nantwich Riverside Loop

Together with British Waterways and a number of local community groups, the Council developed the Nantwich Riverside Loop; a 5 km (3 mile), waymarked, circular walk.

It is hoped that the Nantwich Riverside Loop will encourage both residents and visitors to explore on foot and cycle further than they previously would have done, progressing from urban park land in the Riverside to more open countryside. The Loop will introduce members of the public who would not normally use the public rights of way network or canal towpaths to the facilities that are freely available to them both in the local area and elsewhere in Cheshire East.

Photo: A walker on the towpath of the Shropshire Union Canal, part of the Nantwich Riverside Loop walk.

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Air Quality & Noise Pollution

Air Quality

4.58   Medical evidence shows that exposure to nitrogen dioxide has both long- and short-term health effects. Long term exposure to nitrogen dioxide has been shown to effect lung function and respiratory systems, and has been linked to asthma. Short term exposure to higher levels can irritate the eyes and lungs, cause shortness of breath. Health impacts are likely to be more severe in sensitive individuals (elderly, young and those with underlying health conditions). Other pollutants, such as particulates have been shown to have no safe threshold, and as such any reduction in exposure to these pollutants will potentially have health benefits for a wider population.

4.59   It is therefore important to reduce air pollution in areas where exposure occurs, and provide high quality information to sensitive individuals allowing people to alter their lifestyles to reduce the effects of pollution.

4.60   The Environment Act 1995 requires that Local Authorities undertake a regular assessment of air quality within their area. Ambient levels of seven key pollutants are assessed against health based objectives[ab].

4.61   Where concentrations of pollutants are exceeding (or likely to exceed) these objectives, at locations where members of the public will be exposed, the Council is required to declare an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) and develop an Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) which outlines measures to reduce concentrations, and work towards meeting air quality objectives.

4.62   Through the programme of Local Air Quality Management, the Council has determined the main pollutant of concern is Nitrogen Dioxide, generated primarily from road vehicles. In areas where people live in close proximity to busy, or congested roads, exposure to unacceptable levels of nitrogen dioxide has been found to occur, and as a result there are 12 AQMA's declared within the borough (2010) covering some areas along the following roads:

- A6 Disley
- A556 Mere
- A50 Knutsford
- A523 Macclesfield
- A34 Congleton (two areas)
- A54 Congleton
- M6 (Junction 18) Cranage
- A534 / A5022 Sandbach
- A534 Nantwich
- A534 Crewe
- A532 Crewe

4.63   There are further areas where levels of nitrogen dioxide have been found to be of concern, and the Council is currently undertaking a more detailed assessment in these areas to determine if it is necessary to declare additional AQMA's.

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4.64 To address the specific air quality challenges, the Council will adopt a strategic approach to local air quality management aimed at improving air quality in AQMAs and across the borough. Preparing an Air Quality Strategy and Air Quality Action Plan as a complimentary "daughter document" to the LTP has a number of advantages:

- it embeds air quality into the transport planning process – recognising that the primary source of air pollution in the borough is road traffic and that actions to reduce air pollution are invariably focused on traffic;
- By adopting an exposure reduction approach to limit harmful effects on health; it ensures an integrated approach, where-benefits and risks are considered throughout land use and transport planning; and,
- Avoids any unintended impacts from one policy area to another.

4.65 The Air Quality Action Plan will outline a suite of measures aimed at improving air quality, and will show on a cost-benefit basis the likely impact of measures designed to achieve improvements to air quality.

4.66 Alongside the LTP process, the Council will also seek to manage the emission impacts of new development, and help deliver wider sustainable development goals, through the preparation and adoption of supplementary planning guidance on based on a Low Emission Strategy (LES). The guidance will aim to accelerate the uptake of low emission technologies and reduce transport related emissions from proposed development.

Noise

4.67 Noise from road transport has been shown to rank highly as a source of annoyance. In addition, noise from vehicles on the highway is not subject to nuisance controls available to the Councils. Similarly to air quality, noise has the greatest impact at properties located closest to busy roads, however there can also be significant impacts further afield.

4.68 The non-auditory health impacts of environmental noise are well documented. Noise annoyance has been shown to have an impact on overall health and wellbeing, in particular causing sleep disturbance, increased stress and anxiety. It is important to ensure that where exposure is excessive, steps are taken to mitigate the impact.

4.69 When a new road is constructed, or existing roads substantially altered there is a requirement to assess the noise impact of that road, and provide noise insulation, or compensation to properties that qualify under the Noise Insulation Regulations 1975.

4.70 On a broader scale, and in accordance with the Environmental Noise (England) Regulations 2006, noise maps have been produced for major roads, railways, airports industrial sites in large agglomerations (initially with populations greater than 250,000).

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4.71 For the second round of mapping, due to commence in 2012, in addition to re-mapping the areas covered in the first round, roads having more than 3 million vehicle passages per year and railways with more than 30,000 train passages per year are to be mapped. All agglomerations with a population of over 100,000 will also be mapped. The actual roads, railways and agglomerations to be mapped in the second round will be subject to confirmation based on the most up to date data available at the time.

4.72 Cheshire East has 9 roads (non-Highways Agency) which have been identified as First Priority Locations through the first round mapping exercise:

- Middlewich – A54 eastern and western extents of town and towards Sproston Green.
- Crewe – A530 near Wistaston
- Plumley – A556 (various properties between Lostock Gralam and M6.
- Knutsford – A50 north of town
- Alderley Edge – A34 south of Harden Park
- Wilmslow – A538 north of town
- Macclesfield – A523 Gas Road
- Macclesfield – A523 near Butley
- Adlington – A523 (also railway priority).

4.73 Following identification of priority locations on the M6, the Highways Authority is required to assess the areas, and consider what measures (if any) can be taken in each area to aid the management of noise.

4.74 Transportation noise impacts will be managed through local implementation of the Environmental Noise Directive and the following measures:

- Implementation of national legislation which provides façade mitigation (e.g. double glazing, sound barriers, etc.) for qualifying properties; and
- The ongoing improvement to road surfaces with low noise surface technologies.

Air quality & noise challenges

4.75 A number of key challenges have been identified which have an impact on air pollution and/or transport noise.

4.76 One of the primary challenges within Cheshire East is the high volume of traffic on some of the roads, leading to increased emissions of vehicle related pollution. Cheshire has been shown to have a high proportion of car ownership (82% in 2001 against a UK average of 72%), and an equally high proportion of families with more than one vehicle (40% in 2001 against a UK average of 29%).

4.77 The predominant means of commuting in Cheshire East is the car, with only a small proportion of residents (4% in 2001) using public transport to commute to work.

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4.78 Tackling congestion is a key factor in reducing emissions. Free flowing traffic produces less pollution than "stop start", or stationary traffic. Many of the market towns within Cheshire East have narrow streets with residents living in very close proximity to the road, and traffic flow is often impeded by on street parking, goods vehicles servicing shops and other activities.

4.79 Freight movements have an impact on air and noise quality and pollution within Cheshire East. "Source apportionment" undertaken as part of the Local Air Quality Management Process shows that, in a number of the Air Quality Management Areas, emissions of nitrogen dioxide from Heavy Goods Vehicles are disproportionately high when compared to emissions from other categories of roads user (cars for example).

4.80 New development also has the potential to adversely affect both air quality and transport noise, partly from the development's own activities (for example boiler emissions, or manufacturing noise), but more often from increased road traffic, or changes to traffic patterns on the wider highway network as a result of the development.

4.81 Specific policy initiatives to address noise and air quality are set out below. Initiatives relating to Public Transport, Freight, Network Management, Cycling, Walking and Climate Change are set out in **Chapter 2: Sustainability** and **Chapter 3: Business**. These policy initiatives are all likely to lead to benefits to local air quality.

POLICY

Policy H4 Air Quality: Work to improve air quality in the borough.

POLICY

Policy H5 Noise: Seek to reduce the impact of noise pollution from transport.

H4 & H5 Policy Initiatives

4.82 **Public information:** Work to raise awareness of air quality issues, and communicate the results of air quality monitoring through development of a web portal. Consider providing targeted, health based advice to sensitive individuals allowing them to adjust lifestyles according to air pollution forecasts.

4.83 **Driver technique:** Undertake a series of sector specific campaigns aimed at better awareness of how improved driver technique can reduce vehicle emissions. Raise overall awareness of how driver technique can impact emissions through the website. Place signage at strategic areas where

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vehicle engine idling leads to increased emissions and explore the feasibility of adopting legislation to enforce the switching off of idling engines within AQMAs.

4.84   **Vehicle emission testing:** Undertake roadside emission testing of vehicles to ensure they meet vehicle emission regulations.

4.85   **New technology:** Continue to investigate innovative techniques and encourage adoption of new technology designed to improve local air quality – e.g. photo-catalytic paint.

4.86   **Quiet surfacing systems:** Where necessary for environmental reasons utilise 'low noise' surfacing materials in its highway maintenance activities.

H4 & H5 Related Initiatives	Policy
Transport assessment of strategic site proposals	S1 Spatial Planning
Strategic joint working	S2 Climate Change – Mitigation & Adaptation
Influence travel behaviour	S2 Climate Change – Mitigation & Adaptation
All initiatives within S3-6 Public Transport	S3-6 Public Transport
Hybrid and electric vehicles	S9 Technology & Energy Efficiency
Facilitate sustainable development	B2 Enabling Development
Developer contributions	B2 Enabling Development
Network and route planning	B3 Network Management
Junction efficiency	B3 Network Management
All initiatives within B5 Freight	B5 Freight
Parking management	B6 Parking
Transport Asset Management Plan	B8 Maintenance

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CASE STUDY

Application of Photo-Catalytic Paint

Awareness has in recent years been steadily growing that titanium dioxide in the form of photo-catalytic products, appeared to be a promising technology for the removal of nitrogen dioxide from ambient air. It was deemed a suitable, interim mitigation option for Cheshire East where traditional methods or re-routing traffic may not be feasible, or whilst longer term measures are implemented.

A pilot study has been undertaken within an Air Quality Management Area in Congleton. Solution was applied to approximately 200m2 of paving, a number of residential properties and street furniture in late 2008.

Nitrogen dioxide concentrations were notably reduced following application of the solution, and there was a measured reduction of 34% over a 12-month period. The results of the study demonstrated that the use of photo-catalytic products may be an effective mitigation measure on reducing nitrogen dioxide concentrations within Air Quality Management Areas.

There are plans to undertake further studies within AQMA's of differing topography, and geography to enable further assessment of the impact.

The study has prompted interest amongst national and international air quality experts.

Photo: application of Photo-catalytic paint (left) and the area sprayed (Right) in West Road, Congleton

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Road Safety

4.87 The Road Traffic Act 1988 places a duty on all local authorities to identify those road users most at-risk of death or injury and implement measures that are appropriate to reduce crashes.

4.88 While the general health of people in Cheshire East is predominantly better than the national average; the number of road injuries and deaths in the area are significantly worse than the national average[ac]. The cost of road death and injury in 2009 alone is calculated at £105m[ad].

4.89 The Community Survey 2008 identified that 68% of residents in Cheshire East had been involved in a road traffic crash or collision, of these accidents 18% had resulted in a minor injury and 9% had resulted in a more serious injury. Unlawful acts are contributory factors in almost half of road traffic collisions in Cheshire East, with one in five associated with alcohol impairment[ae].

4.90 An analysis of traffic accidents where people are killed or seriously injured (KSIs) in Cheshire East (2005-2009) identified an overall downward trend since 1998, however, more recently the rate of reduction has begun to level out. Moreover, a significant proportion of these reductions have been achieved on motorway and trunk roads. In their 2010 Cheshire East Profile Report, the Cheshire Safer Roads Partnership (CSRP) noted that when these roads are excluded, the average number of KSIs in Cheshire East has remained relatively constant, albeit with some year-on-year variations[af].

4.91 The CSRP has identified young adult road users (16 to 25 years) and powered-two-wheelers as the top two at risk road user groups. These groups accounted for 49% of all KSIs between 2005 and 2009[ag]. Key statistics include:

- 61% of all young adult road user KSIs during this period were car occupants (either as a driver or passenger), with males twice as likely to be killed or seriously injured[ah].
- In terms of all powered-two-wheeler KSIs, 50% of accidents can be attributed to 36-45 year old males riding 500cc+ motorbikes.
- Of the 266 KSIs on Cheshire East roads in 2009, only 28 were children although there is a steady rise in child KSIs over the last decade.
- Of all cyclist KSIs, 36-55 year olds contribute to almost half (48%) and the vast majority of these (80%) are male.

4.92 By supporting greater road safety education and enforcement at high risk sites, the Council aims to reduce the overall rate of road traffic incidents in Cheshire East.

4.93 The engineering of highways and junctions can also have a significant impact on the number of road traffic incidents experienced at these sites. Examples of positive action include rectifying sites with poor visibility, lighting or drainage, inappropriate crossing design, or below standard corner radius or road camber.

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> **POLICY**
>
> **Policy H6 Road Safety (Education):** Work with partners to improve road safety through targeted education campaigns.

H6 Policy Initiatives

4.94   **Target high risk groups:** Work with local and sub-regional partners including, the Police, Cheshire Fire and Rescue and other external organisations to provide education and training services to high risk groups (e.g. young adults, and motorcyclists). The Council will also undertake an evaluation of existing education and training campaigns to measure the impact they are having on the number of KSI incidents in the borough and ensure effective delivery.

4.95   **National behavioural campaigns:** Better inform all drivers and riders of the consequences of excessive speed, alcohol impairment and not wearing seatbelts, as well as improving observation skills through the use of national behavioural campaigns.

4.96   **Cyclist training**: Work with schools, employers and in local communities to provide road safety training to cyclists identified as having a high level of risk in the borough and promote the use of active travel.

> **POLICY**
>
> **Policy H7 Road Safety (Enforcement)**: Work with partners to improve road safety through targeted enforcement in high risk areas.

H7 Policy Initiatives

4.97   **Speed cameras:** Support the use of existing speed cameras at high risk sites to encourage drivers and riders to abide by speed limits. Undertake an evaluation of the impact of installing average speed cameras on roads identified as having a particularly high level of collisions for at-risk road user groups.

4.98   **Innovative enforcement schemes:** Support targeted innovative enforcement schemes to enhance road safety in towns and villages and on rural roads. For example, using peak time collision data to target specific at-risk groups, considering temporary introduction of Speed Indication Devices (SIDs) or assistance with informal community speed camera enforcement schemes.

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H7 Related Initiative	Policy
Community-led initiatives	C1 Community

PRIORITY POLICY

Policy H8 Road Safety (Engineering): The Council will improve road safety through highway design improvements at collision blackspots.

H8 Policy Initiatives

4.99   **Local safety schemes:** Contribute towards the reduction in the number of road traffic incidents by undertaking appropriate highway design improvements where evidence identifies a collision of casualty problem – then undertake appropriate evaluation to ensure future effectiveness.

4.100   **Vulnerable road users:** Take account of the needs of vulnerable road users (e.g. pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders) and the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 when undertaking highway design. The Network Management Plan will set out a road user hierarchy to identify the circumstances where pedestrians and cyclist will be given priority on the highway network – see **Chapter 3: Business** for details.

4.101   **Quiet lanes:** Consider the viability of introducing 'Quiet Lanes' in villages to enhance pedestrian and cycling road safety using appropriate best practice guidance.

H8 Related Initiative	Policy
Safer routes to school	Y1 Travel to Education

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End Notes

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b. Chief Medical Officer's Report (2004) At least 5 times a week: evidence on the impact of physical activity and its relationship to health, Department of Health, London
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g. House of Commons Health Committee (2004) Obesity: Third report of session 2003-2004
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j. Central and Eastern Cheshire Primary Care Trust (2010) Joint Strategic Needs Assessment
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m. Phillipson C & Scharf T (2004) The Impact of Government Policy on Social Exclusion of Older People: A Review of the Literature. London, The Stationery Office, Social Exclusion Unit, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.
n. Central and Eastern Cheshire Primary Care Trust (2010) Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, Physically active adults, modelled for 2005-6
o. No regular exercise is considered to be exercising fewer than 3 times a week
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q. Cheshire East Council (2010) Public Rights of Way Discussion Groups 2010, Sandbach
r. Cheshire East Council (2010) Cheshire East Draft Visitor Economy Strategic Framework June 2010, Sandbach, p8
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t. Schmid, T., Prattt, M. & Howzw, E. (1995) Policy as intervention: environmental and policy approaches to the prevention of cardiovascular disease, American Journal of Public Health 85(9), p 1207-11
u. Source: Sustrans Connect2 and Greenway Design Guide: The Importance of Increasing Walking and Cycling in the UK
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w. Office for National Statistics Family Resources Survey 2003-4 , London, as defined by the Disability Discrimination Acts 1995 and 2005

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x.   Using Cheshire East Research and Intelligence 2007 mid-year estimate, Cheshire East Profile,2009 for the estimated population of Cheshire East

y.   Office of National Statistics, Census 2001, London

z.   Cheshire East Council (2010) Cheshire East Draft Visitor Economy Strategic Framework June 2010, Sandbach, p12

aa.   Hickey, R. (2003) Use and Demand for Rights of Way, A Report to the Countryside Agency, Public Rights of Way Services Ltd.

ab.   as set out in The Air Quality (England) Regulations 2000 (SI 928), The Air Quality (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2002 (SI 3043.

ac.   APHO and Department of Health, Health Profile 2009 – Cheshire East, 2010

ad.   Department for Transport, Highways Economic Note 2

ae.   Cheshire Safer Roads Partnership, Strategic Assessment, March 2010, V3

af.   Cheshire Safer Roads Partnership, June 2010, Cheshire East: Road Traffic Collision Casualties 2005-2009 Profile Report

ag.   Cheshire Safer Roads Partnership, June 2010, Cheshire East: Road Traffic Collision Casualties 2005-2009 Profile Report

ah.   Cheshire Safer Roads Partnership, May 2010, Young Adult (16-25y) Road User Problem Profile

5 Nurture Strong Communities

Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) Priorities

5.1   Over the next 15 years the SCS seeks to ensure that local people will be actively involved in shaping the future of where they live. The SCS has identified four priorities for action in nurturing strong communities in Cheshire East. These are:

- Let local voices take the lead
- Support the community to support itself
- Deliver services as locally as possible
- Ensure communities feel safe

5.2   Communities depend on local transport to get to work, to school, to the hospital, shops or GP surgery. However, the ease of access to services is not just about transport, it is also about how key services are planned and delivered. The aim is to work with partner organisations, town & parish councils and community & voluntary groups to identify solutions that will improve the way in which local communities can access services now and in the future.

Evidence Overview

5.3   The 2008 Community Survey found that 93% of respondents liked living in the area and 61% felt that they belonged to a community. Cheshire East has a strong town and parish council network, pro-active town partnerships, neighbourhood action groups and a strong volunteer force. Residents are proud of the levels of community activity and see this as one of the strengths of the area. There are many examples of community-led solutions to transport problems, such as community car schemes and informal car sharing.

5.4   Cheshire East contains a diverse mixture of urban and rural areas with approximately 39% of the population living in rural areas and 61% in towns, suburbs and larger villages. The ease with which people can access services such as work, healthcare, education and shopping is an important and challenging issue, particularly for rural communities.

5.5   The profile report for each Local Area Partnership (LAP) has identified the proportion of households located within 2km of a range of key services. The results indicate that access to services across each LAP varies. Nantwich and Knutsford have a lower than average access across a range of services. However, Congleton, Crewe, Wilmslow and to a lesser extent Macclesfield experience higher-than-average access to most services. This constitutes a benefit of the more urban composition of these LAP areas.

5.6   There are some neighbourhoods in Cheshire East which are classified as being in the 20% most deprived nationally. The majority (10 out of 14) of these neighbourhoods are in Crewe town, with the rest in Macclesfield and Congleton

5 Nurture Strong Communities

towns, and the Wilmslow-Handforth conurbation. A greater proportion of households in these areas do not have access to a car and many rely on public transport to access key services.

Stakeholder Opinion

5.7   Stakeholders recognised the important role that transport can play in supporting communities – in particular, stakeholders identified accessibility to services from rural areas as a key issue – however, nurture strong communities was not identified as a priority theme for transport.

5.8   Reducing the need to travel by providing services locally or remotely, better partnership working and working with existing networks/community groups to facilitate a better understanding of local transport needs were seen to be important and applicable to all the SCS themes.

5.9   In terms of possible initiatives, members of the LAPs expressed greatest support for increasing the role of taxi services to meet community needs and providing practical support for community groups in meeting community transport needs (e.g. lift services organised by communities).

5.10   Stakeholders also recommended a range of other opportunities to nurture strong communities including: joined-up service delivery to address loss of local services (e.g. post office closures); communication to understand community needs; and supporting local community groups and local councils to ensure that town and parish plans are at the heart of local decision making. Stakeholder suggestions are reflected in the draft policies wherever possible.

LTP Objectives

RELEVANT OBJECTIVES

Objective 4 (Community): Support community involvement and decision-making.

Objective 2 (Accessibility): Improve access to key services (employment, education, health, shopping and leisure) and reduce the need to travel.

Objective 7 (Safety): Improve road safety for all users and increase personal and community safety.

5 Nurture Strong Communities

Transport Challenges & Policy Solutions

Community

5.11 Cohesive, empowered and active communities in which people can influence the decisions that affect their locality is at the heart of the SCS for Cheshire East. Local services which are tailored to the needs of local communities will help to maintain the distinctiveness of towns and villages.

5.12 It is recognised that local communities are often best placed to identify their own transport needs and to develop local transport solutions. Many communities across the borough have a history of self help and coming up with innovative ways of serving local people, whether it be giving someone a lift to a doctor's appointment, or saving a post office by relocating it to the local pub. This is particularly important in rural areas where access to mainstream services is more difficult.

5.13 There is a need to assess the extent to which transport and accessibility issues contribute to deprivation, particularly in the areas which are classified as being in the 20% most deprived nationally. The Council will work in partnership with communities to understand the complex range of transport needs at a local level and support where possible community-led solutions.

5.14 Local Area Partnerships (LAPs) bring together the key agencies within localities to ensure engagement with communities, provide empowerment opportunities and improve service delivery through the development of robust, evidence based Area Delivery Plans. The Council will work with the LAPs, town & parish councils and community & voluntary groups to facilitate a better understanding of transport and accessibility needs and work together to explore potential solutions.

5.15 In order to empower local communities, the Council are exploring opportunities to transfer and devolve functions within localities. The purpose of this devolution is to improve local services by involving town and parish councils in service delivery and promoting local ownership of services. The transport-related services which may be devolved include maintenance of bus shelters, maintenance of footpaths and street name plates, bridleways and road sweeping.

5.16 In developing the range of LTP policies, a full assessment of each town and parish plan has been undertaken to ensure that appropriate policies for Cheshire East are adopted. This assessment will feed into the development of transport frameworks for each principal town and key service centre during the first implementation plan period (for more details see **Chapter 8: Towns**).

5.17 There are opportunities to nurture the development of grass roots initiatives and empower local people to develop a range of community-led solutions.

5 Nurture Strong Communities

C1 Policy Initiatives

5.18   **Community engagement:** Encourage communities to identify and prioritise transport and accessibility issues relevant to their community – town and parish plans and LAP "Area Delivery Plans" may help facilitate this process.

5.19   **Community-led initiatives:** Adopt a flexible and open approach to community identified initiatives and support local people to develop a range of community-led solutions, such as voluntary car schemes, car share schemes and community speed reduction initiatives.

5.20   **Local service delivery:** Support initiatives to provide access to services locally, including mobile service delivery (e.g. libraries) and local delivery hubs. This may include the provision of some services by town and parish councils.

5.21   **Local minor infrastructure improvements:** Implement small-scale improvements to local transport facilities and services identified in town and parish plans and other community plans (e.g. LAP "Area Delivery Plans").

5.22   **Community groups:** Utilise the knowledge and expertise of specialist interest groups, such as Cheshire East Cycling Forum, Community Rail Partnerships and Low Carbon Communities (LCC).

5 Nurture Strong Communities

CASE STUDY

Rural Accessibility - Audlem

As part of a North West Accessibility & Regeneration Study, Audlem was selected as a case study to explore access to services in a rural settlement with close ties to larger neighbouring employment and service areas.

The study found that the changing nature of village life towards commuting to urban centres has had a number of positive and negative impacts on Audlem village. The demand for local services has reduced as car ownership has risen, and access to employment and key services by car has resulted in more people travelling further.

One of the key successes found in Audlem was the role of the local community in bringing people together, providing voluntary support, and representing local opinion in an effective manner. The Parish Plan, Village Design Statement, Audlem Online and the range of community events are just some of the positive messages.

The case study found that many people who live in Audlem feel the advantage of living in a rural village is that people look out for each other. For example, it was identified through the focus groups that Audlem has a group of volunteers who offer a taxi service for people wanting to access Leighton Hospital. The service enables local residents with transport problems to attend hospital, dentist, chiropody and surgery appointments.

This local support network is evidence that people living in Audlem recognise the issues faced by local people and work together to support people within their village. The Audlem community have a strong culture of self help and coming up with innovative ways of serving local people. The success of community initiatives to tackle rural accessibility problems should be an important lesson for other areas across Cheshire East.

5 Nurture Strong Communities

Accessibility of Services

5.23 Many people in Cheshire East have good access to services; however, there are a significant number of people for whom accessing key services is a real challenge. This section outlines the 'places' where access to services can be challenging and the 'people' who experience accessibility problems which may also be linked to issues of deprivation and social exclusion.

5.24 The national indices of deprivation suggest that several of Cheshire East's rural communities experience significant levels of deprivation in terms of geographical barriers to services. The most affected communities are located in the area covered by the Nantwich Local Area Partnership.

5.25 In addition, local accessibility mapping has identified the rural communities with limited access to conventional fixed route public transport services (albeit excluding 'demand responsive' solutions such as Dial-a-ride, which cannot easily be mapped). The challenges to rural accessibility include greater distances to travel, less concentrated levels of demand for public transport and the increasing loss of local service provision.

5.26 However, living in a rural area does not necessarily translate to a problem of access to services, as many of these communities have high car ownership and often do not consider themselves to be experiencing difficulties. Therefore, activities to address rural accessibility must be targeted at the people for whom accessing essential services is a real challenge.

5.27 Consultation with rural communities has found that older people often experience accessibility problems as they may become less mobile and less inclined to drive as they get older (see **Chapter 7: Older people**). Young people can also experience accessibility problems linked to availability and affordability of transport (see **Chapter 6: Young people**).

5.28 Research by Cheshire Community Action has found that transport which is flexible and responsive to local needs is a top priority for rural communities. Community transport initiatives, such as dial-a-ride and community car schemes, were highly valued in providing journeys for older people and disabled passengers to a range of essential key services.

5.29 Many people are concerned about the loss of local services and the potential for isolation and disadvantage as many village shops, post offices and pubs continue to close. Community buildings can host numerous other services and with 144 village halls in Cheshire East there is a significant physical resource of buildings in which more localised services can be provided.

5.30 People without regular access to a car often experience difficulties in accessing key services. The lowest levels of car ownership are concentrated in the areas classified as being in the 20% most deprived nationally. 40% of households in West Coppenhall & Grosvenor in Crewe have no access to a car, which was the highest percentage in Cheshire East.

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5.31   However, Crewe has an extensive commercial bus network with good availability of services during peak hours of the day. The accessibility problems experienced by these communities are often more closely associated with affordability of travel and off peak journeys, particularly for shift workers (early mornings and late evenings).

5.32   In addressing deprivation there is a need to consider a range of issues and potential solutions to reduce the inequalities in household incomes (access to work), educational attainment (access to schools & colleges) and health (access to hospitals & GP surgery). This may include assessing the location of services, safety and security concerns at transport interchanges and people's travel horizons (e.g. confidence to travel longer distances), as well as the availability and cost of transport.

5.33   An increasing number of retailers and service providers make their goods and services available online, reducing the need to travel to service outlets. The majority of households in Cheshire East can access broadband with the exception of a small number of areas (often referred to as 'blindspots'), which are concentrated in the rural parts of the borough. In addition, the diversity of service providers and speed of the connection is weaker in rural areas.

5.34   In order to improve access to goods and services it is important for all areas of Cheshire East to have access to high quality broadband infrastructure. The aim is to reduce the digital divide and ensure that there is parity in the provision of broadband services for those that live and work in rural areas with that available in nearby towns.

5.35   However, it is also recognised that the affordability of broadband may be an issue in low income households, particularly in deprived neighbourhoods in the urban areas of the borough. Promoting outlets which offer community access to internet services, such as libraries and internet cafés could be targeted to areas of deprivation.

5.36   In summary, the Council will seek to improve accessibility through a combination of effective transport links and working with partners to explore new ways of service provision. This will include effective use of technology and making better use of local facilities (such as village halls and community centres) to deliver joined-up services. It is essential that communities have a strong voice in determining decisions that are made, so that services are responsive to the needs of local communities.

PRIORITY POLICY

Policy C2 Accessibility of Services: Work with partner organisations and local communities to make key services easier to access with a particular focus on disadvantaged groups and areas, including people living in rural areas, older people, young people and those without access to a car.

5 Nurture Strong Communities

C2 Policy Initiatives

5.37 **Key service location:** Work with service providers (NHS, schools, colleges, leisure centres) to ensure that changes to service location do not have a detrimental impact on accessibility for vulnerable groups and isolated people.

5.38 **Multi-use premises:** Work with service providers to explore the opportunity to utilise existing community facilities to provide a wider range of services locally (e.g. village halls & community centres).

5.39 **Rural taxi services:** Further utilise the role of taxis and private hire vehicles by investigating innovative taxi-sharing initiatives serving rural areas, and ensuring adequate availability of taxi services covering such areas.

5.40 **Access to employment, skills and education:** Work with employers and education providers to ensure that future and (where possible) existing sites are as accessible as possible to local communities, particularly young people from areas of deprivation.

5.41 **Sustainable communities:** Encourage communities to "live local, work local, buy local" to support the viability of local services, promote home delivery of goods which cannot be purchased locally and increase the availability of allotments to facilitate access to affordable healthy food.

C2 Related Initiatives	Policy
Broadband infrastructure	B7 Business Innovation
Supported services	S4 Public Transport (Service Levels & Reliability)
New commercial opportunities	S4 Public Transport (Service Levels & Reliability)
Multi-media information	S5 Public Transport (Information & Marketing)

CASE STUDY

Community Transport - Gawsworth

The village of Gawsworth is situated approximately two miles outside the town of Macclesfield. The financial cost of maintaining a Tuesday only local bus service for the village of Gawsworth was unsustainable, yet this service provided essential accessibility to shopping, personal business and other needs of those residents using this service.

In response to this, a community transport service was introduced. By changing the day of operation to Friday, it was possible to use existing community transport resources, therefore the service could be provided at marginal additional cost, which is met by fare income. Close engagement with service users was necessary, particularly as the new service required residents to register and pre book their journeys. However, this has subsequently proven to be successful, with service users accepting and understanding how the new service works for them.

The LTP will seek further opportunities to rationalise services and increase sustainable accessibility for rural residents.

Access for All

5.42   People with mobility problems and disabled people often experience difficulties in using the transport system to access key services. Transport policy and planning should influence the effective location and delivery of services, such that they are as accessible as possible to all users.

5.43   In addition, improvements in the physical accessibility of public transport will go some way towards better meeting the needs of all users within 'mainstream' transport. The provision of accessible buses is important to ensure that older people, disabled people, wheelchair users and people with pushchairs are afforded equal access to bus transport.

5.44   The English National Concessionary Travel Scheme (ENCTS) enables free bus travel after 9.30am to all eligible older people and disabled people. The concession provides greater freedom and independence to some of the most vulnerable people in our society, representing a major step forward in tackling social exclusion.

5.45   The Council currently operates a number of discretionary enhancements to the scheme, such as half fare travel before 9.30am and the ability to use the pass on Dial-a-Ride services. The enhancements extend the advantages of the scheme, particularly for those who live in areas with limited bus services.

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5.46 As part of the concessionary travel scheme, the Council currently offers both the Senior Railcard and Disabled Persons Railcard to eligible residents at a discounted price through the power of bulk buying directly from National Rail.

5.47 In terms of adult social care, the Council currently provide a total of 1,200 journeys each day. The majority of these customers are aged over 60. The service provides access to a range of facilities including day-care centres and healthcare. However, the provision of transport is set to change as part of the social care redesign programme.

5.48 The introduction of the personalisation agenda and devolved care budgets mean that clients will in future be allocated an allowance for transport costs. People will be given freedom in how they spend this budget, how much they spend on transport and indeed, how they choose to travel. This will result in a demand led and demand responsive approach to transport.

5.49 Disabled people in receipt of the higher rate mobility component of Disability Living Allowance are eligible for a number of concessions including the Blue Badge scheme, which enables mobility impaired people to park on the street close to key services where there are no waiting restrictions in place.

5 Nurture Strong Communities

5.50 'Shopmobility' schemes assist people with mobility problems to access local shops and services by providing wheelchairs and electric scooters that are made available for hire in local town centres. 'Shopmobility' forms an integral part of the journey for a person with mobility problems, enabling them to retain a level of independence.

5.51 Currently there are four Shopmobility centres around the borough (Macclesfield, Crewe, Nantwich and Wilmslow), with a fifth (Congleton) in progress. This will expand the access of Shopmobility schemes and provision for mobility vehicles and enable more people to access the scheme.

5.52 In addition, Independent Travel Training supports people with disabilities and learning difficulties to gain the essential skills they need to access 'mainstream' public transport services. The training has been highly valued by users helping them to gain independence and greater social inclusion.

5.53 The Council will work with users to better understand the diverse range of needs (e.g. visual impairment, learning difficulties, wheelchair users) and develop initiatives to support access to public transport for all.

PRIORITY POLICY

Policy C3 Access for all: Consider the diverse range of needs concerning disabled people and other groups who experience difficulties using the transport system.

C3 Policy Initiatives

5.54 **Accessibility audits:** Undertake regular assessments of key transport infrastructure, such as railway stations and bus interchanges, to ensure that they are accessible for those with mobility constraints and disabled people.

5.55 **Accessible vehicles:** Encourage operators to replace older bus and rail vehicles with high quality fully accessible buses or carriages that enable easy access and provide a comfortable journey for all users.

5.56 **Accessible information:** Support the provision of transport information in a range of formats to increase access to this information (e.g. for partially sighted or disabled people).

5.57 **Independent travel training:** Support people with disabilities and learning difficulties to gain the essential skills they need (e.g. confidence) to access 'mainstream' public transport services.

5.58 **Social care transport options:** Facilitate informed choices and decision-making through easier access to information on travel options for accessing facilities (e.g. day care centres), particularly in relation to the social care redesign programme and independent travel budgets.

5 Nurture Strong Communities

5.59   **Concessionary bus travel:** Review current criteria to ensure it offers value for money and supports broader policy objectives. Additional discretionary elements to consider will include introduction of companion bus passes and/or taxi vouchers.

5.60   **Concessionary rail cards:** Promote the national scheme offered to older people and people with disabilities.

C3 Related Initiatives	Policy
Access to green spaces	H3 Public Rights of Way & Green Infrastructure
Bus driver training	S4 Public Transport (Service Levels & Reliability)
Computerised booking systems	S5 Public Transport (Information & Publicity)
Footpath & footway improvements	S7 Walking

5 Nurture Strong Communities

> **CASE STUDY**
>
> **Independent Travel Training**
>
> Independent Travel Training supports people with disabilities and learning difficulties to gain the essential skills they need to access mainstream public transport services gaining independence, helping achievement of greater social inclusion.
>
> A pilot scheme has been set up in Cheshire East to assist students attending local schools and colleges. Students from these educational establishments have benefited by improving their access to further education, training and employment and reduced their dependency on specialist or personalised transport arrangements provided by the Council.
>
> Students at Reaseheath College who have participated in the travel training course have thoroughly enjoyed the process. One student called his first day of using the college bus his 'independence day' as he has spent most of his school life travelling by taxi and this was his first step towards adulthood.

Crime & Terrorism

5.61   Despite the reduction in the number of actual crimes committed within Cheshire East, fear of crime remains high. A considerable number of respondents to locally conducted surveys in the former District Council areas indicated that they felt very (Macclesfield: 12%; Crewe and Nantwich: 14% and Congleton 11%) or quite (Macclesfield: 55%; Crewe and Nantwich: 49% and Congleton 39%) worried about being a victim of crime.

5.62   Criminal damage, theft and violence were the most common types of crime experienced in Cheshire East. Macclesfield, Haslington, Knutsford and Handforth experience a relatively high level of violence – defined as violent crime rates higher than 10 per 1,000 population, with Disley, Prestbury, Bunbury and Holmes Chapel experiencing very low levels of violent crime.

5.63   The Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report identified that women value personal security more greatly than men, although security is often an issue of perception rather than reality, particularly when travelling at night. Issues of street lighting and security at public transport stops, stations and interchanges are often a concern.

5.64   Actual and perceived levels of safety and security have been highlighted as a barrier to using public transport. The issues of concern include isolated bus stops, badly lit waiting areas and intimidating atmosphere on-board, which can generate feelings of insecurity. The walking and waiting parts of the journey can be where passengers feel most at risk, particularly at night. Older people, more than any other age group, need to be assured of their personal security and safety.

5 Nurture Strong Communities

5.65   The Council will work with the Safer Cheshire East Partnership and public transport operators to jointly address problems of crime and safety in and around the transport network.

POLICY

Policy C4 Crime & Terrorism: Work with partners to reduce crime, fear of crime and anti-social behaviour on the transport network.

C4 Policy Initiatives

5.66   **Targeted safety improvements:** Reduce the incidence of crime and anti-social behaviour on the transport network.

5.67   **Security of stations and bus stops:** Improve the waiting and interchange facilities, including installation of CCTV, to improve the actual and perceived levels of safety of security.

5.68   **Car park security:** Enhance the security of car parks, particularly those close to public transport interchanges not owned or operated by the Council.

5.69   **Street & Footpath Lighting:** Ensure appropriate provision of lighting to enhance actual and perceived safety on footways and footpaths.

C4 Related Initiatives	Policy
Railway station improvements	S3 Public Transport (Integration & Facilities)
Bus stop condition	S3 Public Transport (Integration & Facilities)
Provision of high quality parking	B6 Parking

6 Support our Children & Young People

Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) Priorities

6.1 The SCS aims to ensure that children and young people are helped to fulfil their potential by providing opportunities, support and giving young people a voice in shaping their future. The priorities for action over the next 15 years are:

- Ensure good transitions (e.g. education to employment) and skills for the future
- Improve support and facilities for children and young people
- Strengthen the voice of children and young people
- Improve the health of children and young people

6.2 The Cheshire East Children & Young People's Interim Plan (2010/11) further defines this commitment by setting out immediate priorities, targets and actions, as well as setting the direction of travel for services for a 2-5 year period.

6.3 Transport has a supporting role to play in delivering these priorities, particularly when considering the needs of children and young people in accessing education and employment. Children and young people's safety will feature in transport policy through road safety initiatives to reduce the number of young people killed or seriously injured (KSI) on Cheshire East's roads.

6.4 There are also important linkages between transport and health, with opportunities to encourage young people to walk and cycle from an early age resulting in active, healthier lifestyles and reducing obesity in children.

Evidence Overview

6.5 There are just over 80,000 children and young people (aged 0-19) in Cheshire East. By the year 2027 there is forecast to be approximately 5% fewer children then there were in 2010, with the 5-10 year old population declining by 3% between 2007 and 2027 and the 11-15 year old population decreasing by 7%.

6.6 Evidence suggests that while the majority of Cheshire East's children and young people are doing well and have improving prospects, a significant number, often living in the most disadvantaged areas, are not as fortunate[a].

6.7 Around 6,500 children and young people live in areas that fall into the 20% most disadvantaged in the country. Estimates suggest that around 17% of all children and young people (0-19) in Cheshire East are 'at risk' of poor outcomes[b].

6.8 Overall the proportion of Cheshire East's young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) is good compared to national levels. However, NEET rates remain significantly higher for some groups (e.g. cared for children) and NEET is a strong predictor of poor outcomes.

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6.9   A survey undertaken as part of the Cheshire East Youth Parliament Elections (11-18 year olds) found that from a list of 12 critical issues, transport costs were top, along with the way young people are presented by the media. The Tellus4 survey[c] identified that safe places to go and things to do are highly valued amongst children and young people. Safer streets, especially from cars that drive too fast, and safer places to cross roads were raised[d].

6.10   Children account for 10.5% of all people killed or seriously injured (KSI) on Cheshire East roads. The majority of incidents involve children aged 11 to 15 as pedestrians and as passengers in a car. Single vehicle collisions are the most prevalent type of collision. The majority of car KSI collisions occur on A and C class 60mph rural roads; pedal cycle collisions occur on 30mph or 60mph roads; and pedestrian KSI collisions occur close to pedestrian crossings.

6.11   In 2009/10, method of travel to school data found that 47.1% of school attendees travelled on foot, a third (33.6%) travelled by car and 14.7% travel by public transport. Younger children (aged 5 to 10) were more likely to travel by car, whilst children aged 10-15 were more likely to travel by public transport or walk.

6.12   Levels of cycling to school have remained low and relatively static over recent years at around 2.7-2.9% of 10 to 15 year olds. When comparing this against the national figures, Cheshire East has a higher percentage of children travelling to school by car. All Cheshire East schools now have a travel plan to help facilitate sustainable access to schools.

6.13   Within Cheshire East obesity levels in adults are not significantly higher than the England average. However, childhood obesity is steady increasing and this will lead to more cases of early onset diabetes type 2 and other associated health problems[e].

Stakeholder Opinion

6.14   In exploring the transport challenges relating to **supporting children & young people**; stakeholders identified road safety for young adults as a key cross-cutting issue. There was support for initiatives focused on young adults road safety education and training as part of the SCS aspiration to improve health.

6.15   Other challenges raised by stakeholders included encouraging more active forms of travel for the 'school run' and minimising car use, as well as improving access to employment, education and training for young people. Overall, it was considered that the needs of children and young people would need to be considered specifically (such as direct work with schools to support active travel) and also within other policy areas (such as public transport, walking and cycling). This understanding contributed to stakeholder prioritisation of SCS theme to **create a sustainable future**.

6 Support our Children & Young People

LTP Objectives

RELEVANT OBJECTIVES

Objective 2 (Accessibility): Improve access to key services (employment, education, health, shopping and leisure) and reduce the need to travel.

Objective 5 (Health): Support active and healthy lifestyles.

Objective 7 (Safety): Improve road safety for all users and increase personal and community safety.

Transport Challenges & Policy Solutions

Travel to Education

6.16   Although over the last few years there has been a small decrease in the proportion of pupils travelling to school by car, there are trends in education delivery that would suggest that future demand for longer-distance travel to education may increase during the next 15 years.

6.17   The factors influencing this trend include school reorganisation driven by falling pupil numbers, changes in the 14-19 education system introducing choice and personalisation, and increasing numbers of tertiary education students travelling from home rather than living on-campus.

6.18   Transport has a key role to play in the 'choice agenda', which allows children to travel to their preferred school or college. Difficulties with transport can prevent young people from participating in learning, or restrict the choice of learning that they attend.

6.19   In order to respond positively to changes in education delivery, the Council will work with education providers and bus operators to identify where transport barriers may restrict access to education and, in conjunction with partners, consider ways in which these could be overcome. In future there may be a need for more complex demand responsive arrangements.

6.20   Local surveys show that most children and parents would like travel to school to be by sustainable modes of transport, but they encounter difficulty in doing so for a number of reasons. For example, some parents drop their children off on their way to work, whilst others find that the distance is too far to walk. In addition, there are parents who use their car because they feel the roads are unsafe for walking and cycling – there are still a few children who are driven to school when they only live 'around the corner'.

6 Support our Children & Young People

6.21 Perceived cost can also be a barrier to using local and school bus services (where students are not eligible for support), and anti-social behaviour on public transport can also be a deterrent. The lack of lockers, safe cycle routes and cycle parking facilities are the main factors in preventing secondary school students from cycling to school.

6.22 These issues present significant challenges to encouraging sustainable modes of transport for the journey to school. Overcoming these barriers would support the delivery of wider transport policy objectives, including reducing congestion, reducing carbon emissions and improving road safety at the school gate.

Home to School Transport

6.23 Local authorities have a statutory obligation to provide transport for children of compulsory school age who either live over the statutory walking distance (over 2 miles for children under the age of 8 years, or aged 8-16 and from a low-income family (attending one of the three nearest schools), and over 3 miles for children aged 8-11 years), or have to walk along a hazardous route and are attending their nearest suitable school. Children eligible for assistance may choose to travel by bike instead of using the bus and in these cases a cycle allowance is paid.

6.24 The Council currently provide a number of discretionary enhancements to the statutory minimum. For example, provision of transport to attend a school on the grounds of religion or belief, transporting children placed in the care of foster families and transport of children aged between 8 and 11 who live within 2-3 miles of the nearest suitable school.

6.25 The Council also has a duty to provide special educational needs (SEN) transport for children who exhibit needs that are above those of a typical child. Children with complex special needs may qualify for transport provision either on grounds of distance, or on the basis of their needs.

6.26 As part of the Passenger Transport Strategy, a review will be undertaken of home to school transport policy. This will include a cost benefit analysis of discretionary enhancements to ensure that policies are meeting priority needs cost effectively. In addition, travel to education policy must react to changes in the delivery of education.

6.27 Where children do not qualify for assisted transport, children living in areas with limited or no public services can purchase spare seat places on education contracts where capacity exists and these are currently allocated on a first come first served basis. There is an opportunity to review the marketing policy / pricing of this initiative with a view to providing additional capacity in future.

6.28 There are also opportunities to support groups of parents who wish to procure their own transport arrangements for taking their children to school – this could include taxi sharing or minibus contracts. The Council could provide advice and develop a set of quality standards for such initiatives.

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6.29 In addition to the delivery of statutory minimum service levels, a range of initiatives have been identified to support and help deliver the policy aspiration for travel to education.

POLICY

Policy Y1 Travel to Education: The Council will work with schools and colleges to enable sustainable travel to education, including appropriate provision for those eligible for free or assisted transport.

Y1 Policy Initiatives

6.30 **Review home to school transport policy:** Review the discretionary elements of the eligibility criteria, the policy and pricing structure for selling spare seats and initiatives to address anti-social behaviour and bullying on school buses, as well as driver training.

6.31 **Safer routes to school:** Encourage schools to identify potential safety improvements on key routes to schools through travel plans and address issues identified, and develop 'invest to save' initiatives where some capital investment can remedy the unsafe sections of a "hazardous route" (thereby reducing eligibility of home to school transport).

6.32 **Encourage sustainable travel:** Explore a range of initiatives to promote and encourage increased levels of walking and cycling. For example, school travel plans, walking schemes (Walking Buses) and cycling schemes.

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6.33   **Respond positively to changes in education delivery:** Work with partners to constantly review the Council's response to emerging issues in the field of travel to education (e.g. 14-19 diploma) to meet the transport needs of children and young people.

6.34   **Sharing arrangements:** Work with schools and parents to encourage sharing arrangements for travel to education. For example, car share, park and stride, taxi sharing and minibus contracts.

Y1 Related Initiatives	Policy
Supported services	S4 Public Transport (Service Levels & Reliability)
Vulnerable road users	H8 Road Safety (Engineering)
Key service location	C2 Accessibility of Services

CASE STUDY

School Minibus

Pott Shrigley Primary is situated in a rural location which means that the majority of children had always been driven to school. Their School Travel Plan identified that an increase in the number of pupils attending the school had also led to an increase in traffic and parking problems on the roads around the school. This had triggered some minor disputes with neighbours who found their driveways blocked by parent or staff cars.

In 2007, the school put in a bid to loan one of the School Travel Team's minibuses which had been funded through the Local Transport Plan.

The successful bid has meant that the school can use the minibus on the school run as well as for school trips, sporting and educational outings. The minibus is also used by local community groups including the Scouts, Brownies and church groups.

On the school run, the minibus is driven by a teaching assistant with up to 12 children regularly using the minibus to get to and from school rather than travelling by car.

Over the last two years the number of children being driven to school by car has dropped from 96% to 68%.

The School view the minibus as a much valued resource and now with the federation with Bollington St John's Primary, the minibus will be extremely useful transporting pupils between the two sites.

6 Support our Children & Young People

CASE STUDY

Goostrey Primary School

Goostrey Primary School is a semi rural school with a wide catchment area. At the start of the travel plan process the school were sceptical about how they could impact on the travel mode of their pupils and whether they would be able to find the time to put in the necessary work. However, as the plan progressed they found that the work not only complimented their existing curriculum but that it made a real difference. The school has a long list of initiatives of which just a few are listed below:

• Walking activities in classes linked to activity afternoon

• Walking bus.

• Road safety initiatives

• Local pubs allowing parking for parents cars

• Liaison with Parish Council to match fund improvements to a hand rail on steps.

• Staff monitoring of cars parked inconsiderately by parents and leafleting

• Information on healthy ways to school for new starters. And

• Praise and rewards for pupils who participate in travel to school schemes

The below figures show the continuing impact the school have had on reducing the number of children travelling to school by car over the past 4 years.

Mode Of Travel	Walk	Cycle	Car	Car Share	Taxi
2007	16%	1%	80%	2%	1%
2008	31%	4%	61%	3%	1%
2009	33%	6%	58%	3%	1%
2010	37%	10%	49%	3%	1%

6 Support our Children & Young People

Cross-Cutting Challenges for Children & Young People

6.35   The SCS identified that local people are concerned about the lack of facilities available for young people. The 2008 Community Survey found that 'activities for teenagers' was the second highest priority for improvement and at the Local Area Partnership (LAP) level it was the top priority in both Congleton and Macclesfield.

6.36   In addition, a North West accessibility study[f] identified that young people in rural areas experienced a heavy reliance on travel by private vehicle. Without access to a vehicle, young people felt they were isolated from high street shops, leisure and entertainment facilities. The challenge is therefore to improve access to a wide range of interesting, challenging and engaging activities outside of school (e.g. sports and leisure activities, cinema and after-school clubs).

6.37   In 2009, 5.8% of young people aged 16-18 were not in employment, education or training (NEET). Many of these people are concentrated in the urban areas of deprivation in the borough, particularly in Crewe. Initiatives to improve access to schools, colleges and employment opportunities are particularly relevant to this group. This may include innovative transport solutions where lack of transport is a barrier to employment (e.g. Crewe Flexi Rider).

6.38   The cost of transport has been identified as an issue for children and young people. Exploring ways of providing incentives for young people to use public transport to encourage them to make it a life-time habit will be another challenge reliant on close cooperation with commercial operators.

POLICY

Policy Y2 Targeted Action for Children and Young People: Work with stakeholders to ensure that transport provision and facilities meet the needs of children and young people.

Y2 Policy Initiatives

6.39   **Fare and ticketing incentives:** Promote the services which offer fare reductions for young people. Explore ways of providing incentives for young people to use public transport.

6.40   **Transport linkages from areas of deprivation:** Identify where transport is a barrier to employment, education and training, particularly for young people aged 16-18, and explore innovative solutions in conjunction with partners.

Y2 Related Initiatives	Policy
Multi-media information	S5 Public Transport (Information & Marketing)

6 Support our Children & Young People

Y2 Related Initiatives	Policy
Cycling facilities	S8 Cycling
Target high risk groups	H1 Targeted Health Action
All initiatives within H2 Promotion of Active Travel and Healthy Activities	H2 Promotion of Active Travel & Healthy Activities
Key service locations	C2: Accessibility of Services
Access to employment, skills and education	C2: Accessibility of Services

Children, Young People & Road Safety

6.41   Over the last decade there has been a slight upward trend in the number of children aged 0-15 killed or seriously injured (KSI) within Cheshire East, which is inconsistent with the reductions achieved nationally.

6.42   51% of child KSIs are pedestrians. They account for almost one-third (31%) of all pedestrian KSIs in Cheshire East. 95% of these were injured on a road with a 30mph limit in place[g].

6 Support our Children & Young People

6.43   Children account for almost one-quarter (22%) of all pedal cyclist casualties. Almost all of these (92%) were males with just over two-thirds (69%) between the ages of 12 and 16 years of age[h].

6.44   Failing to look properly and being careless, reckless or in a hurry were the highest contributory factors in all child pedestrian and pedal cyclist KSIs. These are preventable through education and training.

6.45   Young adults (16-25) account for 29% of all KSIs on Cheshire Safer Roads Partnership (CSRP) roads. Of that, 61% are car occupants and 17% are riding powered two wheelers under 125cc. A further 7% are riders of powered-two wheelers over 125cc[i].

6.46   The biggest contributory factors involving young adult KSIs are travelling too fast for the condition, careless / reckless / in a hurry, impaired by alcohol, exceeding the speed limit and aggressive driving[j]. Each of these factors result in increased severity of injury but are preventable through education and enforcement[k].

6.47   A combination of engineering, enforcement and education campaigns targeting children and young people identified as at-risk of death or injury from road traffic incidents can be effective in reducing the overall number of KSI incidents.

6.48   The challenges/problems associated with children, young people and road safety will be addressed in the road safety sections of **Chapter 6: Health**. As such, there is no specific policy for children and young people relating to road safety in this chapter, however, the most relevant initiatives are set out in the table below:

Related initiative	Policy
Target high risk groups	H4 Road Safety (Education):
Cyclist training	H5 Road Safety (Enforcement)

6 Support our Children & Young People

End Notes

a.   Cheshire East Children and Young Peoples Trust Interim Plan 2010/11
b.   Based on Profile of vulnerable young people living in Cheshire Aug 2007 DAAT
c.   Department of Education, Tellus4, Cheshire East survey results, 2009.
d.   Cheshire East Children & Young People's Interim Plan (2010/11)
e.   Central and Eastern Cheshire NHS Primary Care Trust & Cheshire East Council, Joint Strategic Needs Assessment – First Look Report, 2008.
f.   Delivering a Sustainable Transport System (DaSTS) North West Regional Study 5: Accessibility & Regeneration
g.   Cheshire Safer Roads Partnership, June 2010, Cheshire East: Road Traffic Collision Casualties 2005-2009 Profile Report.
h.   Ibid
i.   Cheshire Safer Roads Partnership, May 2010, Young Adult (16-25y) Road User Problem Profile
j.   Ibid
k.   Ibid

7 Prepare for an Increasingly Older Population

Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) Priorities

7.1   Over the next 15 years the number of people aged over 65 will increase dramatically. The SCS identifies two priorities for action in preparing for an increasingly older population in Cheshire East. These are:

- Help people stay fit and active for longer
- Improve care and support for those who need it

7.2   An Ageing Strategy for Cheshire East will be published in April 2011 linked to the priorities for action within the SCS. The strategy will seek to maximise the opportunities for older people to stay fit for longer, remain within their own home and communities, as well as the opportunity to participate in hobbies, volunteering, employment and learning.

7.3   Transport provides an essential link to friends and family, as well as access to key services – a vital lifeline to maintaining independence. Lack of mobility can prevent older people from participating in social activities and lead to low morale, depression and loneliness[a]. It is acknowledged that older people represent an enormous resource in terms of talent, experience and knowledge.

Evidence Overview

7.4   Cheshire East has an older age profile than the UK as a whole. Approximately 18.9% (68,400) of the population is over 65 compared to only 15.2% of UK residents. The percentage of people aged 85 and over is 2.6% (9,300) compared to 2.1% nationally.

7.5   In addition, Cheshire East has the fastest growing older population in the North West. By 2016, the population aged 65+ will increase by 29% and the population aged 85+ by 41.5%. The 2008 Community Survey identified that planning for the ageing population was one the top priorities for a good quality of life.

7.6   There are variations across the borough in the geographic distribution of the age of the population. For example, over 65's make up approximately 14.3% of the population of Middlewich, whilst in Chelford 26.2% fall into the same age bracket. There are also variations in pensioner households living alone, ranging from almost 30% in the towns of Crewe and Macclesfield, to just over 10% in Middlewich.

7.7   The dominant factor affecting older peoples transport use is health status, rather than age. The incidence of disability increases with age[b], as do general restrictions in mobility. Although increasing numbers of older people continue to drive for longer, the rising number of older people who prefer not to drive is likely to mean an increase in demand for accessible public transport to various destinations.

7 Prepare for an Increasingly Older Population

7.8 Over the next 15 years more attention will need to be paid to removing physical barriers to accessing public transport (e.g. steps on older buses and at rail stations) and ensuring that town centres footways are well maintained and safe for walking. These issues are discussed in detail in **Chapter 2: Sustainability**.

7.9 The increasingly older population will result in greater demand for healthcare and a key challenge for transport, in conjunction with service providers, will be making healthcare accessible. Indeed, another area where transport will play an increasingly important role will be on encouraging more physically active travel for health and fitness – this is examined in more detail in **Chapter 4: Health**.

Stakeholder Opinion

7.10 Stakeholder discussions of the transport issues associated with **preparing for an increasingly older population** were supportive of innovative ways of improving access to services and affordability of transport. The suggestions made were often cross-cutting to the other themes (e.g. public transport improvements, footway condition, promoting active lifestyles, etc.) and included the retention and possible expansion of the current discretionary elements of the concessionary travel scheme.

7.11 Enabling independent living and encouraging an active lifestyle were common themes and it was recognised that a collaborative approach with healthcare providers would be needed to deliver services more locally. Aspects of the **nurture strong communities** theme were also reflected in the discussions; with an aspiration to support community groups to provide services/transport for older residents expressed.

7.12 The targeted initiatives addressing the needs of the aging population were not specifically prioritised within the final workshop; however, the cross-cutting policy areas of community, accessibility of services and access for all were given prominence within the **nurture strong communities** theme and stakeholders felt that the needs of older people would be supported in these areas.

LTP Objectives

RELEVANT OBJECTIVES

Objective 2 (Accessibility): Improve access to key services (employment, education, health, shopping and leisure) and reduce the need to travel.

Objective 5 (Health): Support active and healthy lifestyles.

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Transport Challenges & Policy Solutions

7.13 Many of the transport challenges for older people are cross-cutting and relate to the policies and initiatives within other chapters of the LTP, particularly **Chapter 2: Sustainability** and **Chapter 5: Communities.**

7.14 However, the sections below outline the particular issues for older people concerning the availability of transport, physical accessibility and safety, affordability of transport and accessibility of services.

POLICY

Policy O1 Targeted Action for Older People: The Council will work with stakeholders to ensure that transport provision and facilities meet the needs of older people.

Availability of Transport

7.15 For many older people, driving or travelling as a passenger, can be a lifeline to maintaining their independence and preventing isolation. For the increasing proportion of older drivers, a number of measures could be implemented to assist older people. For example, driver assessment and training initiatives, as well as highly reflective road studs and road markings which can help with visibility, particularly in wet conditions.

7.16 However, despite the number of older driving licence holders, declining driving ability and financial constraints mean that many motorists will have to adjust their driving practices and ultimately could have to give up their car.

7.17 A high proportion of older people are dependent on public transport. The local bus network consists of fixed route services, complimented by flexible community transport solutions of both a general and specialised nature. Community transport is particularly valued by those unable to use conventional buses due to disability or mobility issues.

7.18 National research has shown that awareness of transport schemes for older people (e.g. Dial-a-Ride and shopmobility) can be low. This can mean that those with the greatest need fail to benefit from services that have been specially implemented to help them[c].

O1 Policy Initiative (Availability)

7.19 **Travel options awareness:** Use targeted promotion and marketing to ensure that people aged 65+ are aware of, and know how to use, pre-booked transport options such as Dial-a-Ride. Promotional activities

7 Prepare for an Increasingly Older Population

will be linked to initiatives that develop capacity of pre-booked services. Examine ways of delivering targeted training in computer skills to our older population to enable easy access to on-line travel information.

7.20   **Older driver assessment and training initiatives:** Work with third party providers to promote and develop an older driver assessment and improvement scheme.

O1 Related Initiatives	Policy
Provision of high quality parking	B6 Parking
Shopmobility	C3 Access for all
Community-led initiatives	C1 Community
Supported services	S4 Public transport (Service Levels & Reliability)
Social care transport options	C3 Access for all

Physical Accessibility & Safety

7.21   Cheshire East's relatively fit and active population is something to celebrate, maintain and seek opportunities to improve. Encouraging older people to continue walking and cycling will contribute to a healthy older age and helping people to stay fit and active for longer.

7.22   However, older people often experience barriers to mobility and physical difficulties associated with walking and accessing public transport. Common concerns include poor condition of footways, inadequate crossing facilities, boarding/ alighting buses and trains, and steps at railway stations[d] (also see **Chapter 5: Communities**).

7.23   Research commissioned by Age Concern and Help the Aged shows that over 800 older people per day fall whilst travelling on a bus and nearly two million are concerned about falling due to abrupt stop/starting[e]. Other issues include moving off before passengers are seated, insufficient hand rails, overcrowding and erratic driving practices can increase the risk – and the perception of risk – of an accident. Such concerns can be addressed with improved driver training.

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7.24 "Building Society for all Ages" (2009) proposes a range of national initiatives to improve transport for the older population. These include, for example, requirements that by 2020 all rail vehicles will have to meet accessibility standards and that all buses and coaches

Accessible bus

used on local scheduled services must meet accessibility targets by 2017. 62% of buses have already been made accessible.

7.25 Older people can experience health issues that may weaken their ability to walk. Poorer vision and hearing, mobility difficulties, walking more slowly, problems with balance, reduced ability to make head and neck movements (affecting looking), reaction times and a reduced ability to change speed or direction quickly to avoid hazards.

7.26 Each year, 35% of over 65's experience one or more falls. About 45% of people over 80 who live in the community fall each year. Between 10-25% of such fallers will sustain a serious injury[f].

7.27 Pedestrians between the ages of 76 to 85 are at increased risk of death or injury per 1000 head of population than child pedestrians. However, the number of child pedestrian KSIs are greater[g]. It is known with some certainty that the number of people aged over 65 will increase dramatically over the next 15 years, so there is a risk that the number of older pedestrians being killed or seriously injured will increase.

O1 Policy Initiative (Accessibility)

7.28 **Targeted access improvements:** Improve the physical infrastructure most heavily used by our older population, such as provision of dropped kerbs, pedestrian crossing points and accessible bus stops. The focus will be on areas likely to make the greatest impact to the lives of older people, for example routes approaching community centres, care homes and healthcare centres. Furthermore, areas of the borough where the greatest mobility and disability problems exist will be targeted.

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O1 Related Initiatives	Policy
Bus driver training	S4 Public transport (Service Levels & Reliability)
Target high risk groups	H1 Targeted Health Action
Target high risk groups	H6 Road Safety (Education)
Accessibility audits	C3 Access for all
Accessible vehicles	C3 Access for all

Affordability

7.29 In Cheshire East, around 4 million bus trips per year are undertaken by older people using concessionary fare discounts. Concessionary travel journeys now equate to 37% of all bus journeys undertaken in Cheshire East.

7.30 The English National Concessionary Travel Scheme (ENCTS) enables free bus travel after 9.30am to all eligible older people and disabled people. The concession provides greater freedom and independence to some of the most vulnerable people in our society, representing a major step forward in tackling social exclusion.

7.31 Cheshire East currently operate a number of discretionary enhancements to the scheme, such as half fare travel before 9.30am and the ability to use the pass on Dial-a-Ride services. The enhancements extend the advantages of the scheme, particularly for those who live in areas with limited bus services.

7.32 However, carers of older people currently pay full price which may result in problems of affordability – a further discretionary enhancement could include companion bus passes for carers at a reduced rate. In addition, taxi vouchers could be provided to residents who live where there are no fixed route bus services.

7.33 As part of the concessionary travel scheme, Cheshire East currently offers both the Senior Railcard and Disabled Persons Railcard to eligible residents at a discounted price through the power of bulk buying directly from National Rail.

7.34 The Senior Railcard is available to anyone over 60 whilst the Disabled Persons Railcard is available to people who meet the National Rail Disabled Criteria. This card also entitles a companion to travel at the same discounted price.

Y0 Related Initiatives	Policy
Monitor & review the fare structure	S4 Public transport (Fares & Ticketing)
Concessionary bus travel	C3 Access for all

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Y0 Related Initiatives	Policy
Concessionary rail cards	C3 Access for all

Accessibility of Services

7.35 The ease of access to key services (e.g. healthcare, food shops, employment and education) is an important factor influencing the quality of life of older people, although it should be noted that most accessibility issues are addressed in **Chapter 5: Communities**.

7.36 The 2008 accessibility survey found that hospitals were the most difficult key service to access in Cheshire East, particularly for older people. There are large variations across the borough with regard to life expectancy factors, which will be a key consideration in service planning. The length of time people live with a limiting long term illness also varies considerably across the borough.

7.37 The Council will seek to influence any changes in the delivery of healthcare in the future, by working with service providers to consider the location, design and delivery of healthcare services. Future reforms may also impact on commissioning of health-related transport, so the Council will need to influence and respond to changing circumstances.

7.38 Many older people wish to maintain their independence when, for whatever reason, they feel unable to continue living in their own home. Extra Care Housing provides the opportunity to deliver this, with residents able to live independently with the backup of help and assistance if they require it. It is important that Extra Care Housing is located in areas with good access to services by walking, cycling and public transport.

O1 Policy Initiative

7.39 **Extra care housing:** Work with registered social landlords to guide and direct future developments of extra care housing provision in locations that are accessible to key services, families and friends by public transport, walking and cycling.

Y0 Related Initiatives	Policy
Local service delivery	C1 Community
Key service location	C2 Accessibility of services
Multi-use premises	C2 Accessibility of services

7 Prepare for an Increasingly Older Population

End Notes

a. Older People: Their transport needs and requirements – Main report (Department for Transport)
b. Labour Force Survey, June 2005
c. Older People: Their transport needs and requirements – Main report (Department for Transport)
d. Older People: Their transport needs and requirements – Main report (Department for Transport)
e. Bus falls – Policy Update, Age Concern and Help the Aged, July 2009, Edition 114
f. Falls and fractures, developing a local joint strategic needs assessment, Department of Health
g. Cheshire Safer Roads Partnership, June 2010, Cheshire East: Road Traffic Collision Casualties 2005-2009 Profile Report

8 Unlock the Potential of Our Towns

8 Unlock the Potential of Our Towns

Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) Priorities

8.1   The SCS identifies three priories for action to unlock the potential of towns within Cheshire East:

- Regenerate Crewe;
- Revitalise Macclesfield; and
- Deliver sustainable growth for our towns.

8.2   Transport is fundamental to the success of towns – it supports the exchange of goods and services, it facilitates the participation in leisure, social and cultural activities, and it enables access to employment and education. Transport networks can therefore either help or hinder efforts to regenerate, revitalise or grow our towns. While the availability and quality of different modes of travel serving town will help determine whether growth can be sustainable for future generations.

8.3   A heavily congested road network that causes delays accessing town centres will be a deterrent to both business investment and visitor appeal – particularly where no effective alternative means of access exists by rail, bus, cycling or walking. It is clear too that many town centre highway networks do not have the capacity to efficiently deal with current vehicle numbers during peak hours. A "tool kit" of highway network management techniques can be employed depending on the circumstances of congestion – these are outlined in **Chapter 3: Business** and they range from relatively inexpensive signal timing improvements and parking enforcement, through to enormously expensive town centre bypass schemes. This tool-kit can be employed alongside initiatives to encourage mode-shift – i.e. enabling more people to travel by train, bus, cycling and walking to reduce congestion.

8.4   Encouraging and enabling non-car access to town centres will not only help tackle congestion, but will also support access by the full spectrum of the community – from people with disabilities or mobility problems, young and older people who are unable or unwilling to drive, through to low income groups who are unable to afford car travel. Initiatives supporting non-car access to towns are set out in **Chapter 2: Sustainability**.

8.5   Finally, transport is also an issue to consider in the planning of towns in terms of accessible land use decisions. This seeks to plan the future development in towns in a way that will minimise unnecessary car use, by providing appropriate facilities and residential areas in close proximity or in locations connected by established public transport links. Issues of accessibility are included in both **Chapter 5: Communities** and **Chapter 2: Sustainability**.

8.6   One of the defining characteristics of Cheshire East is the distribution of settlements – with Crewe and Macclesfield being the largest developed areas in the borough and a series of vibrant market towns and smaller towns that offer a range of services. In addition, there are some major employment sites that are located outside these towns (e.g. Manchester Airport, Alderley Park and Pyms Lane) which provide an important employment function within the borough. This pattern of land use leads to a complex level of inter-dependency unlike many other local authority areas, which typically have one major urban area that serves as a focus for all activity (e.g. Warrington).

8.7   For transport to play its role in delivering sustainable growth in our towns, it is important to recognise the interrelationships which exist between Cheshire East's principal towns, key service centres and the surrounding small towns, villages and rural communities. Transport plays an important role in unlocking the potential of towns and enabling future development in these locations.

Stakeholder Opinion

8.8   The stakeholder engagement process highlighted the diverse nature of Cheshire East. Stakeholders made it clear that a unique approach to the transport issues in each town would be required to enable responsive delivery of the SCS at a local level.

8.9   In addition to discussion on the role of transport in towns to **create the conditions for business growth**, **create a sustainable future**, **nurture strong communities** and **improve health**, a range of specific issues were identified at key locations. These issues ranged from the need for improved traffic management through to requirements for drop-kerbs, dependent on local circumstances.

8.10   This feedback from stakeholders resulted in the Transport Frameworks for Towns approach set out within the **Policy T1: Towns**.

8 Unlock the Potential of Our Towns

LTP Objectives

RELEVANT OBJECTIVES

Objective 1 (Congestion): Minimise congestion in our urban areas and on important routes and improve the overall efficiency of the highway network.

Objective 2 (Accessibility): Improve accessibility to key services (employment, education, health, shopping and leisure) and reduce the need to travel.

Objective 3 (Maintenance): Improve maintenance of the highway and transport network.

Objective 4 (Community): Support community involvement and decision-making.

Objective 5 (Health): Support active and healthy lifestyles.

Objective 6 (Environment): Protect and enhance the local and global environment.

Objective 7 (Safety): Improve road safety for all users and increase personal and community safety.

Transport Challenges & Policy Solutions

8.11   Each of the towns in Cheshire East will need a tailored approach to address local concerns. For example, in some towns the overriding problem will be traffic congestion, while in others the greatest priority might be the need to improve pedestrian links. As such, each of the policies set out within this LTP will need to be appropriately implemented at local level in accordance with locally agreed priorities.

8.12   Communities and stakeholders often have strong views on the types of transportation intervention that would be most effective in their locality to solve local issues. This local knowledge is important to capture alongside the strategic concerns of the LTP, and in certain locations a large amount of consultation has already taken place (e.g. Crewe Vision and Macclesfield Town Centre Regeneration). The challenge is to deliver on local priorities in a way that complements and helps deliver the objectives for the borough as a whole.

8.13   When considering the future of towns, the LDF process will identify suitable housing and employment land for development, which will have local and strategic implications on the demand for transport infrastructure and services. As such, a mechanism will be needed that is capable of both considering existing problems locally and the potential new (or exacerbated) transport issues arising from new development – e.g. increased congestion at junctions, new rights of way required, or improved pedestrian environments.

8 Unlock the Potential of Our Towns

8.14 Many small towns and rural communities have strong connections to the nearest significant town as the main location to access vital services including schools, shopping, healthcare and employment services. As such, the policies implemented as priorities in each of the towns will also need to relate to the challenges and problems faced by nearby small towns and rural communities.

8.15 The LTP needs to support the SCS priorities to regeneration Crewe, revitalise Macclesfield and deliver sustainable growth in towns. The approach taken to **Policy T1: Towns** is therefore driven by the diverse individual characteristics of Cheshire East towns and the recognition that in order to deliver on the LTP objectives different approaches will be required in different communities.

POLICY

Policy T1 Towns: Work with stakeholders and the community to develop a local approach to transport issues that helps address local priorities and deliver the strategic objectives of the SCS and LTP.

T1 Policy Initiative

8.16 **Transport Frameworks for Towns:** In order to ascertain local priorities and undertake locally specific discussion on transport issues, a series of Transport Frameworks will be prepared for each of the principal towns and key service centres (to be defined by the LDF).

8.17 The aim of each document will be to provide an opportunity for people help define the transport priorities at a local level and set out these priorities in a structure consistent with the LTP. The document will also reflect any proposed land use changes arising from the LDF process. Locally defined priorities will then be used to guide implementation at a local level and seek to ensure delivery of the wider LTP objectives at a borough-wide level.

8.18 Each document will consist of a prioritised list of LTP policies accompanied by an outline of how the LTP policy will be implemented locally. These documents will be "owned" by the local community and will be used to develop local initiatives in the second implementation plan (to be prepared by 2014). [*Please*

8 Unlock the Potential of Our Towns

note: the first implementation plan is being prepared to accompany the LTP and will set out implementation activities for the forthcoming three-year spending period, in line with LTP objectives and identified ward priorities].

8.19 The aim will be to prepare all transport frameworks during years 1-3 of the LTP to help identify and prioritise initiatives within the second implementation plan. This will enable the framework documents to take account of proposed development implications and local community aspirations.

8.20 A large amount of development work has already been undertaken in Crewe and a draft Framework for Crewe is attached in **Appendix A** to illustrate the approach that will be rolled-out across the borough in years 1-3 of the LTP.

Appendix A: Draft Transport Framework for Crewe

Appendix A: Draft Transport Framework for Crewe

Introduction

.1 Crewe is one of the largest and most economically important places in Cheshire East. The town is home to one-third of Cheshire East's residents, around 5,000 businesses, and provides employment for some 60,000 people.

.2 Crewe is well positioned with excellent strategic transport links provided by its close proximity to the M6 and density of train services serving Crewe station.

.3 Crewe's "Strategic Framework for Economic Growth 2010-2030" describes the challenges for economic development and the role that transport needs to take to support the long-term prospects of Crewe's economy, businesses and community.

.4 The strategic aim relating to accessibility in Crewe seeks to:

- Facilitate more sustainable transport movements within and around Crewe.
- Fully leverage Crewe's strategic transport gateway status.
- Establish a competitive and first rate Next Generation Broadband network across Crewe.
- Develop stronger economic links to neighbouring city-regions.

.5 In terms of Crewe's physical development, liveability and local transport objectives, the strategic framework outlines aspirations to:

- Support significant population growth and enhancement of the area's housing offer through fully integrated urban extensions that are well served by public transport and mainstream service provision.
- Connect areas of opportunity with areas of need by developing effective local public transport networks.

Transport Challenges for Crewe

.1 A number of underlying themes arise through the "vision" including tackling congestion, enhancing Crewe's role as a 'Gateway to the Northwest' , improving public transport and providing quality, sustainable transport infrastructure.

.2 There is a heavy reliance on access by private vehicle in Cheshire East. However, in the 2001 Census, the Crewe LAP area demonstrated the lowest levels of car use for commuter travel and the highest levels of travel by bus, motorcycle and bicycle. The number of people who travel to work on foot was also high compared to most LAP areas. These patterns would suggest that there is great potential in Crewe to increase the uptake of public transport and create substantial benefits from improvements in sustainable transport infrastructure provision.

Appendix A: Draft Transport Framework for Crewe

.3   Road and pavement repairs were identified as the issue most in need of improvement (and amongst the highest in terms of making Crewe a good place to live) for residents in Crewe LAP, while traffic congestion was ranked as the 4th most important priority for improvement [a]. Congestion and community severance in Crewe are compounded by the un-bridged railway lines which dissect the town, while poor quality footpaths and road surfacing are a problem in key locations.

.4   The map of average delay in Crewe (2009 data) illustrates the points on the highway network where the volume of traffic limits both the movement of cars and buses, and affects the reliability of public transport services.

.5   The A534 and A532 are of particular concern. Traffic on the A534 causes significant delay on Nantwich Road and around Crewe Railway Station (causing problems for bus-rail interchange reliability). The A532 runs close to Crewe town centre and experiences heavy traffic flow at peak times, limiting traffic circulation in the town centre.

.6   There are also two Air Quality Management Areas in Crewe (Nantwich Road and Earl Street) that are directly linked to emissions from vehicles travelling along these roads. Policies to minimise congestion and reduce traffic levels along these routes will be important for improving air quality.

.7   Life expectancy and the age at which people experience a difficulty or limiting long-term illness is lower in Crewe than all other LAP areas [b]. This is linked to higher rates of deprivation and a higher percentage of residents who select an unhealthy lifestyle. The creation of an environment that encourages active travel (such as cycling and walking) has the potential to improve health and wellbeing. Localised areas of poor health also occur in Haslington within the Crewe LAP area.

.8   The crime rate in Crewe and Haslington is also marginally higher than elsewhere in Cheshire East (though still comparatively low); however, there is no evidence that this crime rate is particularly related to transport.

.9   Crewe benefits from a prime location on the West Coast Main Line and the M6 Motorway and serves as a 'Gateway' for people travelling both north and south. However, the quality of the existing public transport gateways, including the railway station and town centre bus station, create a poor first impression for visitors and do little to encourage people to use sustainable transport modes.

.10   Additionally, access to the M6 J16 (via the A500 Barthomley link) can be hampered by congestion and poor journey time reliability.

.11   A number of sites in and around Crewe have planning permission or have been identified as having strong development potential in the Councils Economic Development Strategy. Such sites, when developed, are likely to generate a significant amount of additional traffic on the highway network. This could, if not properly managed, exacerbate congestion problems on the highway network in and around Crewe. The Crewe Strategic Framework report also identifies

Appendix A: Draft Transport Framework for Crewe

poor public transport links exist between job growth areas in the University Quadrant, Crewe Business Park, Crewe Industrial Park and the West End (where deprived areas are located), presenting a transport barrier to employment.

.12 The implications of new development proposals on the public transport and highway networks will be examined in conjunction with the Local Development Framework and will be incorporated into the LTP Implementation Plan and LDF Local Infrastructure Plan. i.e.:

.13 Basford is one of the North West's Strategic Regional Sites, and its size and location presents a significant strategic opportunity as the gateway to the North West.   Crewe's "Strategic Framework for Economic Growth 2010□2030" identifies the potential to create high value, high technology employment uses for the site. Measures to unlock this potential will include implementing the Crewe Green Link Road Scheme and capacity improvements to Crewe Green Roundabout and the A500 Barthomley link road.

.14 Any other sites…

Objective Statement for Crewe

RELEVANT OBJECTIVES

Objective Statement for Crewe: The Council will support agreed aspirations for economic growth and development in Crewe by seeking to strengthen national connectivity, reduce congestion and improve sustainable access to employment.

Policy Interpretation Table - Sustainability

SCS Theme	LTP Policy	Policy focus in Crewe	Delivery
Sustainability	**Policy S1 Spatial Planning**: Seek to minimises the future need to travel through a strategy in the Local Development Framework that focuses most new developments in larger settlements where there is a good range of housing, jobs, shops and services already	Implementation of planning policy in Crewe will be centred on fully understanding the transport implications of the Local Development Framework, influencing final strategic site selection around Crewe. Regard will also be taken of improving the links to the town centre by foot / bicycle from the railway station, along with the quality of streetscape.	Short-term

Appendix A: Draft Transport Framework for Crewe

SCS Theme	LTP Policy	Policy focus in Crewe	Delivery
	accessible by public transport, cycling and walking.		
Sustainability	**Sustainability Policy S3 Public Transport (Integration & Facilities)**: Work with passenger transport providers (bus, rail and community transport) to improve public transport integration and facilities.	Public transport policy implementation will focus on partnership arrangements to secure significant transformational improvements to the quality of Crewe Railway Station and forecourt bus/taxi interchange.\n\nAdditional parking will be investigated at the railway station and Crewe Bus Interchange.\n\nNew funding and partnership opportunities will be investigated to encourage private sector investment in public transport facilities, particularly where these will support economic regeneration, inward investment and carbon reduction targets.\n\nAction will also be taken to support further rail electrification to improve services and reduce carbon emissions. Medium linked with the West Coast re-franchising timescale.	Medium linked with the West Coast re-franchising timescale.
Sustainability	**Policy S4 *Public Transport (Service Levels & Reliability)*:** Work with passenger transport operators (bus, rail, community transport & taxis) to explore	Bus reliability issues in Crewe are a matter of concern and the implementation of this policy will focus on working with operators to improve timetable reliability. Bus service levels to the railway, town centre, MMU and	Short-medium term

Appendix A: Draft Transport Framework for Crewe

SCS Theme	LTP Policy	Policy focus in Crewe	Delivery
	improvements to service levels and reliability.	business parks will also be reviewed alongside the potential for providing higher frequency evening services.	
Sustainability	**Policy S4 *Public Transport (Service Levels & Reliability)*:** Work with passenger transport operators (bus, rail, community transport & taxis) to explore improvements to service levels and reliability.	Aspirations for re-opening the Middlewich rail line linking Crewe, Sandbach, Middlewich, Northwich and Knutsford will remain. A review of the latest business case will be undertaken if population, employment or travel patterns alter sufficiently to potentially influence the conclusions of this report.	Long term
Sustainability	**Policy S5 *Public Transport (Information & Marketing)*:** Work with passenger transport operators to promote the use of public transport through improved information and publicity.	Focus on improved information displays and interpretation at Crewe bus station, with more timetables provided at bus stops. The use of public transport will also be promoted through the innovative and cost effective delivery of bus information to potential users.	
Sustainability	**Policy S7 *Walking*:** Work with stakeholders to improve facilities for walking so that it is attractive for shorter journeys.	Footway and footpath improvements are needed in a number of important locations including the town centre and links to the town centre from the railway station and Basford sites. This will include the provision of improved signage.	Short-term
Sustainability	**Policy S8 *Cycling*:** Work with stakeholders to improve facilities for cycling so that it is attractive for shorter journeys.	Crewe has great potential for increasing use of cycling due to its flat topography and existing levels of cycling. The implementation of a Cycling policy in Crewe will focus on ensuring new	Medium-long term

Appendix A: Draft Transport Framework for Crewe

SCS Theme	LTP Policy	Policy focus in Crewe	Delivery
		development provides cycle facilities and identifies opportunities to make cycling safer and more attractive than travel by car.	
Sustainability	**Policy S9** *Technology & Energy Efficiency*: Encourage technological development in transport services in partnership with operators and will improve energy efficiency of transport infrastructure.	Work with providers to help ensure a competitive and first-rate broadband network across Crewe to support sustainable development and accessibility proposals.	

Policy Interpretation Table - Business

SCS Theme	LTP Policy	Policy Focus in Crewe	Delivery
Business Growth	**Policy B1 Strategic Partnerships for Economic Growth:** Work with neighbouring authorities, appropriate regional/sub-regional organisations, public transport operators and providers to enhance cross-boundary and strategic investment opportunities in transport.	The implementation of strategic partnership policy within Crewe will focus on developing partnerships with the Highways Agency, Network Rail and train operators to establish stronger linkages to neighbouring city-region networks (including science, technology, innovation and business). The Highways Agency has an important role to play in promoting Crewe's location close to the M6 and as a North-South 'Gateway'. These connections and the effective management of the	

Appendix A: Draft Transport Framework for Crewe

SCS Theme	LTP Policy	Policy Focus in Crewe	Delivery
		strategic road network will be vital in attracting future inward investment. Reinforcing Crewe's role as a rail 'Gateway' will also be important, particularly in relation to High Speed Rail development proposals. A strong partnership between the Council, Network Rail and the Train Operating Companies will be necessary to support Northern Rail Hub proposals and improve rail access to the airport.	
Business Growth	**Policy B2 Enabling development:** Seek to enable appropriate new development by supporting transport infrastructure, regeneration and/or behaviour change initiatives that will mitigate the potential impact of new development.	Identifying tailored transport and accessibility improvement solutions for final site allocations. Investigations will include assessing the local impact of development proposals on the transport network and identifying need for improvement associated with potential sites.	
Business Growth	**Policy B2 Enabling development:** Seek to enable appropriate new development by supporting transport infrastructure, regeneration and/or behaviour change initiatives that will mitigate the potential impact of new development.	One component of the vision for Crewe is to enable high quality links between the railway station and the Basford development sites. The potential for 'Personal transport' (as seen at Heathrow airport) will be investigated.	Long-term
Business Growth	**Policy B3 Network Management:** Effectively manage the highway network to reduce the	Implementation of network management policy in Crewe will focus on the congestion 'hotspots' and Air Quality Management	

Appendix A: Draft Transport Framework for Crewe

SCS Theme	LTP Policy	Policy Focus in Crewe	Delivery
	level of delay and provide for the needs of all road users including pedestrians, cyclists and motorists.	Areas along Nantwich Road AQMA and Earl Street AQMA.	
Business Growth	**Policy B4 Network Improvement:** Work to improve the operation of the highway network for all users through provision of new and enhanced infrastructure.	Improvement to the highway network will also be delivered through the implementation of Crewe Green Link Road (South). This is identified as a cross-cutting initiative and is discussed in more detail the LTP. Short-medium term priority	
Business Growth	**Policy B5 Freight:** Work with freight operators and organisations to establish appropriate freight routes, delivery routines and driver practices to minimise congestion and pollution.	The focus of freight policy implementation in Crewe will be on facilitating the development and use of rail-freight by Crewe-based businesses (Already a component of the agreed Basford West development.)	
Business Growth	**Policy B7 Business Innovation:** Support businesses to reduce carbon emissions from transport and minimise car use.	The business transport innovation policy for Crewe will be important both for securing a robust and nationally-competitive Next Generation Broadband (NGB) infrastructure that effectively supports large-scale homeworking, raises productivity levels within the local economy, helps to address local congestion issues as well as supporting mainstream service delivery improvements.	
Business Growth	**Policy B8 Maintenance:** Adopt a robust and efficient approach to maintenance to minimise deterioration in the highway network and associated infrastructure assets (lighting, street furniture etc.)	Public perceptions of road and pavement repairs in Crewe is currently poor and the focus of the maintenance policy will be on improving pavement condition at priority locations within the town centre, near bus stops, shopping areas and around community centres.	

Appendix A: Draft Transport Framework for Crewe

Policy Interpretation Table - Health

SCS Theme	LTP Policy	Policy Focus in Crewe	Delivery
Health	**Policy H2 Promotion of Active Travel and Healthy Activities:** Work in partnership to promote walking, cycling and horse riding as active travel options and healthy activities.	Promoting cycling and walking as active and healthy forms of travel and as a means to reduce carbon emissions and to improve the health of Crewe's population.	
Health	**Policy H4 Air Quality:** Work to improve the quality of our air in Cheshire East.	Measures to improve air quality in the Air Quality Management Areas along Nantwich Road AQMA and Earl Street AQMA.	

Policy Interpretation Table - Communities

SCS Theme	LTP Policy	Policy Focus in Crewe	Delivery
Communities	**Policy C2 Accessibility of Services:** Work with partner organisations and local communities to make key services easier to access with a particular focus on disadvantaged groups and areas, including people living in rural areas, older people, young people and those without access to a car.	Access to work from areas of deprivation – particularly links to any new employment sites in Crewe – will be the focus of this policy in Crewe.	Medium term

Crewe Smarter Choices

.1 20. Crewe Smarter Choices package will capitalise on Crewe's potential to become a more sustainable town by investigating the potential for modal shift to reduce car use in the town centre by promoting alternative modes of transport as part of a packaged approach. This will be implemented in parallel to initiatives to improve services and facilities where possible in a corridor approach along key routes.

Appendix A: Draft Transport Framework for Crewe

Major Scheme: Crewe Green Link Road (South)

.1   For the full strategic potential of the Basford sites to be realised, the completion of the Crewe Green Link Road (CGLR) will be necessary. The first phase (North) was completed in 2004 and has played an important role in facilitating employment growth east of the town centre. Completion of CGLR South will facilitate the delivery of Crewe's vision for economic growth to 2030, which will see Basford East firmly established as one of the UK's largest science-focused business parks with over 800,000 square feet of grade A accommodation, housing multi-national companies, leading edge logistics firms, university spin-outs and a wide range of technology-rich enterprises.

Basford Development Site & Crewe Green Link Road Proposals

.1   The CGLR South will support sustainable economic growth and ensure that Crewe has the infrastructure needed as a key regional transport gateway. It will provide a link between areas of deprivation to the north of Crewe and employment opportunities to the south east. It will reduce traffic congestion, increase freight efficiency and reduce the impact of traffic on the local environment and local community.

.2   Crewe Green Link Road South will help deliver a range of policy aspirations for Crewe including:

.3   **S1 Spatial Planning** aspirations to provide well-connected accessible sites.

.4   **S4 Public Transport (Service Levels & Reliability)** to minimise delay for buses by reducing congestion, particularly in the vicinity of the railway station, while also offering the potential for new routes linking to new employment opportunities.

.5   **B3 Network Management & B4 Network Improvement** to tackle congestion and air quality issues in Crewe.

.6   **B5 Freight** to facilitate appropriate route choice and capitalise on Crewe's "gateway" status.

Appendix A: Draft Transport Framework for Crewe

End Notes

a. Cheshire Community Survey,2008
b. Health of the Population within Local Area Partnership Boards within Central and Eastern Cheshire, 2010

Cheshire East Council
Westfields, Middlewich Road
Sandbach, Cheshire CW11 1HZ
www.cheshireeast.gov.uk

This information is available in other formats on request

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

REPORT TO: CABINET

Date of Meeting: 18 October 2010
Report of: Strategic Director - Places
Subject/Title: Future Housing Provision Cheshire East
Portfolio Holder: Cllrs David Brown/Jamie Macrae

1.0   Report Summary

1.1   This report:

- considers the requirement for the Council to maintain a five year supply of deliverable housing land and the position at 1 April 2010 in Cheshire East;
- considers the appropriate figure for the housing requirement for Cheshire East following the revocation of the Regional Spatial Strategy, in the interim pending the adoption of the Local Development Framework;
- proposes the introduction of an Interim Planning Policy to manage the release of land for housing development pending the allocation of land within the Local Development Framework and that consultation should be carried out on the draft policy.

2.0   Decision Requested

2.1   That Cabinet:

1.   approves the housing requirement figure for a minimum of 1150 net additional dwellings to be delivered annually, to be used pending the adoption of the Local Development Framework Core Strategy;

2.   notes the Council's five year land supply at 1 April 2010;

3.   approves the Interim Planning Policy on the Release of Housing Land for consultation purposes and agrees that it be used in the determination of planning applications pending its adoption.

3.0   Reasons for Recommendations

3.1   To ensure that the Council has appropriate planning policies in place to guide the release of additional housing land to ensure the availability of five years supply of deliverable housing land in a manner that will not prejudice the preparation of the Local Development Framework.

4.0   Wards Affected

4.1   All wards

5.0   Local Ward Members

5.1   All

6.0   Policy Implications including - Climate change

6.1   The proposed interim policy will seek to focus new development in the principal town of Crewe where there are a good range of jobs, shops and services and a high standard of accessibility by means of travel other than the car. The policy also encourages the redevelopment of previously developed land within settlements for mixed uses including housing. New housing will be required to be energy efficient.

- Health

6.2   New housing developments will be required to include affordable housing which will be available for people in housing need, providing them with improved healthier living conditions. Sites will also be required to provide open space.

7.0   Financial Implications 2010/11 and beyond (Authorised by the Borough Treasurer)

7.1   Consultation on the policy will be carried out within the current year's Spatial Planning Section's budget. The implementation of the policy will not require any additional staffing or financial resources.

7.2   The policy will require developers to contribute to strategic and local highway improvements, affordable housing, open space and community infrastructure required to serve the development through legal agreements.

8.0   Legal Implications (Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)

8.1   Planning Policy 3 Housing sets out a requirement for local planning authorities to maintain a five year supply of deliverable housing land. The inability of the Council to demonstrate a five year supply of housing land carries a high risk that land owners/developers will submit speculative planning applications for their development on sites outside settlement boundaries. Such applications would have to be determined through the planning process in the usual way. In the case of refusal of planning permission, appeals may be upheld on the grounds that there is not a 5 years housing land supply.

8.2   The Interim Planning Policy would be a material consideration in determining planning applications for new housing development. Whilst it would carry only limited weight until adopted following consultation, it will provide a clear policy position for the local planning authority and planning inspectors considering appeals on applications for housing development outside Local Plan settlement boundaries.

8.3   Consultation would be carried out with the Strategic Planning Board and the Environment Scrutiny Committee. Widespread consultation would be carried out with town and parish councils, stakeholders, the local community and the Housing Market Partnership in accordance with the Statement of Community Involvement.

9.0   Risk Management

9.1   As the Council is unable to demonstrate that it has a five year land supply of deliverable housing sites, there is high risk of planning appeals for housing development being upheld on greenfield sites outside settlement boundaries which may prejudice the preparation of the Local Development Framework and affect the Council's ability to objectively determine the most appropriate strategy and sites for future housing development.

10.0   Background and Options

10.1   The Government's planning policies for housing are set out in Planning Policy Statement 3 'Housing (PPS3), the latest edition of which was published in June 2010. The PPS has to be taken into account in the preparation of the Council's Local Development Framework and in the determination of planning applications which involve new housing development.

10.3   Paragraph 10 of PPS3 sets out the housing policy objectives that provide the context for planning for housing through development plans and planning decisions. It states that the specific outcomes that the planning system should deliver are:

- High quality housing that is well designed and built to a high standard.
- A mix of housing both market and affordable, particularly in terms of tenure and price, to support a wide variety of households in all areas, both urban and rural.
- A sufficient quantity of housing taking into account need and demand and seeking to improve choice.
- Housing developments in suitable locations, which offer a good range of community facilities and with good access to jobs, key services and infrastructure.
- A flexible and responsive supply of land – managed in a way that makes efficient and effective use of land, including the re-use of previously – developed land, where appropriate.

10.4   Clearly one of the Government's priorities is for the planning system to deliver an adequate supply of suitable land available for housing development. In terms of the longer term delivery of housing, through its Local Development Framework Core Strategy and Site Allocations documents, the Council has to identify broad locations and specific sites that will enable the continuous delivery of sufficient housing for at least a fifteen year period.

10.5   Previously the overall level of housing that the Council would have to deliver over that fifteen year period would have been as set out in the Regional Spatial Strategy. However, as Members will be aware, the Government revoked regional Spatial Strategies on 6th July this year leaving individual Planning Authorities responsible for establishing the appropriate level of local housing provision for their area. In doing so, the Government has said that local planning authorities 'should continue to collect and use reliable information to justify their housing supply policies and defend them during the LDF examination process. They should do this in line with current policy in PPS3'[1]

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[1] Letter from DCLG to all Chief Planning Officers dated 6/7/10

10.6   The Council is at a relatively early stage in the production of its Core Strategy which will identify the level of new housing development that should take place in the Borough up to 2030. In accordance with Government advice, the level of new housing development upon which the Council decides must be based on robust evidence and be defensible at public examination.

10.7   Stakeholder consultation is planned for the Issues and Strategic Options for the Core Strategy during October and November 2010. One of the key strategic options will be to consider the appropriate level of housing growth for the Borough and it is proposed that the consultation document should include a range of options for housing growth. These options would take into account the findings from the Council's Strategic Housing Market Area Assessment and the projections for population and employment growth.

10.8   In the shorter term, PPS3 requires the Council to ensure that a continuous five years supply of deliverable housing sites is maintained. To be considered deliverable, sites should:

- be available now
- offer a suitable location for development which would contribute to the creation of sustainable, mixed communities
- have a reasonable prospect of delivering houses within five years.

Generally to be considered deliverable within five years, sites should have the benefit of planning permission or should be allocated in a Local Plan or should be specific, unallocated brownfield sites within settlement boundaries that have the potential to make a significant contribution to housing land supply in the five year period.

The Annual Housing Requirement

10.9   The accepted methodology for determining the total five year supply requirement has been based on figures from the Regional Spatial Strategy. As the Regional Spatial Strategy has been revoked, it will now be for each individual Authority to decide its own housing requirement. The Regional Spatial Strategy housing requirement figure for Cheshire East of a minimum of 1150 net new dwellings per annum reflects the level of house building in the Borough that was being delivered in the ten years up to April 2010.

10.10   In considering the appropriate figure to set in the short- term, Members will be mindful of the current downturn in the housing market. Net housing completions during 2009-10 was 634, which was less than the previous year. Completions since April 2010 continue to be low and are likely to be around 700 for the year. However, there is considerable interest in housing development in Cheshire East and numbers should rise in the future as the housing market improves. The Council's ambitious plans for growth should give further encouragement to development.

10.11   A separate report to Cabinet on the Local Development Framework Core Strategy considers options for the future housing requirement to be set in the Local Development Framework. These have been developed in the context of delivering the Council's ambitions for growth and look at the implications of increasing the

requirement from 1150 to 1350 or 1600 dwellings per annum. The LDF will include a Borough wide development strategy with site allocations, policies and an infrastructure to secure the delivery of the housing and necessary infrastructure.

10.12   If the housing requirement were increased immediately this would require the release of a number of additional housing sites ahead of the adoption of the Core Strategy. There is a risk that the Council would not be able to secure the full infrastructure levy from these sites that would be expected once new LDF policies are in place .

10.13   **It is recommended therefore that until the future housing requirement has been agreed through the Local Development Framework Core Strategy, the housing requirement for Cheshire East should be set at a minimum of 1150 net additional dwellings per annum.**

Five Year Housing Land Supply

10.14   The Local Development Framework Annual Monitoring 2009 report calculated the Council's five year supply of housing land at 1 April 2009 as 5.14 years, based on the RSS figure. Since then a full review of potential sites has been carried out in parallel with the preparation of a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment for the whole of Cheshire East. The latest assessment indicates a supply of 4.58 years at 1 April 2010.

10.15   The failure to be able to demonstrate a five year supply of available housing land has implications for the Council. PPS3 states that "where local planning authorities cannot demonstrate an up to date five year supply of deliverable sites .... they should consider favourably planning applications for housing, having regard to the policies in this PPS".

10.16   The inability of the Council to demonstrate a five year supply of housing land carries a high risk that land owners/developers will submit speculative planning applications for their development outside settlement boundaries. Such applications would have to be determined through the planning process in the usual way. In the case of refusal of planning permission, appeals may be upheld on the grounds that there is not a 5 years housing land supply. Nevertheless whilst there is less than a 5 year supply of deliverable housing sites, there is a high degree of risk that planning permission may be granted on appeal for housing on greenfield sites outside settlement boundaries in conflict with the policies of the three Local Plans. Such decisions would also prejudice the preparation of the Local Development Framework and affect the Council's ability to objectively determine the most appropriate strategy and sites for future housing development.

Interim Policy to Manage the Release of Housing Land

10.17   **Given the current housing supply position and the timescale for the adoption of the Council's Core Strategy and Site Allocations documents, it is recommended that it would be advisable for the Council to put in place an Interim Planning Policy which will be used in the determination of planning applications for sites which do not form**

part of its identified supply of deliverable housing sites. A draft Interim Policy Statement is attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

10.18 The Interim Planning Policy would be considered as a material consideration in determining planning applications and appeals. In order for the Interim Planning Policy to carry adequate weight, it will be necessary for it to be subject to public consultation prior to final adoption. A report will be presented to the Strategic Planning Board as part of this consultation.

11.0 Overview of Year One and Term One Issues

11.1 The statutory development plan for Cheshire East consists of the saved policies from the Local Plans of the three former authorities. Work is progressing with the preparation of the Cheshire East Local Development Framework which will determine the new development strategy for the Borough and allocate housing land to meet the needs of the Borough for the next 15 – 20 years. This Interim Planning Policy sets out the Council's policy to control the release of land for housing development to ensure that there is sufficient land available in the short term until the Local Development Framework is adopted.

12.0 Access to Information

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer:

Name: Rosemary Kidd
Designation: Spatial Planning Manager
Tel No: 01270 685921
Email: rosemary.kidd@cheshireeast.gov.uk

Cheshire East Council

Draft Interim Planning Policy on the Release of Housing Land

Draft October 2010

CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This document sets out the Council's policy approach to maintaining a five year supply of deliverable housing land to be used as an interim measure pending the adoption of the Local Development Framework Core Strategy.

1.2 Planning Policy Statement 3 'Housing' requires local planning authorities to monitor and mange the release of housing land to ensure that there is a five years supply of deliverable sites. This includes sites with planning permission, sites allocated for residential development in the Local Plan and identified redevelopment sites within settlement boundaries.

1.3 Until the Local Development Framework is adopted, the development plan policies for Cheshire East relevant to the consideration of proposals for residential development are the saved policies of the Crewe and Nantwich, Congleton and Macclesfield Local Plans. The revised timetable for the adoption of the Core Strategy indicates a date for adoption of late 2012.

1.4 The purpose of this Interim Planning Statement is to set out a policy to manage the release of additional land for residential development through the consideration of planning applications, to maintain a five year supply, as an interim measure pending the adoption of the Core Strategy, in a manner that would not prejudice the consideration of alternative options for the development strategy for the Local Development Framework.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 Planning Policy Statement 3 (PPS3) was published in 2006 (and amended in 2010) and sets out the national planning policy framework for delivering the Government's housing objectives.

2.2 Paragraph 10 of PPS3 sets out the housing policy objectives that provide the context for planning for housing through development plans and planning decisions. It states that the specific outcomes that the planning system should deliver are:

- High quality housing that is well-designed and built to a high standard.
- A mix of housing, both market and affordable, particularly in terms of tenure and price, to support a wide variety of households in all areas, both urban and rural.
- A sufficient quantity of housing taking into account need and demand and seeking to improve choice.
- Housing developments in suitable locations, which offer a good range of community facilities and with good access to jobs, key services and infrastructure.

- A flexible, responsive supply of land – managed in a way that makes efficient and effective use of land, including re-use of previously-developed land, where appropriate.

2.3   Paragraph 60 explains the steps local authorities are required to take to maintain a flexible, responsive supply of land. The supply of deliverable sites should be monitored on an annual basis through the Annual Monitoring Report. If a five year deliverable supply is not likely to be available, consideration should then be given to the arrangements necessary to maintain an adequate supply of deliverable sites.

2.4   In circumstances where the Local Planning Authority does not manage the supply of housing land and cannot demonstrate an up-to-date five years supply of deliverable sites, paragraph 71 requires that they should consider favourably planning applications for housing, having regard to the policies in PPS3 including the considerations in paragraph 69.

2.5   If the local authority cannot demonstrate that it has a deliverable five years supply, this means that the Local Planning Authority should give favourable consideration to planning applications for housing development on sites outside of settlement boundaries. Providing that developers can demonstrate that they meet the requirements of paragraph 69 of PPS3 (which relate to the quality of development, mix of housing in the scheme, environmental sustainability and meeting housing need without undermining the spatial vision for the area), it is will be difficult for a Local Planning Authority to refuse such applications.

2.6   This leaves the Local Planning Authority having to deal with planning applications without reference to a planned approach to the development of the communities of the Borough. PPS3 states that the authority cannot argue that the release of any particular site is premature and should be considered through the Local Development Framework process. Examples from other local authorities demonstrate that in considering appeals in these circumstances, inspectors have frequently allowed developments, because of the lack of a five year housing land supply. There have been cases of such development being allowed in Green Belt locations.

The Annual Housing Requirement

2.7   The accepted methodology for determining the total five year supply requirement has been based on figures from the Regional Spatial Strategy. As the Regional Spatial Strategy has been revoked, it will now be for each individual Authority to decide its own housing requirement. The Regional Spatial Strategy housing requirement figure for Cheshire East of a minimum of 1150 net new dwellings per annum reflects the level of house building in the Borough that was being delivered in the ten years up to April 2010.

2.8   In considering the appropriate figure to set in the short- term, Members will be mindful of the current downturn in the housing market. Net housing completions during 2009-10 was 634, which was less than the previous year. Completions since April 2010 continue to be low and are likely to be around 700 for the year. However, there is considerable interest in housing development in Cheshire East and numbers should rise in the future as the housing market improves. The Council's ambitious plans for growth should give further encouragement to development.

2.9   A separate report to Cabinet on the Local Development Framework Core Strategy considers options for the future housing requirement to be set in the Local Development Framework. These have been developed in the context of delivering the Council's ambitions for growth and look at the implications of increasing the requirement from 1150 to 1350 or 1600 dwellings per annum. The LDF will include a Borough wide development strategy with site allocations, policies and an infrastructure to secure the delivery of the housing and necessary infrastructure.

2.10   If the housing requirement were increased immediately this would require the release of a number of additional housing sites ahead of the adoption of the Core Strategy. There is a risk that the Council would not be able to secure the full infrastructure levy from these sites that would be expected once new LDF policies are in place .

2.11   **It is therefore proposed to continue to use the Regional Spatial Strategy figure of a minimum of 1150 net additional houses per annum until it is reviewed formally through the Local Development Framework.**

        Managing the Five Year Housing Land Supply

2.12   The Local Development Framework Annual Monitoring 2009 report calculated the Council's five year supply of housing land at 1 April 2009 as 5.14 years, based on the RSS figure. Since then a full review of potential sites has been carried out in parallel with the preparation of a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment for the whole of Cheshire East. The latest assessment indicates a supply of 4.58 years at 1 April 2010.

2.13   The failure to be able to demonstrate a five year supply of available housing land has implications for the Council. PPS3 states that "where local planning authorities cannot demonstrate an up to date five year supply of deliverable sites .... they should consider favourably planning applications for housing, having regard to the policies in this PPS".

2.14   The inability of the Council to demonstrate a five year supply of housing land carries a high risk that land owners/developers will submit speculative planning applications for their development outside settlement boundaries. Such applications would have to be determined through the planning process in the usual way. In the

case of refusal of planning permission, appeals may be upheld on the grounds that there is not a 5 years housing land supply. Nevertheless whilst there is less than a 5 year supply of deliverable housing sites, there is a high degree of risk that planning permission may be granted on appeal for housing on greenfield sites outside settlement boundaries in conflict with the policies of the three Local Plans. Such decisions would also prejudice the preparation of the Local Development Framework and affect the Council's ability to objectively determine the most appropriate strategy and sites for future housing development.

Interim Policy to Mange the Release of Housing Land

2.15   The Interim Planning Policy on the Release of Housing Land has been drawn up in the context of the work that has been undertaken on developing the Crewe Vision to promote the growth and prosperity of Crewe as a town of sub-regional importance. The development of Crewe will be fundamental to the development strategy for the Borough. Development in Crewe will support sustainability objectives as Crewe has a good range of jobs, shops and services and a high standard of accessibility by means of travel other than the car.

2.16   The development proposals envisaged for Crewe will require significant investment in the strategic highway network around Crewe, in particular the Crewe Green Link Road and the Barthomley Link Road, to improve accessibility to Junction 16 of the M6. In addition, improvements to the local highway network in Crewe and public transport and cycling provision will be required to facilitate new housing development on the outskirts of Crewe. The Council is currently considering options for securing funding of the necessary strategic and local transport improvements. Once the funding arrangements have been approved by the Council, any new housing developments that impact on the highway network in and around Crewe will be required to make contributions towards both strategic and local transport improvements

2.17   The Interim Planning Policy will facilitate the release of a limited number of housing sites on the edge of Crewe outside the green gap. Developers of these sites will have to demonstrate that the site can be delivered within five years of the grant of permission and as there are little or no redevelopment costs associated with these greenfield sites, they will be required to deliver high quality, well designed developments with a minimum of 35% affordable housing in accordance with the Interim Planning Statement on Affordable Housing as well as contributions to improve the strategic and local transport networks in accordance with the forthcoming Transport Contributions Levy. In addition, open space and/ or community benefits will be required to meet the needs of future residents in accordance with the saved Local Plan policies.

2.18   The Interim Planning Policy will also enable housing to be brought forward as part of mixed use redevelopment schemes within settlements to support the development of the site for employment, town centres and or other uses, in accordance with the relevant Local Plan policies. Subject to economic viability assessment, a minimum of 30% of the housing should be affordable in accordance with the Interim Planning Statement on Affordable Housing.

2.19   Consultation on the draft interim policy will be carried out for six weeks during November – December 2010 with town and parish councils, the Housing Market Partnership, stakeholders and the local community.

2.20   It is proposed that the policy should be used in the consideration of planning applications with immediate effect and will be considered as a material consideration, although it is recognised that it will not carry significant weight until it is adopted by the Council following consultation.

Draft Interim Planning Policy on the Release of Housing Land

When it is demonstrated through the Annual Monitoring Report that there is not a five year supply of housing land as defined by PPS3, subject to other saved policies of the relevant Local Plan being satisfied, residential development will be permitted in the following locations:

1. Adjacent to the settlement boundary of Crewe provided that the site:
    - is well related to the built framework of the settlement;
    - is not within the Green Gap;
    - is not within an allocated employment area; and
    - is capable of being fully developed within five years of the granting of outline planning permission.

2. As part of mixed developments in town centres and regeneration areas to support the provision of employment, town centre and community uses.

Housing developments on greenfield sites will be required to deliver:

- a minimum of 35% affordable housing in accordance with the Interim Planning Statement on Affordable Housing;
- Open Space and / or community facilities in accordance with the relevant saved Local Plan policy;
- Improvements to the strategic and local highway network, public transport, and pedestrian and cycle routes; and
- A high quality designed development to Code for Sustainable Homes Level 4 or higher and Building for Life Silver standard or higher.

Subject to the assessment of the economic viability of the scheme, housing development on mixed use redevelopment sites will be expected to deliver:

- a minimum of 30% affordable housing in accordance with the Interim Planning Statement on Affordable Housing;
- Employment, town centre and / or community uses within the site; and
- A high quality design to Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3 or higher and Building for Life Silver standard.

Justification

1. PPS3 states that the Council is required to demonstrate that there is a five year supply of deliverable housing land. Pending the adoption of the Cheshire East Local Development Framework Core Strategy it is likely that there will be insufficient deliverable housing land within the settlement boundaries identified in the three Local Plans of the former

local authorities. The Interim Planning Policy on the Release of Housing Land has been introduced as an interim measure to facilitate the release of additional sites on the edge of Crewe and to encourage the redevelopment of sites within town centres and elsewhere for mixed uses including housing development.

2.   Crewe is a principal town and will continue to be a focus for future housing development in the Borough as envisaged in the Crewe Vision. Although the overall amount and direction for growth has yet to be determined, it is considered that there is scope for sufficient housing development to be brought forward adjacent to the Local Plan settlement boundary of Crewe (not including the village of Shavington) to meet the short term need for housing land in the Borough in a way that would not prejudice the preparation of the Local Development Framework.

3.   Sites that are approved under this interim policy should be capable of being built out within five years of the grant of outline planning permission under average market conditions. For sites that will require a longer period for development, permission will only be granted for the first phase of the site.

4.   The development of any greenfield sites adjacent to the settlement boundaries will be considered as exceptional development and will be required to be of a high design standard and deliver 35% of the development as affordable housing in accordance with the Interim Affordable Housing Policy. They will also be required to contribute towards the improvements to the strategic and local transport networks and public transport in and around Crewe.

5.   It is recognised that there are a number of areas within town centres and older employment areas throughout the towns of the Borough that may have the potential for regeneration. This policy aims to encourage mixed use schemes to come forward which include housing development to support the redevelopment of the site for a range of employment and other uses.

6.   Many older areas are designated as conservation areas and include listed buildings. Any scheme should seek to retain and convert existing buildings in these areas. Particular care will be needed with the design of new developments to ensure that they are appropriate to the character of the area.

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CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

REPORT TO: CABINET

Date of Meeting: 18 October 2010
Report of: Strategic Director - Places
Subject/Title: Local Development Framework Core Strategy Issues and Options
Portfolio Holder: Cllr David Brown

1.0 Report Summary

1.1 This report is the first stage of the preparation of the Core Strategy of the Local Development Framework. It has been prepared to generate discussion about the challenges facing the future planning of the Borough over the next 20 years, proposes a draft vision for the future of Cheshire East in 2030 and considers the impact of different strategic objectives. Finally, it looks at three options for housing and jobs growth and three options for how this growth could be distributed to the various towns in Cheshire East.

1.2 The Core Strategy Options and Issues Report is contained in Appendix 1.

2.0 Decision Requested

2.1 That the Cabinet considers the report in the light of any comments from the Strategic Planning Board of 6 October.

2.2 That the Cabinet approves the Issues and Options report for the Local Development Framework Core Strategy for consultation purposes.

3.0 Reasons for Recommendations

3.1 The preparation of the Local Development Framework is a statutory requirement under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. The Local Development Framework will form the statutory development plan for the Borough and will set out the strategy to deliver the spatial elements of the Sustainable Community Strategy. It will be used to consider planning applications.

3.2 In preparing the Core Strategy, the local planning authority is required to demonstrate that they have considered and consulted on alternative options for the future development strategy of the Borough.

4.0 Wards Affected

4.1 All wards

5.0   Local Ward Members

5.1   All

6.0   Policy Implications including - Climate change and Health

6.1   The Local Development Framework strategy will be focused on delivering sustainable development. The strategy and policies aim to reduce the effects of climate change and include mitigation measures to take account of the impacts of climate change.

6.2   The Local Development Framework will give consideration to how the planning of future development can contribute to improved health and quality of life.

7.0   Financial Implications 2010/11 and beyond (Authorised by the Borough Treasurer)

7.1   The costs of consultation on the Core Strategy Issues and Options will be carried out within the current year's Spatial Planning Section's budget.

8.0   Legal Implications (Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)

8.1   The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires local panning authorities to prepare Local Development Frameworks. Planning Policy Statement 12 and supporting Good Practice Guidance and the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004 (as amended) set out the procedures to be followed.

9.0   Risk Management

9.1   The risks associated with the preparation of the Local Development Framework are set out in the Local Development Scheme. The principal risks are

- That the Coalition Government will introduce changes to the procedures for preparing LDFs

- Changes to national planning policy

- High level of local opposition to development proposals

- Uncertainty and delays arising from local opposition to proposals.

- Legal challenge

10.0   Background and Options

10.1   Cheshire East is facing many challenges over the next twenty years or so including climate change, moving to a low carbon and globalised economy and increased housing need. These challenges will need to be faced in a period of a slow growing national economy and much reduced levels of infrastructure investment by the Government. It will therefore be important to have in place a clear plan, known as

the Local Development Framework (LDF), to tackle these issues and to map out how we want our towns and villages to change and grow.

10.2   LDFs were introduced through the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act in 2004. The Local Development Framework is made up of a number of documents which combine to form the statutory Development Plan within which planning decisions are made. The Core Strategy sets out the vision, strategic objectives and overall spatial strategy. The Site Allocations document identifies site allocations and sets out more detailed policies which will deliver the spatial strategy and which will be used in considering proposals for development. Supplementary Planning Documents will set out detailed guidance on the implementation of policies.

10.3   The objective of the new LDF system is to achieve sustainable development through a 'spatial planning' approach. Spatial Planning is about an integrated strategy for the future of an area which is supported by a clear vision, with commitment by all the relevant agencies to its delivery. Spatial Planning goes beyond the traditional view of planning as relating purely to the use of land and buildings and recognises the need to address a wider range of issues that affect our communities and the areas in which we live. The Core Strategy will integrate land use matters with other plans and strategies that deal with community issues such as health, community safety, housing, employment, community development, education, transport, the environment and regeneration.

10.4   The LDF will, therefore, play a critical part in delivering Cheshire East Council's ambitious plans for the future of the Borough. It will set out where new homes will be built, where new employment should be located and how the physical and social infrastructure will be provided to support new development. It will play an important part in tackling issues surrounding climate change and in achieving sustainable development.

10.5   The LDF will do far more than this, however. It is also concerned with protecting and enhancing parts of the Borough that are important natural or heritage assets. It is about improving our town centres, protecting valued areas of open space and providing new recreation and leisure facilities. It also plays an important role of ensuring that the community's need for affordable housing is met.

10.6   Through the LDF, critical decisions will have to be made which will seek to balance the need for future development to deliver economic prosperity and housing with the need to safeguard and enhance the environment. We need to ensure that Cheshire East is a well planned, attractive place to live in for future generations.

10.7   The Cheshire East LDF will cover the Borough which lies outside the Peak National Park. The Peak Park LDF will cover that part of Cheshire East within the National Park.

10.8   The LDF Core Strategy identifies the overarching objectives for spatial planning outcomes in Cheshire East. It will be used by everyone who want to see how Cheshire East will change or how new development will be planned for and managed over the next 20 years. It will deal with the strategic planning issues facing the borough.

10.9   The Core Strategy will therefore set out:

- Spatial vision and strategic objectives which provide a clear vision and direction for the future of the Borough and to steer the development of the strategy;
- A spatial strategy for the Borough as a whole and area strategies for main towns and sub areas which are holistic and which identify the broad locations for development, protection and change;
- Strategic policies for addressing how the vision and objectives can be achieved. These will set the scene for more detailed policies to be contained in the Site Allocations and Policies Development Plan Document;
- Strategic development sites;
- An Infrastructure Plan; and
- A monitoring and implementation framework.

10.10 The Core Strategy is the spatial development plan for Cheshire East that will steer and be informed by other plans and strategies prepared by the Council and its partners and which will support their delivery. Key strategies that will inform the LDF include:

"Unleashing the Potential" – the sub-regional aspirations for growth

10.11 At the Sub Regional level under the auspices of the Cheshire and Warrington Enterprise Commission, in partnership with Cheshire West and Chester and Warrington Councils, Cheshire East Council has signed up to an ambitious growth strategy for Cheshire and Warrington in the form of a strategy document entitled 'Unleashing the Potential'.

10.12 The overall aim for the sub region is to achieve "significant economic growth by accommodating significant increase in population, housing, jobs and GVA". The potential is identified to increase annual GVA for the sub-region by at least £10 billion to at least £30 billion by 2030, together with an increase in population by at least 100,000 and 22,000 additional jobs during the same period.

10.13 In spatial terms, for Cheshire East the priorities are:

- 'Accelerated' growth for Crewe with the aim of significantly increasing its economic productivity - with an approximate 25% growth in jobs and population
- to retain the focus on Macclesfield and North East Cheshire as the North West's most productive business and entrepreneurial area with targeted growth and collaboration with key employers.
- to reinforce the role of market towns and larger villages as important components of economic growth and also in providing attractive residential locations for managers, professionals and knowledge workers. There is particular potential for economic and quality housing growth in the 'Weaver Towns' including Middlewich. The town of Congleton also is identified as having growth potential.

"**Ambition for All**" - the Cheshire East Sustainable Community Strategy

10.14 The LDF will deliver the place shaping aspects and objectives of the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) in particular:

- Creating conditions for Business Growth, including making the most of our tourism, heritage and natural assets and ensuring there is a good range of available employment sites and premises in all parts of Cheshire East with good transport links to attract new and expanding businesses;
- Unlocking the potential of our towns; this focuses firstly on the regeneration of Crewe including the redevelopment of the town centre and the provision of new homes and jobs, secondly on the revitalisation of Macclesfield including improving the quality and choice of shops and services in the town centre and progressing the development of South Macclesfield and thirdly on retaining the vitality and viability of our market towns to ensure that they continue to deliver essential services, retail, leisure and employment opportunities.
- Supporting our children and young people;
- Ensuring a sustainable future by providing affordable and appropriate housing to meet future needs, by promoting energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy, by ensuring that all major developments are located with good access to local amenities, cycle and walking routes, by developing a green infrastructure plan to safeguard, manage and enhance our green assets, giving priority to the redevelopment of our vacant brownfield sites and by recognising the importance of mineral extraction to the local economy.
- Preparing for an increasingly older population including the provision of an adequate supply of suitable extra care housing;
- Driving out the causes of poor health including investment in green infrastructure to encourage active and healthy lifestyle choices.

10.15 Key, relevant actions to deliver those objectives include:

- Promote major regeneration of Macclesfield and Crewe;
- Maximise developer contributions to improve infrastructure, culture, leisure and green spaces;
- Meet targets in relation to the provision of affordable housing;
- Reduction in carbon emissions;
- Thriving and prosperous market towns; and
- Growth in the Cheshire East economy and the visitor economy.

Other Council Strategies

10.16 The LDF will also take into account and inform the Council's Local Transport Plan, Economic Development Strategy, Housing Strategy and Open Space Strategy, all of which are in the course of preparation.

The Core Strategy Issues and Options Report

10.17 The creation of Cheshire East Council provides us with the opportunity to look afresh at how we want the towns and villages of the Borough to grow and flourish over the next twenty years or so.

10.18 The Core Strategy Issues and Options report has been prepared to encourage a full debate about the future spatial strategy for Cheshire East. It builds on the feedback that has been made during the consultation on the Sustainable Community Strategy. This will be the first of several consultations on the LDF; the next consultation in spring 2011 will look at each of our towns and how they could contribute to the overall strategy.

10.19 Firstly this document includes a spatial portrait of the Borough which provides a description of Cheshire East and the main towns. From this the key challenges that the LDF will need to address are identified.

10.20 The next section proposes a Spatial Vision for how we would envisage the Borough in 20 years time. Seven key spatial objectives are then proposed; these would steer the development of the strategy.

10.21 Finally the document sets out a range of alternative options for how those objectives might be achieved. At the Borough level, three options for the amount of housing and job growth that would be appropriate are set out. There are then three options for how growth would be distributed across the Borough. Given the scale of the likely development and the Council's stated ambition for growth, the options essentially address the different proportions of growth each area will accommodate. The question is not so much of some growth versus no growth; rather it is one of what proportion of growth should each area accommodate.

The Proportions of Growth Across Cheshire East

10.22 Option 1 proposes that a high proportion of development over the next 15 - 20 years would occur in the southern part of the Borough with the focus of development on delivering the Crewe Vision and maximising Crewe's role, not just as the sub-regional centre for south Cheshire, but also as the main driver of growth for the whole of Cheshire. There would also be growth in the Key Service Centres in the south of the Borough (Alsager, Congleton, Middlewich, Nantwich and Sandbach).

10.23 Option 2 looks to reinforce the role of Crewe as the sub-regional centre for the south of the Borough and Macclesfield for the north. The Key Service Centres in the southern part of the Borough (Alsager, Congleton, Middlewich, Nantwich and Sandbach) would also be the focus for growth, albeit at a lower level than in Option 1.

10.24 Option 3 would focus development in the principal towns and Key and Local Service Centres in locations that have a good standard of accessibility that will enable people to travel to work, shops and services by means other than the private car i.e. public transport, cycling and walking. The following towns would be the focus of most development:

- Crewe, Alsager, Congleton, Nantwich and Sandbach in the south of the Borough;
- Macclesfield, Alderley Edge, Handforth, Knutsford, Poynton and Wilmslow in the north.

10.25 A Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) will test how the objectives and options will contribute to the development of sustainable communities. The parallel SA/SEA processes are taking place in tandem with the production of the Core Strategy and should inform key stages of the process.

10.26 A Habitats Regulations Assessment is required under the European Habitats Directive, to ensure the Core Strategy will not have an adverse impact on sites designated as being of European importance in terms of nature conservation and / or geological interest. Both the Sustainability Appraisal and the Habitats Regulations Assessment will be published for consultation alongside this Issues and Options Report.

Programme for Consultation

10.27 Consultation on the Core Strategy Issues and Options report will be the first stage of consultations on the Local Development Framework and will focus on the options for the overall development strategy for the Borough. Further consultations will be carried out in 2011 to consider town and area strategies.

10.28 Initial consultation on the Issues and Options would be carried out with the Strategic Planning Board. A workshop is to be held on 2 November for all Members prior to the launch of the public consultation. Further workshops will be held for the Housing Market Partnership, the business community, infrastructure providers and the Citizen's Panel during November and December. Widespread consultation would be carried out by letter and online with town and parish councils, stakeholders and the local community in accordance with the Statement of Community Involvement.

11.0   Overview of Year One and Term One Issues

11.1   The statutory development plan for Cheshire East currently consists of the saved policies from the Local Plans of the three former authorities. This report is the first stage consultation on the first part of the Local Development Framework Core Strategy. The Cheshire East Local Development Framework will determine the new development strategy for the Borough to implement the Council's ambitions for growth in a sustainable manner; it will determine the housing, employment, retail and infrastructure needs and allocate land to deliver the strategy for the next 20 years. It will set out safeguarding policies to protect and enhance important environmental assets.

12.0   Access to Information

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer:

Name: Rosemary Kidd
Designation: Spatial Planning Manager
Tel No: 01270 685921
Email: rosemary.kidd@cheshireeast.gov.uk

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Cheshire East Local Development Framework

Core Strategy Issues and Options Consultation Paper

October 2010

Cheshire East
Council

Equal Opportunities and Access

Cheshire East Council recognises that it can improve the quality of life of people in the area by seeking to ensure that every member of the public has equal access to its services, facilities, resources, activities and employment.

We want these to be accessible to everyone in the community regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, disability, marital status or sexual orientation. Furthermore, we are keen to respond to the individual requirements of our customers to develop services that recognise their diversity and particular needs.

We use the Big Word as a translation service, and have hearing induction loops in our reception areas.

Information can be made available in large print, in Braille or on audiotape on request.

If you would like this information in another language or format, please contact us.

如欲索取以另一語文印製或另一格式製作的資料，請與我們聯絡。

如欲索取以另一语文印制或另一格式制作的资料，请与我们联系。

Jeżeli chcieliby Państwo uzyskać informacje w innym języku lub w innym formacie, prosimy dać nam znać.

ਜੇ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ ਜਾਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਚਾਹੀਦੀ, ਤਾਂ ਇਹ ਸਾਥੋਂ ਮੰਗ ਲਓ।

اگر آپ کو معلومات کسی دیگر زبان یا دیگر شکل میں درکار ہوں تو برائے مہربانی ہم سے پوچھئے۔

اگر این اطلاعات را به زبانی دیگر و یا در فرمتی دیگر میخواهید لطفا از ما درخواست کنید

Se deseja obter informação noutro idioma ou formato, diga-nos.

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What is the Local Development Framework?

1.1 Cheshire East is facing many challenges over the next twenty years or so including climate change, moving to a low carbon and globalised economy and increased housing need. These challenges will need to be faced in a period of a slow growing national economy and much reduced levels of infrastructure investment by the Government. It will therefore be important to have in place a clear plan, known as the Local Development Framework (LDF), to tackle these issues and to map out how we want our towns and villages to change and grow.

1.2 Local Development Frameworks were introduced through the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act in 2004. The Local Development Framework is made up of a number of documents that combine to form the Spatial Development Plan within which planning decisions are made. The Core Strategy sets out the vision, strategic objectives and overall spatial strategy. The Site Allocations document identifies site allocations and sets out more detailed policies that will deliver the spatial strategy and which will be used in considering proposals for development. Supplementary Planning Documents will set out detailed guidance on the implementation of policies.
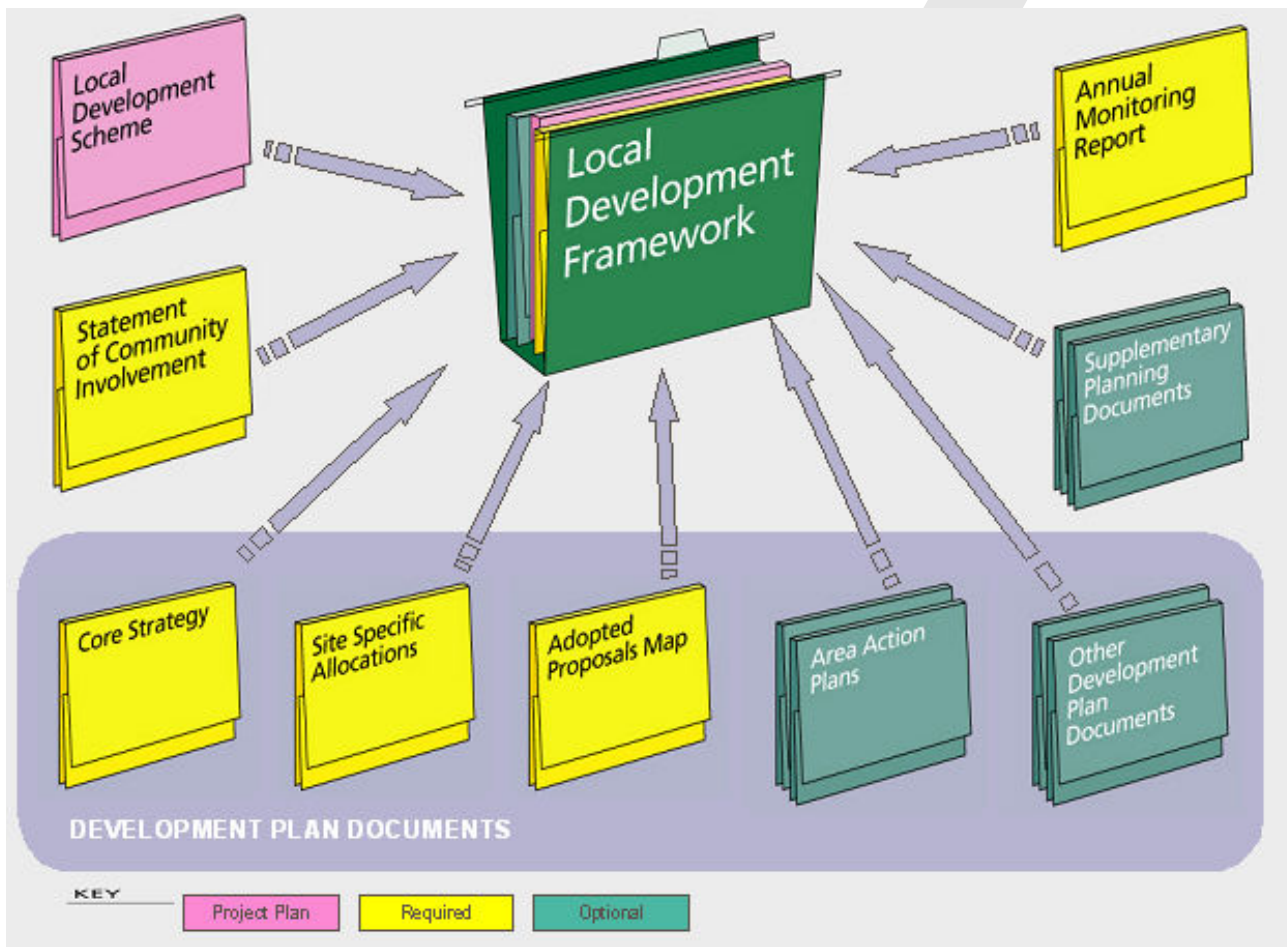
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Figure 1.1 LDF Diagram

1.3   The objective of the new Local Development Framework system is to achieve sustainable development through a 'spatial planning' approach. Spatial Planning is about an integrated strategy for the future of an area that is supported by a clear vision, with commitment by all the relevant agencies to its delivery. Spatial Planning goes beyond the traditional view of planning as relating purely to the use of land and buildings and recognises the need to address a wider range of issues that affect our communities and the areas in which we live. The Core Strategy will integrate land use matters with other plans and strategies that deal with community issues such as health, community safety, housing, employment, community development, education, transport, the environment and regeneration.

1.4   The Local Development Framework will, therefore, play a critical part in delivering Cheshire East Council's ambitious plans for the future of the Borough. It will set out where new homes will be built, where new employment should be located and how the physical and social infrastructure will be provided to support new development. It will play an important part in tackling issues surrounding climate change and in achieving sustainable development.

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1.5   The Local Development Framework will do far more than this, however. It is also concerned with protecting and enhancing parts of the Borough that are important natural or heritage assets. It is about improving our town centres, protecting valued areas of open space and providing new recreation and leisure facilities. It also plays an important role of ensuring that the community's need for affordable housing is met.

1.6   Through the Local Development Framework, critical decisions will have to be made that will seek to balance the need for future development to deliver economic prosperity and housing with the need to safeguard and enhance the environment. We need to ensure that Cheshire East is a well planned, attractive place to live in for future generations.

1.7   The Local Development Framework will cover the Borough that lies outside the Peak National Park (see Figures 2.1 and 2.2). The Peak Park Local Development Framework will cover that part of Cheshire East within the National Park.

What is the Core Strategy?

1.8   The Core Strategy is the central part of the Local Development Framework setting out the strategic framework with which all the other Local Development Framework documents have to conform.

1.9   The Core Strategy identifies the overarching objectives for spatial planning outcomes in Cheshire East. It will be used by everyone who want to see how Cheshire East will change or how new development will be planned for and managed over the next 15 years. It will deal with the strategic planning issues facing the Borough.

1.10   The Core Strategy will therefore set out:

- The spatial vision and strategic objectives that provide a clear vision and direction for the future of the Borough and to steer the development of the strategy;
- A spatial strategy for the Borough as a whole and area strategies for main towns and sub areas, which are holistic and which identify the broad locations for development, protection and change;
- Core strategy policies for addressing how the vision and objectives can be achieved. These will set the scene for more detailed policies to be contained in the Site Allocations and Policies Development Plan Document;
- Strategic Development Sites:
- An Infrastructure Plan; and
- A monitoring and implementation framework for delivery.

Links to Other Strategies

1.11   The Core Strategy is the spatial development plan for Cheshire East that will steer and be informed by other plans and strategies prepared by the Council and its partners and which will support their delivery.

Sub Regional Strategy -Unleashing the Potential

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1.12 At the sub-regional level under the auspices of the Cheshire and Warrington Enterprise Commission, in partnership with Cheshire West and Chester and Warrington Councils, Cheshire East Council has signed up to an ambitious growth strategy for Cheshire and Warrington in the form of a strategy document entitled 'Unleashing the Potential'.

1.13 The overall aim for the sub-region is to achieve "significant economic growth by accommodating significant increase in population, housing, jobs and GVA". The potential is identified to increase annual Gross Value Added for the sub-region by at least £10 billion to at least £30 billion by 2030, together with an increase in population by at least 100,000 and 22,000 additional jobs during the same period.

1.14 In spatial terms, for Cheshire East the priorities are:

- 'Super-charged' growth for Crewe with the aim of significantly increasing its economic productivity - with an approximate 25% growth in jobs and population;
- To retain the focus on Macclesfield and north east Cheshire as the North West's most productive business and entrepreneurial area with targeted growth and collaboration with key employers; and
- To reinforce the role of market towns and larger villages as important components of economic growth and also in providing attractive residential locations for managers, professionals and knowledge workers. There is particular potential for economic and quality housing growth in the 'Weaver Towns' including Middlewich. The town of Congleton also is identified as having growth potential.

1.15 In conjunction with and complementary to the development of the sub-regional strategy, Cheshire East Council has identified Crewe as its biggest spatial priority and has developed a 'Crewe Vision'. The Vision proposes to:

- Plan for significant growth in housing and jobs;
- Radically improve strategic transport links and create a state-of-the-art broadband internet network;
- Develop a more diversified 'knowledge economy' that attracts and keeps hi-tech firms and skilled workers;
- Enhance the attractiveness of Crewe as a place to live and work – including boosting schools and local transport;
- Develop key underutilised sites – including the Basford East investment site, Crewe rail station and the town centre; and
- Improve the town's public image and leadership.

1.16 Cheshire East Council has undertaken a review of the plans and agreements in place for the redevelopment of Macclesfield Town Centre and to investigate the potential of the South Macclesfield Development Area, an area allocated for mixed-use development in the Macclesfield Local Plan but which has largely failed to be developed. It is expected that one outcome of this work will be a revised and deliverable proposal for a town centre regeneration scheme and for the South Macclesfield Development Area.

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1.17   The Council is also developing a framework for its smaller towns that will build on and work with local partnerships to regenerate and revitalise these important service centres. It is critical to ensure that they grow and develop in the future and play a part in delivering the Borough's growth aspirations.

1.18   The spatial outcomes of the Crewe Vision, Macclesfield Economic Masterplan and the smaller rural town initiatives will need to be reflected in the Core Strategy in order to facilitate their implementation.

Ambition for All - the Sustainable Community Strategy

1.19   The Local Development Framework will deliver the place shaping aspects and objectives of the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS). It will also play a key role in delivering the Council's Corporate Objectives and other relevant strategies prepared by Cheshire East Council and its partners.

1.20   'Ambition for All' the Cheshire East Sustainable Community Strategy for the period 2010 to 2025 was approved on 22nd July 2010. The purpose of the strategy is to set out how, over the next 15 years, the Partnership for Action for Cheshire East (PACE) will seek to ensure that Cheshire East continues to prosper. The activities outlined in the strategy are intended to improve the quality of life of all the people of Cheshire East and to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development through action to improve economic, social and environmental well-being across the area. The Strategy provides a high-level vision for Cheshire East centred around seven priorities for action which are:

- Nurturing strong communities, including the delivery of services as locally as possible and ensuring that communities feel safe;
- Creating conditions for Business Growth, including making the most of our tourism, heritage and natural assets and ensuring there is a good range of available employment sites and premises in all parts of Cheshire East with good transport links to attract new and expanding businesses;
- Unlocking the potential of our towns; this focuses firstly on the regeneration of Crewe including the redevelopment of the town centre and the provision of new homes and jobs, secondly on the revitalisation of Macclesfield including improving the quality and choice of shops and services in the town centre and progressing the development of South Macclesfield and thirdly on retaining the vitality and viability of our market towns to ensure that they continue to deliver essential services, retail, leisure and employment opportunities;
- Supporting our children and young people;
- Ensuring a sustainable future by providing affordable and appropriate housing to meet future needs, by promoting energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy, by ensuring that all major developments are located with good access to local amenities, cycle and walking routes, by developing a green infrastructure plan to safeguard, manage and enhance our green assets, giving priority to the redevelopment of our vacant brownfield sites and by recognising the importance of mineral extraction to the local economy;

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- Preparing for an increasingly older population including the provision of an adequate supply of suitable extra care housing; and
- Driving out the causes of poor health including investment in green infrastructure to encourage active and healthy lifestyle choices.

1.21   The Council has prepared a Corporate Plan for the period 2010 to 2013. It defines a number of Corporate Objectives. These are:

- To give the people of Cheshire East more choice and control around services and resources;
- To grow and develop a sustainable Cheshire East;
- To improve life opportunities and health for everybody in Cheshire East;
- To enhance the Cheshire East environment; and
- To be an excellent Council and work with others to deliver for Cheshire East.

1.22   Key, relevant actions to deliver those objectives include:

- Promote major regeneration of Macclesfield and Crewe;
- Maximise developer contributions to improve infrastructure, culture, leisure and green spaces;
- Meet targets in relation to the provision of affordable housing;
- Reduction in carbon emissions;
- Thriving and prosperous market towns; and
- Growth in the Cheshire East economy and the visitor economy.

1.23   The Core Strategy and other Local Development Framework documents will also take into account, in due course, the Council's Local Transport Plan, Economic Development Strategy, Housing Strategy and Open Space Strategy, all of which are in the course of preparation.

Purpose of this Document

1.24   The creation of Cheshire East Council provides us with the opportunity to look afresh at how we want the towns and villages of the Borough to grow and flourish over the next twenty years or so.

1.25   This document has, therefore, been prepared to encourage a full debate about the future spatial strategy for Cheshire East. It builds on the feedback that has been made during the consultation on the Sustainable Community Strategy. This will be the first of several consultations; the next consultation will look at each of our communities and how they could contribute to the overall strategy.

1.26   Firstly this document includes a spatial portrait of the Borough which provides a description of Cheshire East and the main towns. From this the key challenges that the Local Development Framework will need to address are identified.

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1.27   The next section proposes a Spatial Vision for how we would envisage the Borough in 20 years time. Seven key spatial objectives are then proposed; these would steer the development of the strategy.

1.28   Finally, the document sets out a range of alternative options for how those objectives might be achieved.

1.29   At the Borough level, three options for the amount of housing and job growth that would be appropriate are set out. There are then three options for how growth would be would be distributed across the Borough.

1.30   Option 1 proposes that a high proportion of development over the next 15 - 20 years would occur in the southern part of the Borough with the focus of development on delivering the Crewe Vision and maximising Crewe's role, not just as the sub-regional centre for south Cheshire, but also as the main driver of growth for the whole of Cheshire. There would also be growth in the Key Service Centres in the south of the Borough.

1.31   Option 2 looks to reinforce the role of Crewe as the sub-regional centre for the south of the Borough and Macclesfield for the north. The Key Service Centres in the southern part of the Borough (Alsager, Congleton, Middlewich, Nantwich and Sandbach) would also be the focus for growth, albeit at a lower level than in Option 1.

1.32   Option 3 would focus development in the principal towns and Key and Local Service Centres in locations that have a good standard of accessibility that will enable people to travel to work, shops and services by means other than the private car i.e. public transport, cycling and walking. The following towns would be the focus of most development:

- Crewe, Alsager, Congleton, Nantwich and Sandbach;
- Macclesfield, Alderley Edge, Handforth, Knutsford, Poynton and Wilmslow

What are your views?

1.33   This Issues and Options paper marks the first stage in the process of preparing the Cheshire East 'Core Strategy'. This is your chance to help us decide which is the best way to manage the growth of the Borough over the next 15-20 years.

1.34   We want to know what you think. Do you agree with the vision? Have we understood the challenges? Which Option will provide the best strategy for the future of the Borough? Are there other factors which we should take into account?

How can I get involved?

1.35   Your comments will help us shape the final Core Strategy document. The policies and proposals in the final document will affect everyone that lives, works or visits Cheshire East - this is your opportunity to get involved and have your say on shaping the future of your district.

1 Introduction

1.36   The consultation is based upon a series of specific questions that seek your views on the policy options. For ease of reference, the consultation questions are numbered consecutively and presented as a yellow box at the appropriate place in the document.

1.37   You can read this document in libraries, Customer Service Centres and on our website. You may also request a hard copy (for which we have to make a charge to cover our printing and postage costs) or a copy on CD by contacting us by telephone or email. For up to the minute information about what's going on where and when, please visit our website.

1.38   We would prefer you to tell us what you think using the on-line interactive document. However, you can also download a copy of the questionnaire which can then be filled in and sent to us. This will also be available on the CD or on request from us.

1.39   The consultation period runs from ------- until the -------- .

1.40   Our contact details are:

Address: Spatial Planning, Cheshire East Council, Westfields, Middlewich Road, Sandbach, Cheshire CW11 1HZ

Telephone: 01270 685893

Email: ldf@cheshireeast.gov.uk

Website: www.cheshireeast.gov.uk

1.41   A Sustainability Appraisal and a Habitats Regulations Assessment report have been published to accompany the Issues and Options consultation . These documents provide further background information to this consultation document but do not form part of the consultation itself.

What Happens Next?

1.42   There will be many further opportunities for people to have their say as we move through the process of writing our Core Strategy.

1.43   Following this Issues and Options consultation, we will consider the responses and start to work on a draft Core Strategy taking on board the comments we have received and any new evidence that has emerged. The draft Core Strategy is due to be published for consultation in -------.

Sustainability Appraisal

1.44   A Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) will test how the objectives and options will contribute to the development of sustainable communities. The parallel Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment

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processes are taking place in tandem with the production of the Core Strategy and should inform key stages of the process. A Scoping Report was published in June 2009 and an appraisal of the issues and options accompanies this document.

Habitats Regulations Assessment

1.45 A Habitats Regulations Assessment is required under the European Habitats Directive, to ensure the Core Strategy will not have an adverse impact on sites designated as being of European importance in terms of nature conservation and / or geological interest. Both the Sustainability Appraisal and the Habitats Regulations Assessment will be published for consultation alongside this Issues and Options Report.

2 Spatial Portrait

The Borough

2.1   The Borough of Cheshire East is bounded by Cheshire West and Chester to the west, Warrington and the Manchester conurbation to the north, Shropshire and the North Staffordshire conurbation of Stoke-on-Trent and Newcastle-under-Lyme to the south and the Peak District National Park to the east.
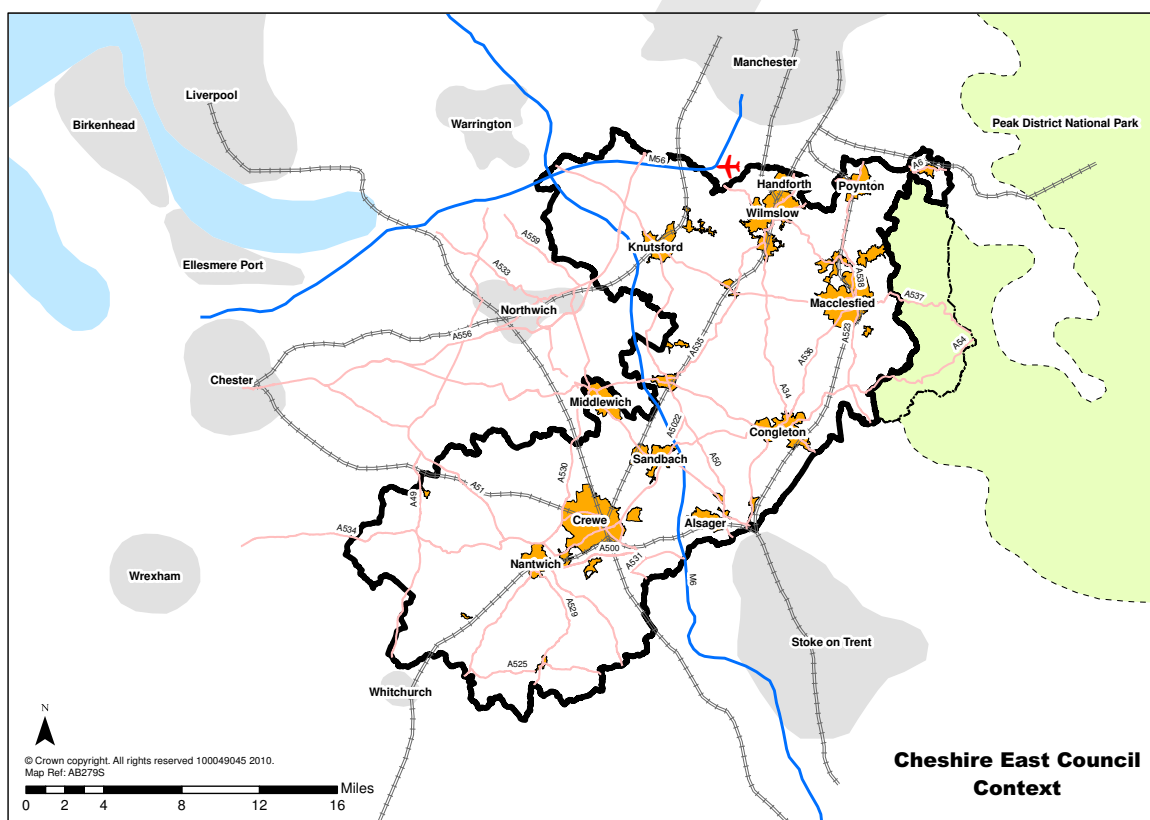
Figure 2.1 Cheshire East Location Map

2.2   Much of the northern part of the Borough and a smaller area to the east lie within the Green Belt. Green Belt is intended to prevent urban sprawl, protect the countryside and assist in the regeneration of urban areas. Cheshire East has 40,630 hectares of land designated as Green Belt.

2.3   Cheshire East contains the two principal towns of Crewe and Macclesfield and a number of market towns including Alsager, Congleton, Handforth, Knutsford, Middlewich, Nantwich, Poynton, Sandbach and Wilmslow.

2.4   The extensive road network in the Borough includes the M6, which runs north-south through the centre of the Borough and the M56 running east-west. The M56 links to the M6 in the north of the Borough. There are also fourteen primary 'A' roads in Cheshire East.

2 Spatial Portrait

2.5   The rail network is accessible from 22 railway stations across the Borough. These railway stations are located on one or more of the rail-lines radiating from Crewe. These are the West Coast Main Line to Glasgow and London, the Stoke-on-Trent/ Nottingham Line, the Shrewsbury/South Wales Line, the Chester/Holyhead Line, and the Greater Manchester line. Macclesfield is on the West Coast Main Line (Stoke-on-Trent route) giving access to Greater Manchester and London Euston.

2.6   The map below indicates the distribution of key features within Cheshire East.
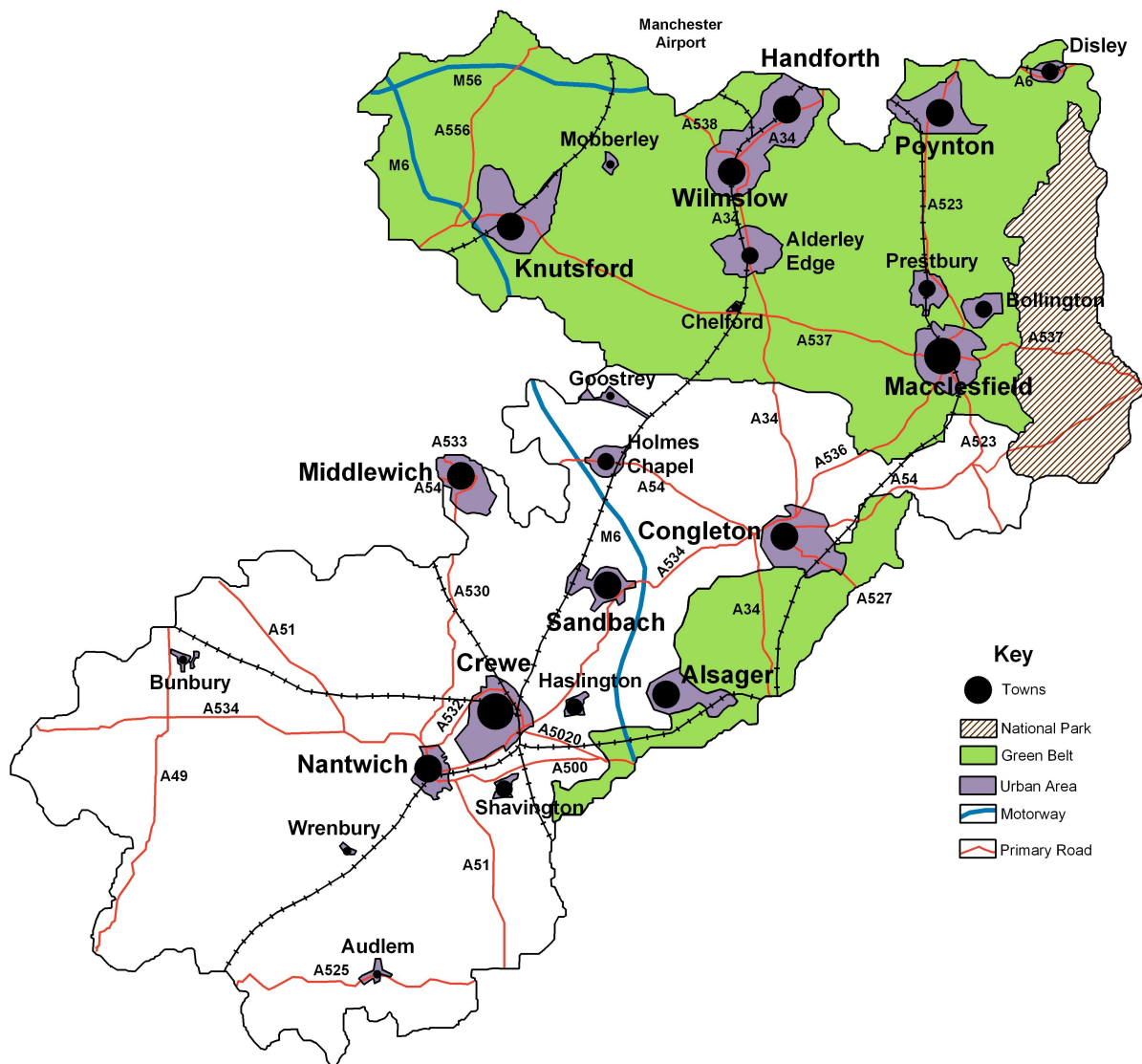
Figure 2.2 Map of Cheshire East

2.7   Cheshire East has a population of 362,700; 50.9% (184,500) are female and 49.1% (178,200) are male. [1] This is equivalent to 0.66% of the population of England and Wales. The population pyramid below highlights the age distribution of Cheshire East.
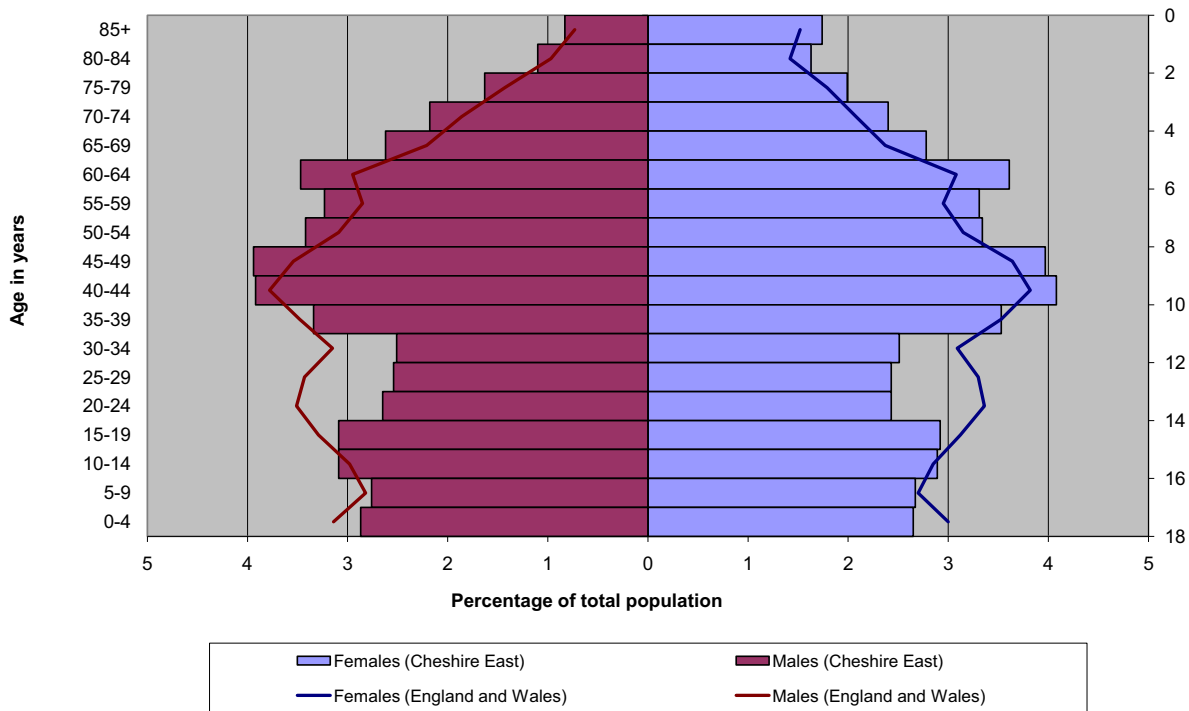
Figure 2.3 Cheshire East Population Pyramid (2009)

2.8   As illustrated in Figure 2.3 Cheshire East has a lower than England and Wales average proportion of both male and females in the following age groups (15-19, 20-24, 25-29 and 30-34). Cheshire East has a higher than the England and Wales average proportion of residents over the age of 40. The relative shortage of people of working age and predominance of older people has implications for the housing needs of the population and for the future economic prosperity of the Borough.

2.9   Using 2007 population data as a base it is expected that the total Cheshire East population will increase by 22,900 up to 2027 leading to an overall population figure of 383,60. [2]

2.10   According to the Cheshire East Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA), house prices across Cheshire East and its former districts have increased dramatically over the period 1996 to 2009, from around £55,500 as a median figure to a peak of £186,000 in 2007. This represents an increase of 234% in median house prices over a 13 year period. House prices in the former Macclesfield area were highest, Crewe and Nantwich the lowest and prices in Congleton have tended to mirror the Cheshire East average (median) house price.

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1   ONS Mid-Year Estimate, 2009
2   Cheshire East Population Forecast September 2009

2 Spatial Portrait

2.11   According to the Communities and Local Government website (2009), Cheshire East has an income to house price ratio of 6.7. In terms of relative affordability the Borough is ranked the 8th least affordable District in the North West. [3]

2.12   Information from the 2001 census shows that within Cheshire East there were 147,144 households with an average household size of 2.36 people. Housing need is expected to increase as a result of national trends, including predicted increases in population and changes to family sizes/dynamics resulting from the increased number of divorces and separations (6% of the residents of Cheshire East were divorced in 2001).

2.13   The economy of Cheshire East is diverse and generally vibrant. The Borough provides 6.9% of the economic output in the North West and 7.4% of its businesses; the highest share of any NW authority area. Its residents make up a significant proportion of the 'knowledge economy' workforce that drives the adjacent city regions, especially Manchester. Cheshire East performs better than the regional and national averages in skill levels, business start ups and knowledge based employment.
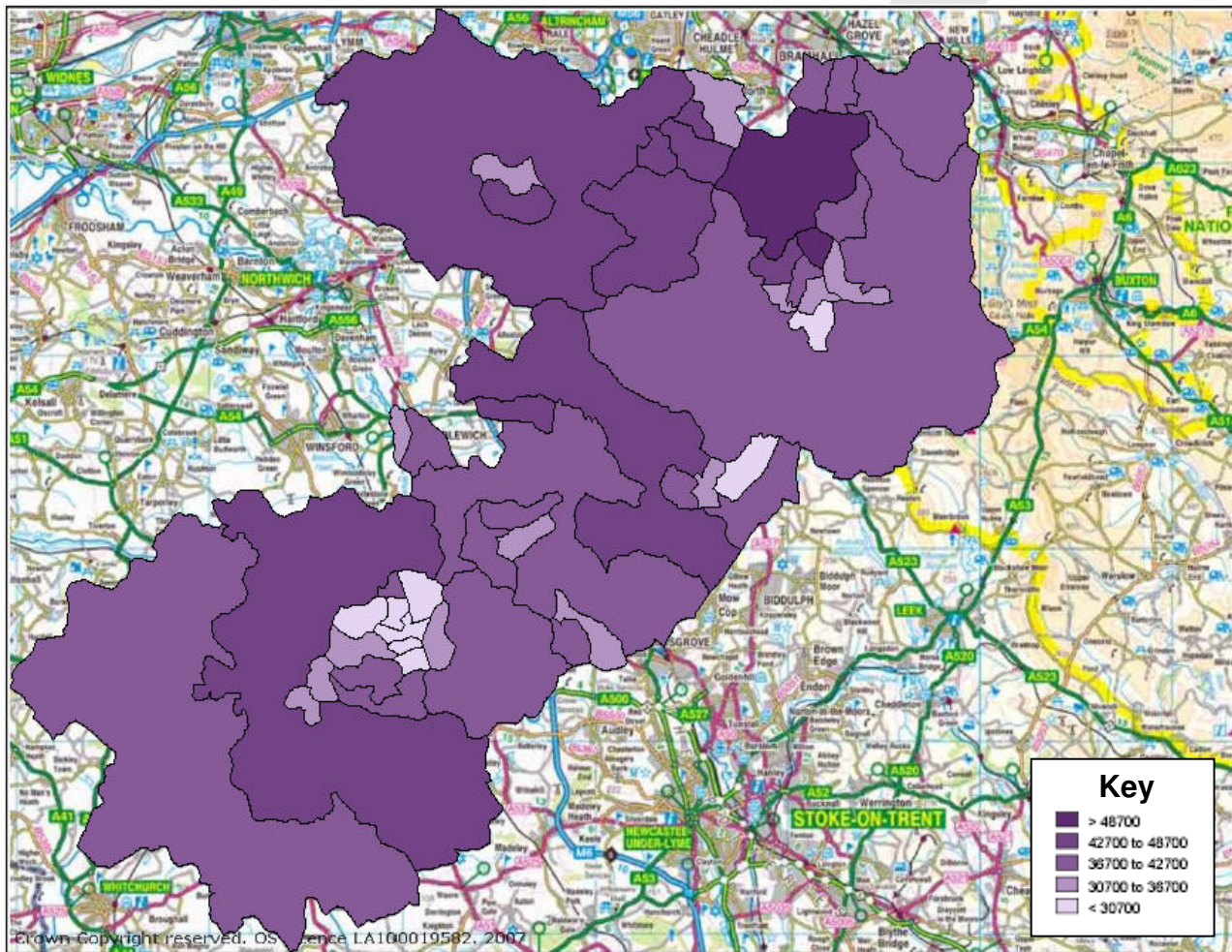
2.14   The average household income in Cheshire East is £38,100 per year, however there is significant disparity of wages across the Borough. Lower income areas are predominantly located within the major towns of Congleton, Crewe, Macclesfield and Nantwich, whilst the majority of the high income areas are the smaller towns and rural areas of the Borough (with the highest average earners located in the north of the Borough). This is indicated in Figure 2.4 below.

2.15   The number of people employed in the pharmaceutical industry is significantly above the national average with particular concentrations in the former Macclesfield District (e.g Astra Zeneca). Advanced engineering is a significant employer in the Crewe area (e.g. Bentley Motors and Bombardier). Both Macclesfield and Crewe are net importers of labour whereas in the Congleton area there is a relative shortage of jobs and a large outflow of jobs. The rural nature of the Borough is reflected in the relatively high number of people employed in agriculture, twice the national average. There are significant numbers of residents, particularly in the north of the Borough, who commute to Greater Manchester to work.

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3   CLG House Price Statistics; Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings 2009.

2 Spatial Portrait

Figure 2.4 Average Weekly Houshold Income in Cheshire East

2.16 In 2008, 166,100 people were employed within Cheshire East. 70% of these were in full time positions and 30% were working part time. Out of those, the majority were employed within the banking, finance and insurance sector (24.9%), 13.5% within the manufacturing sector, 21.9% in public administration, education and health and 24.4% in the distribution and hospitality sector.

2.17 The Borough has major educational assets in terms of skills development and knowledge transfer, in the form of Manchester Metropolitan University at Crewe and three Further Education colleges (South Cheshire, Reaseheath and Macclesfield). The proximity of Manchester International Airport also provides economic benefits to the Borough in terms of access to national and international markets as well as providing a substantial number of jobs.

2.18 Cheshire East has a diverse retail offer, ranging from the traditional town centres to out of centre retail parks including Handforth Dean (Handforth), Grand Junction (Crewe) and Barn Road (Congleton). However many of the Borough's town centres are under performing, in need of revitalisation and suffering from competition from major centres outside the Borough. With the exception of Nantwich and Knutsford, our town centres are insufficiently attractive to bring in visitors from outside the Borough. There is scope therefore to improve the

2 Spatial Portrait

attractiveness and vitality of our town centres. Unfortunately the economic recession has led to uncertainty in the delivery of major town centre redevelopment schemes in Crewe and Macclesfield.

2.19 The visitor economy is an important contributor to the Cheshire East economy with about 10,000 jobs associated with the tourism industry and with a turnover of £653 million. Major attractions include Tatton Park, Jodrell Bank, Styal Mill and the Peak District National Park.

2.20 Over an 8 year period from July 2000 until June 2008, a total of 101,130 people moved into Cheshire East (with particular links to Stockport, Manchester, Trafford and London) and 88,090 people have moved out of the Borough (with particular links to Staffordshire, the South West and North Wales). The result is a net in-flow of 13,040 people (around 1,630 each year)[4]

2.21 Based on data taken from the 2009 Strategic Housing Market Assessment Household Survey, 66% of its 189,771 economically active residents lived and worked in Cheshire East and 34% lived in Cheshire East but worked outside the Borough.

2.22 The Strategic Housing Market Assessment suggests that, on the basis of migration and travel to work data, Cheshire East comprises three housing market areas; one focused on the former Macclesfield District, which exhibits strong interactions with the South Manchester market; a second focused on the former Crewe and Nantwich district, which is largely self-contained; the third is centred around Congleton, which has noticeable market interactions with North Staffordshire and South Manchester.

2.23 Within Cheshire East, statistics indicate that residents have a higher than average CO_2 emissions level, averaging 10.3 tonnes per person more than either the regional or national average of 8.4 tonnes per person. This has implications for local, regional and national air quality. [5]

2.24 Cheshire East's landscape is dominated by the flat topography of the Cheshire plains; however variety is provided as a result of the proximity of the Peak District to the east and the Mid Cheshire Ridge to the west. There is also a diverse and valued range of flora and fauna in the Borough.

2.25 The most prominent environmental designations within Cheshire East are:

- 416 **Sites of Biological Importance** (SBIs) - Locally valued sites of biological diversity;
- 33 **Sites of Special Scientific Interest** (SSSIs) - Nationally important sites, designated as they are felt to represent the very best wildlife and geological sites in the Country;
- 2 **National Nature Reserves** - Nationally important sites established to protect the most important areas of wildlife habitat and geological formations in Britain;
- 1 **Special Protection Area** (SPA) - Designated as a result of its importance as a habitat for rare and vulnerable birds and is of international importance;

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4   ONS Migration Flow Data via NHSCR
5   Source Cheshire East Climate Change Unit

2 Spatial Portrait

- 2 **Special Areas of Conservation** (SAC) - Designated due to their potential to contribute towards the conservation of 189 habitat types and 788 species identified at most in need of conservation at a European level (excluding birds). These sites are of international importance;
- 2 **Ramsar** designations (spread across 9 sites) - Wetlands of international importance designated under the Ramsar Convention; and
- **National Park** designation placed on the Peak District National Park - Designated because of its outstanding value in terms of natural beauty, ecological, archaeological, geological and recreational value.

2.26   The distribution of these key environmental designations is indicated below:
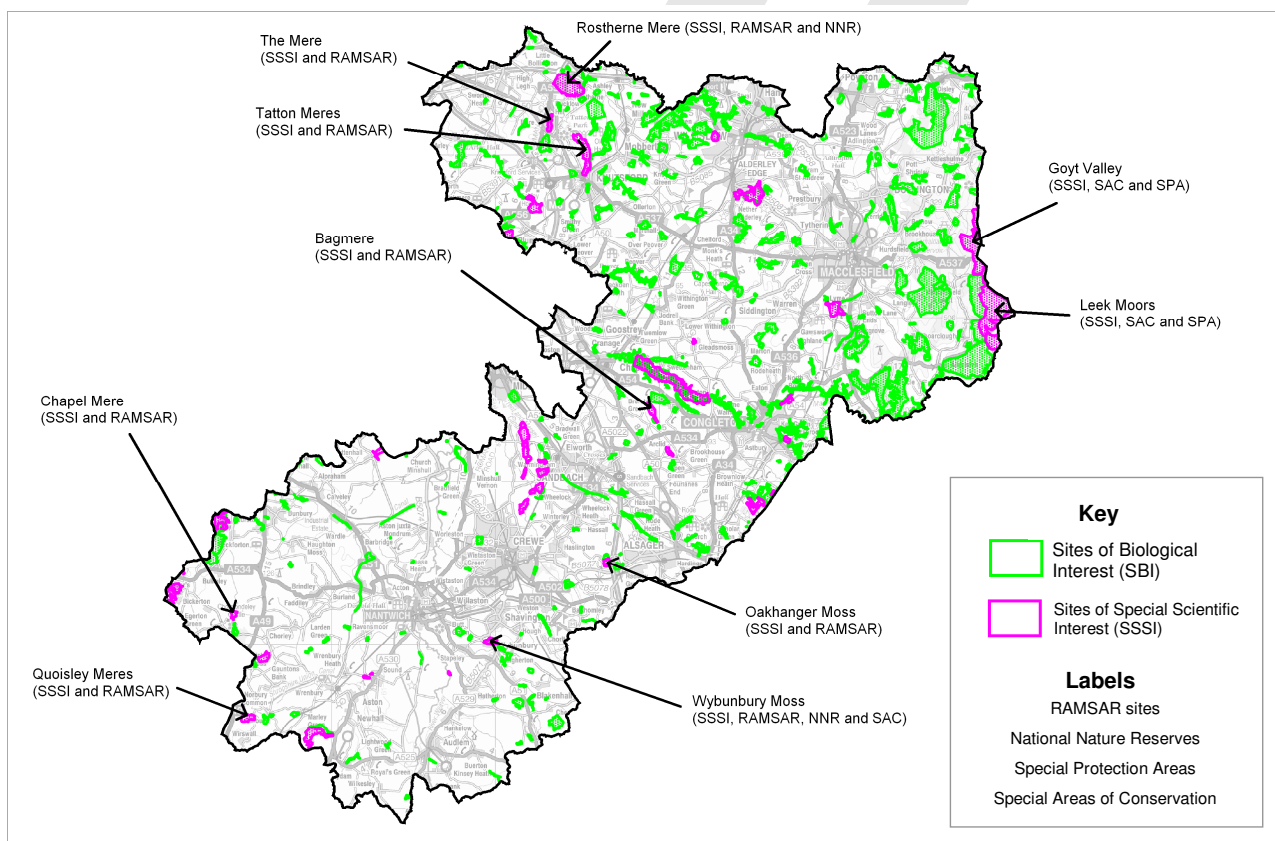
**Figure 2.5 Environmentally Designated Sites in Cheshire East**

2.27   Cheshire East contains a valued, varied and unique heritage which includes a number of cultural and environmental assets. These assets include Macclesfield's industrial heritage, Little Moreton Hall, Crewe's railway heritage, Tatton Park, Lyme Park, Styal Mill, Tegg's Nose, the canal network, historic towns and parts of the Peak District National Park amongst others. Other unique attractions include a wealth of Historic Parks and Gardens and unique events and attractions such as Jodrell Bank Radio Telescope.

2.28   Formal cultural designations present within Cheshire East include:

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- 76 **Conservation Areas** of varying size and scale - Designated as a result of the special character of development that has taken place within them. Within and adjoining these areas there is a statutory duty to pay 'special attention' to development with the intention of preserving/enhancing its character or appearance;
- **Listed buildings** - Those of particular merit, for reason of architectural quality, their social or economic history, association with well known characters or events or because of their group value with other listed buildings. There are 2,637 listings covering a number of different gradings;
- 108 **Scheduled Monuments** (SM) - Historically important sites and monuments;
- 17 registered **Parks and Gardens of Historic Interest** - Viewed as a distinctive and much cherished part of our inheritance;
- 10 **areas of archaeological potential** - Parts of the country where it is deemed likely that buried archaeology has survived; and
- 1 **registered battlefield -** Designated as a result of the importance of events that took place there.
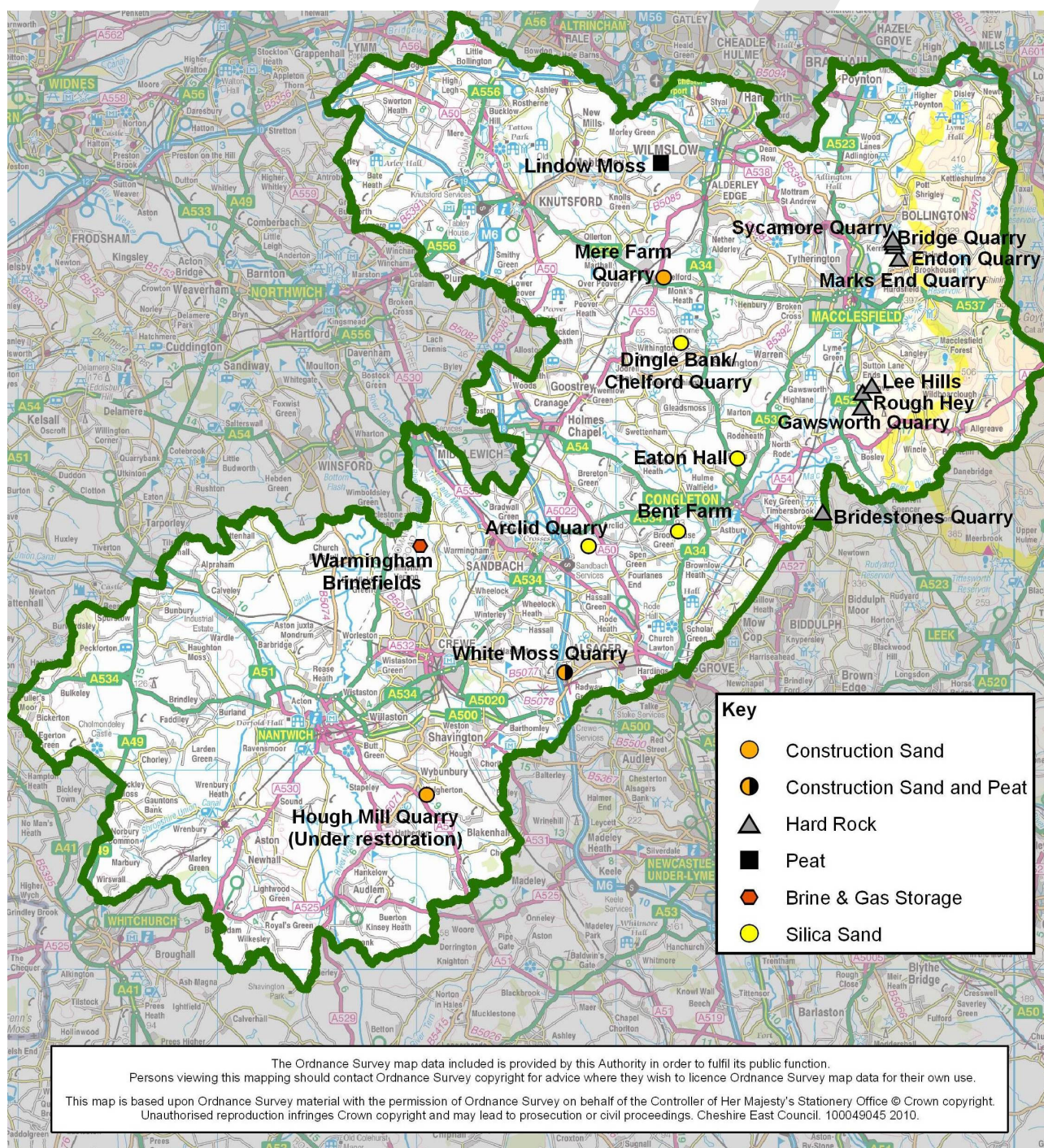
Figure 2.6 Minerals Sites in Cheshire East

2.29   The main mineral types extracted in Cheshire East are silica sand, construction sand and gravel, crushed/hard rock (sandstone), salt (brine) and peat. There are currently 17 permitted minerals sites situated across the Borough.

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2.30 Cheshire East contains key resources of high quality silica sands which are extracted at four sites. The principle use of silica (or industrial) sand is as a raw material in a range of industrial processes; notably glass manufacture and foundry casting. Construction sand and gravel along with hard/crushed rock is extracted primarily for use as aggregate materials in building.

2.31 The Borough also contains significant resources of underground salt that is extracted in the form of brine in an area around Warmingham. Following extraction, specifically created underground cavities are used for the storage of natural gas. In addition, peat resources are extracted at two sites although production is small in scale.

Crewe

2.32 Crewe is the largest town in Cheshire East, with a population of about 70,000. It grew up as a railway town in the nineteenth century; but now it is a major employment centre with a diversified base in education, manufacturing, services and distribution. The major employers are Bentley Motors, Leighton Hospital and Manchester Metropolitan University. Crewe is the primary shopping centre in the south of the Borough although the town centre is in need of major investment; there are plans for a major private sector led redevelopment in the town centre which will increase its attractiveness. The town is also noted for the award winning Crewe Business Park, regarded as the country's first 'green business park'.

2.33 Crewe is often referred to as the "Gateway to the North West". It remains a major railway interchange on the West Coast Main Line. The town is also well served by bus routes. Two large areas of land to the south of the town at Basford have been identified in the Crewe and Nantwich Local Plan as strategically important employment sites, which will provide jobs for the people of south Cheshire and north Staffordshire. This will help to redress Crewe's problems with economic inactivity, which is higher than the Borough average, in addition local residents have the lowest average income. Parts of the west end of Crewe are particularly disadvantaged; an area where life expectancy is 20 years less than the more affluent areas of Cheshire East.

2.34 There is currently planning permission for the construction of an additional 905 dwellings in the town, although about 200 of these are dependent on legal agreements being signed.

2.35 The Council has commissioned work (Crewe Vision) to advise in unlocking the economic potential of the town. This includes developing the knowledge economy and broadband access, and utilising the potential of the Basford sites, Crewe Railway Station and the town centre. The regeneration proposed is likely to see the population increase by some 25%. There is a recognition that there will be a need for major transport improvements to be made to serve new housing and employment development in Crewe, including the completion of the Crewe Green Link Road and dualling of the A500 to Junction 16 of the M6 Motorway.

2 Spatial Portrait

Macclesfield

2.36 Macclesfield is the second largest town in Cheshire East, with a population of about 51,000. It is situated in the north eastern part of the borough on the River Bollin. It is close to the county borders of Greater Manchester to the north, and the Derbyshire Peak District to the east.

2.37 The town is most famous for its once thriving silk industry. Present day industries include: pharmaceuticals, textiles, light engineering, paper and plastics. One of the world's largest pharmaceutical companies Astra Zeneca is located at nearby Alderley Park. In addition many residents work in Greater Manchester.

2.38 Macclesfield has the largest shopping centre in the Borough with over 500 shops. There is a need however for new investment into the town centre to improve its retail offer, to improve the public realm and to boost the night time economy. There are plans for major new retail development in the town which will further improve its attractiveness. Although the northern part of Cheshire East is very prosperous, Macclesfield does have its problems; some of the areas in the town show evidence of multiple deprivation.

2.39 The town is well served by bus routes and the railway station is on the West Coast Main Line with direct regular services to Stoke-on-Trent, Manchester and London Euston.

2.40 There is currently planning permission for the construction of an additional 872 dwellings in the town, although 54 are dependent on legal agreements being signed.

2.41 Cheshire East Council is preparing an Economic Masterplan to revitalise Macclesfield. This will consider the future role of the town and determine how the South Macclesfield Development Area can be brought forward.

Alsager

2.42 Alsager is a small town in the south east of the Borough with a population of 12,460. It lies east of Crewe and is bounded by the Stoke-on-Trent conurbation to the south. It was a small farming village until the 19th century when due to its rail connections and rural character, it became popular with managers from the nearby Potteries. During the Second World War, a large armaments factory was built outside the town at Radway Green, and the town grew to house the influx of factory workers. This site remains the town's largest employer.

2.43 More recently the town was noted for the presence of the Alsager campus of the Manchester Metropolitan University; but in 2006 the process began of transferring staff and departments to the Crewe Campus. The whole of the site is due to close by 2011 although some of the sports facilities may remain in situ.

2.44 Alsager town centre stretches along the main street. The town centre is focused around the crossroads of the B5077 (Crewe Road / Lawton Road) and the B5078 (Sandbach Road North / Sandbach Road South) and comprises approximately 102 retail units. Within this area two Principal Shopping Areas are defined in the Congleton Borough Local Plan;

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one to the east along Lawton Road and one to the west on Crewe Road. In addition, the town centre includes Milton Park, a large area of public open space that has recently been remodelled.

2.45   The number of jobs available within the area is low, although the unemployment rate is lower than the Cheshire East average . Income levels are also generally below the Cheshire East average. Two of the major employers in the town, Manchester Metropolitan University and Twyfords, are in the process of closing their sites.

2.46   The town is served by several bus routes that provide access to Crewe, Hanley, Sandbach, Kidsgrove and Nantwich. The railway station, which is a short walk from the town centre, provides links to Crewe and Stoke-on-Trent, Derby, Lichfield and on to Northampton, Milton Keynes and London Euston.

2.47   There are currently planning permissions in place for the construction of an additional 167 dwellings in the town.

2.48   In respect of constraints to development, the town is bounded to the south and east by Green Belt and there is also an area to the south included in a flood risk zone.

Congleton

2.49   Congleton is a large market town with a population of 26,580. It lies on the River Dane in the east of the borough. In its early days it was an important centre of textile production, especially lace and leather gloves. Today the principal industries in Congleton include the manufacture of airbags. There are light engineering factories and sand extraction occurs on the Cheshire Plain, although much of the area is now a dormitory for Manchester, Macclesfield and Stoke-on-Trent.

2.50   Congleton has a reasonably vibrant town centre with 241 retail units, however vacancy rates are currently high.   Planning permission has recently been granted for a retail development in the town centre that will increase the town's attractiveness. The development will take the form of an extension to the Bridestones Centre through to Mill Street providing a new home for the town's market.

2.51   The town is served by several bus routes and has its own railway station with direct services between Stoke-on-Trent and Manchester. The M6 is a short distance away.

2.52   There is currently planning permission for the construction of an additional 325 dwellings in the town.

2.53   Constraints to development include Green Belt to the south and east, and to the north east the Jodrell Bank Radio Telescopes Consultation Zone.

Handforth

2.54   Handforth is a suburban area on the northern edge of Cheshire East with a population of 6,150. In the 1950's, two Manchester overspill housing estates were built in the area to rehouse people from Victorian slums of inner city Manchester.

2.55 The town has a small shopping centre containing 46 retail units. The Handforth Dean Retail Park contains a number of large format retailers.

2.56 The town has an economic activity rate lower than that of Cheshire East. One in three residents are economically inactive. Average household income levels are the second lowest in Cheshire East.

2.57 A large proportion of jobs in Handforth are located at the Stanley Green industrial estate and the Retail Park. There is a high level of in-commuting, particularly from Stockport.

2.58 There is no direct road access between the settlement of Handforth and Stanley Green / Handforth Dean. Access to the industrial estate and Retail Park is only available from the A34 bypass. Once constructed, the A555 Manchester Airport Eastern Link Road will provide quick road access to the airport, approximately 4 km to the north-west.

2.59 Handforth has its own railway station with two trains per hour serving Crewe and Manchester. Regular buses serve Macclesfield, Manchester, Stockport and Wilmslow.

2.60 There is currently planning permission for just one additional dwelling in the town.

2.61 Handforth is bounded by Green Belt and there are areas of flood risk surrounding the River Dean and other local watercourses.

Knutsford

2.62 Knutsford is a dormitory town with a population of 12,570 people. It lies in the north east of the borough some 19 km to the south west of Manchester and 18 km north west of Macclesfield. After the Second World War overspill housing estates were created in the town to accommodate families from Manchester. This area has localised pockets of deprivation. Tatton Park borders the town to the north.

2.63 Within the town centre, there are 205 retail units, making it the sixth largest shopping centre in the Borough. It contains many buildings of architectural or historic importance.

2.64 There are reasonable daytime bus services linking Knutsford with Altrincham, Macclesfield, Northwich and Wilmslow. The railway station is centrally located and has one train per hour to Chester, Manchester, Northwich and Stockport. There is significant out-commuting to Manchester and Stockport.

2.65 There is currently planning permission for an additional 82 dwellings within the town.

2.66 There are constraints to development with Knutsford tightly bounded by Green Belt. The grounds of Tatton Park extend virtually into the town centre, and there is an area of flood risk to the east of the town.

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Middlewich

2.67   Middlewich is a market town with a population of 13,390. It dates back to Roman times when it was important for the production of salt. Salt is still manufactured at British Salt, which employs around 125 people. The close proximity to the M6 motorway has led to the creation of a large distribution and business park at Midpoint 18.

2.68   The town centre has 95 retail units and is centred on Wheelock Street where planning permission has been granted for a new supermarket. In recent years tourism has become increasingly important, with the annual Folk and Boat Festival being a notable attraction. The Trent and Mersey Canal runs through the town and is an important tourism and recreational resource.

2.69   Although there is a railway line that runs through the town, it is currently used solely for freight movements. There is no railway station or passenger rail service within the town, but there are bus services providing access to Crewe, Holmes Chapel Congleton, Northwich, Sandbach and Winsford. The M6 is a short distance away linked to the town by the A54. An Eastern Bypass for Middlewich has been partially constructed in recent years. The construction of the final section linking to the A533 Booth Lane to the south of the town will open up further land for employment development as well as improving environmental conditions in the town centre. The timing of this project, being largely dependent upon private sector funding, is currently uncertain.

2.70   There is currently planning permission for the construction of an additional 104 dwellings in the town.

2.71   Constraints on development include the Jodrell Bank Radio Telescopes Consultation Zone. There is an area of archaeological potential that covers part of the north eastern area of the town.

Nantwich

2.72   Nantwich is a thriving service centre with a population of 17,180. It dates back to Roman times, when it was a centre for the production of salt. Nantwich has a thriving town centre with 286, mainly independent, units.   The town itself contains more than 100 listed buildings, and has the largest collection of historic buildings in the Borough. It is also a popular destination for tourists and visitors from its large rural hinterland.

2.73   Nantwich railway station lies on the line from Crewe to Cardiff via Shrewsbury. Bus services are relatively good with regular services to residential areas of the town and to Crewe.

2.74   There is planning permission for the construction of an additional 383 dwellings in the town, although 256 of these are dependent on legal agreements being signed.

2.75   In respect of planning constraints, the River Weaver floodplain runs though the town.

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Poynton

2.76 Poynton is a dormitory town (population 13,190) in the north eastern corner of the borough, (11 km) north of Macclesfield, (8 km) south of Stockport. It was once an important coal mining area.

2.77 The shopping centre has 115 retail units. A programme of environmental improvements is currently planned for the town centre.

2.78 Two buses per hour serve the town, providing links to Bollington, Stockport and Macclesfield. The railway station is on the western side of the town and has one train per hour serving stations between Manchester and Stoke-on-Trent.

2.79 There is currently planning permission for the construction of 74 additional dwellings in Poynton.

2.80 The settlement is tightly bounded by Green Belt and development land within the town is very limited. There are some small areas at risk of flooding adjoining Poynton Brook.

Sandbach

2.81 Sandbach is a market town with a population of 17,880. Its origins date back to Saxon times.   It is widely famed for its weekly Thursday market and the ancient Saxon Crosses. It contains a number of areas and features of historical and architectural value as well as encompassing several significant areas of local environmental importance. Although important for its former truck manufacturing industries, there have been significant changes in its employment base recently with significant losses of manufacturing jobs.

2.82 The town centre has 144 retail units. The town is now the headquarters of Cheshire East Council, which is the largest employer.

2.83 There is a railway station on the edge of the town providing services to Crewe Manchester and Manchester Airport. There is also a reasonable bus service, with routes providing access to Congleton, Crewe, Northwich and Macclesfield. The town lies adjacent to junction 17 of the M6.

2.84 There is currently planning permission for the construction of 876 additional dwellings.

2.85 Planning constraints relate to areas around the town being at risk of flooding.

Wilmslow

2.86 Wilmslow, population 22,530, lies in the north of the Borough. The town is noted for its high quality housing and shopping, making it a sought after location.

2.87 The town centre has 234 retail units. The town is also served by the out-of-town Handforth Dean Retail Park which includes major stores for Tesco and Marks and Spencer. The town has a strong office sector both within the town centre and also on a number of

2 Spatial Portrait

large out-of-town office parks. 43.4% of the local jobs are in financial services. A large number of residents work in Manchester, with other significant commuter flows to Stockport and Macclesfield. The nearby Manchester International Airport is also a major employer.

2.88 The town has easy road access to the M60 and M56. Manchester Airport is 5 km to the north. Access will be improved when the western section of the Manchester Airport Eastern Link Road is completed.

2.89 Wilmslow has a reasonable local bus network serving destinations including Knutsford, Macclesfield, Manchester Airport, Manchester and Stockport. The railway station is on the West Coast Main Line served by local and long-distance services.

2.90 There is currently planning permission for the construction of almost 500 additional dwellings in the town.

2.91 There are constraints to development. The town is tightly bounded by Green Belt and there are areas of flood risk surrounding the River Bollin, the River Dean and Whitehall Brook.

3 Key Challenges

3.1   The Core Strategy needs to provide a clear vision and strategy to guide the growth of Cheshire East over the next 15-20 years. This strategy must help to deliver the ambitions of the Sustainable Community Strategy. The Core Strategy will also need to address cross cutting   issues of national importance such as tackling climate change and delivering sustainable communities.

Sustainable Development

3.2   Cheshire East Council has to contribute to tackling the issue of climate change through developing appropriate strategies through the Local Development Framework. Greenhouse gas emissions, particularly carbon dioxide (CO_2), are the main cause of climate change. In the UK, three quarters of our current energy supply comes from burning fossil fuels; a process that is a huge emitter of CO_2. In addition to this, road transport in the UK is responsible for 21% of the total UK greenhouse gas emissions.

3.3   In response to this, the UK currently has a legally binding EU target to produce 15% of its energy from renewable sources by 2020, up from about 2.25% in 2008. In addition to this, through the Climate Change Act 2008, the UK has a statutory duty to reduce its carbon emissions as a whole by 2050, to levels 80% lower than a 1990 baseline.

3.4   The Core Strategy will incorporate policies relating to climate change such as:

- Create sustainable urban and rural communities that locate development in places that are close to jobs, services, and have good links to public transport, so reducing the need to travel, especially by private car;
- Provide opportunities to travel through the Borough by means other than the private car;
- Utilising our landscape, for example green infrastructure for urban cooling and functional flood plains, as well as the identification of carbon sinks that absorb and store emissions;
- Safeguarding land from development that is required for current and future flood management;
- Reducing flood risk to and from new development through location, layout and design, and through the incorporation of sustainable drainage systems (suds);
- Conserving water through the careful design of new developments;
- Protecting and enhancing biodiversity throughout the Borough from the threat of climate change;
- Ensure new development meets a high standard of energy efficiency, so reducing carbon emissions and using the siting and layout of the development to maximise solar gain and natural light, for example; and
- Incorporate low and zero carbon energy requirements into new developments, through decentralised energy supply, as well as through the use of combined/district heating networks.

3.5   Creating sustainable communities is about :

3 Key Challenges

- Increasing jobs and economic growth, promoting social justice and improving the quality of life;
- Ensuring that in delivering new development, a sense of place is maintained or created through careful and sympathetic design;
- Encouraging people to get involved in the decisions that affect their community;
- Planning for schools, hospitals, leisure facilities and transport as an integral part of development; and
- Improving the environment, for example by making streets, parks and squares cleaner, safer and greener, and building more environmentally friendly buildings.

Other Evidence

3.6 In addition the Core Strategy has to address issues which have or are emerging from a range of research which the Council has commissioned. Studies include

- Cheshire Retail Study Update (2010);
- Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2010);
- Cheshire Warrington Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Assessment (2007);
- Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (2010);
- Transport Infrastructure Baseline Position (2010);
- Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2008); and
- Settlement Hierarchy Study (2010).

3.7 The following studies are also in progress, and will inform the development of later stages of the Core Strategy:

- Employment Land Review;
- Open Space Survey;
- Green Infrastructure;
- Renewable Energy; and
- Infrastructure Baseline (non transport).

3.8 Based on the evidence that has been gathered, a number of specific key issues have been identified, as set out in the following sections.

Economy

3.9 A well-performing local economy is vital for the development of sustainable communities. Overall, the Cheshire East economy performs well when considered against regional and national indicators, especially in skill levels, business start-ups and knowledge-based employment. However, this masks significant variations at the local level, with the Crewe economy in particular performing below the Cheshire East average.

3.10 As indicated in Section 1 of this document, the Council, together with Cheshire West and Chester and Warrington Borough Councils, has committed to significant economic growth in the sub-region over the next twenty years or so. This strategy provides for a substantial growth in Gross Value Added , a step change in the economic performance of Crewe, sustaining the success of Macclesfield and surrounding area and revitalising our market

towns as employment locations, visitor attractions and service centres. Similarly the Sustainable Community Strategy focuses on the importance of creating conditions for business growth and unlocking the potential of Cheshire East towns.

3.11 The underlying geology of Cheshire East means that the Borough has a broad range of mineral deposits and resources that are of local, regional and, in some cases, national importance; it is one of the few areas where high quality silica sand for the foundry and glass making industries is found in the UK. In terms of waste, it is essential that it is handled, treated and disposed of in a way that is sensitive to the environment and economical for the local community and businesses. Waste represents a potential resource from which materials, energy and value can be recovered.

3.12 The sub-regional ambitions and the priorities of the Sustainable Community Strategy pose considerable challenges for the Core Strategy. These key challenges can be summarised as follows:

- The need to ensure that an adequate supply of land is available for new economic development, meeting the needs of the local economy and helping to facilitate sustainable economic growth;
- The need to encourage employment-generating developments in the right locations, meeting the needs of the local population whilst reducing the need to travel;
- A need to protect good quality employment sites from other forms of higher-value development;
- A need to make provision for occupiers displaced from lower-grade sites redeveloped for alternative uses;
- A need to identify and build on new emerging sectors with strong growth potential;
- Increasing the availability of jobs in deprived areas and pockets of worklessness; addressing a shortage of jobs in the former Congleton area;
- Minimising the skills gap and ensuring that local people are able to take advantage of new opportunities;
- Counteracting increased competition for investment in jobs from other locations, regionally, nationally and internationally;
- Provision of good digital connections to enable innovation and technological improvements;
- Predicted increase in the proportion of older people and a smaller working-age population;
- To address the impacts of climate change, rising energy costs and the need to move towards a low-carbon economy;
- A need to maximise related opportunities arising from the Green Economy;
- Further diversification of the economy to reduce the reliance on a relatively small number of large employers and key sectors that could be vulnerable to future changes in the economy;
- To make efficient use of natural resources, encouraging sustainable production and consumption;
- To reduce waste generation and reliance on landfill disposal, primarily through recycling and composting; and
- To protect key mineral deposits for possible extraction.

3 Key Challenges

Housing

3.13 Housing plays a significant role in creating sustainable communities, therefore we need to create places where people want to live, improve the quality of our housing stock and make sure that no group of people is disadvantaged because of the housing they have available to them.

3.14 The Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) (2010) plays an important role in informing the amount and mix of types and size of housing required in the Borough. It states that, through natural change alone, the population of the Borough is expected to increase from 362,800 (2009) to 379,300 by 2026. This will mean an increase in the number of households from 138,000 to 171,000 during that same period, pointing to an annual increase of 1,320 households.

3.15 Over the last decade, strong demand for housing in Cheshire East has contributed to a dramatic increase in house prices and created an acute need for both market and affordable housing to meet the needs of the local community. We want to ensure that sufficient affordable housing is provided across Cheshire East, especially in the areas where the gap between house prices and average earnings is the greatest. The Strategic Housing Market Assessment found that there is a net shortfall in 1,243 affordable houses each year

3.16 The Strategic Housing Market Assessment also states that the population of Cheshire East is ageing, with an increase of 44% between 2009 and 2026 in the number of residents over the age of 65. This trend will create a significant additional demand for adapted and specialist housing in the Borough.

3.17 There are a number of key challenges for housing within Cheshire East and these include:

- Identifying an appropriate supply of land for residential development in the most suitable and sustainable locations;
- The creation of balanced communities throughout the Borough by providing an appropriate mix of housing types, sizes and tenures to ensure that residents have a choice of accommodation to meet their current and future needs;
- The provision of affordable housing to meet the needs of the local community;
- Ensuring the provision of appropriate housing to meet the needs of an increasingly ageing population;
- Consider the identified need of the Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Show People communities; and
- The creation of high quality residential environments by ensuring the principles of good design, sustainability and accessibility are incorporated into all new residential developments.

3.18 The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) assesses sites that have potential for housing development over the next fifteen years. This will be used to inform the formulation of the strategic development options for future housing provision.

3 Key Challenges

Retail / Town Centres

3.19   The services and facilities that town centres provide are vital for local communities and their surrounding areas, with an appropriate range providing opportunities for communities to be self-contained, reducing the need to travel, amongst other outcomes. Cheshire East has a diverse retail offer that includes thriving markets and unit-based shopping centres, with the vitality of these centres varying across the Borough. It is recognised that the vitality of our town centres very much impact on the image of the area and its attractiveness as a place to invest, live and visit.

3.20   A supporting 'Cheshire Retail Study Update' document has been produced, the contents of which will be taken into account in due course in determining the future capacity for additional retail floorspace in our town centres. The key challenges for the Core Strategy in respect of retailing and town centres are:

- To facilitate major regeneration schemes and revitalisation in Crewe and Macclesfield town centres;
- In our smaller towns in the Borough, to create attractive, vital and viable town centres to support the wider economy;
- To ensure the retail needs of communities are met;
- Provision of an appropriate range of services and facilities within all our town centres;
- The retention of local distinctiveness within the town centres;
- The management of evening and night-time economies; and
- To retain village shops, recognising their role as community facilities;

Accessibility and Transport

3.21   Accessibility of settlements and transportation choices can influence travel patterns and levels of sustainability within the Borough. Accessible locations via a choice of transportation methods has an impact upon the functionality of individual settlements and how they interrelate. It can also have an impact upon climate change and the carbon footprint of individuals, organisations and the Borough overall.

3.22   Locationally, Cheshire East has excellent national and international transport links via the motorway network, rail connections and proximity to Manchester and Liverpool airports. All of the main settlements are connected by regular bus services. Public transport choices in rural areas are, however, far more limited.

3.23   There are a number of key challenges for the Core Strategy in relation to the issue of accessibility and transportation. These include:

- Encouraging development in accessible locations; sites should have good accessibility by means other than the car to key services including health, retail, education, employment and leisure;
- Ensuring that, where new development is proposed, the transport infrastructure necessary to serve that development is delivered;

3 Key Challenges

- Promoting sustainable travel options, by enhancing the current footpath, cycling and bridle networks, protecting the current waterways, rail lines and bus routes and providing new infrastructure where appropriate;
- Improving transport links to serve major growth at Crewe and to provide better access to the Motorway network at Junctions 16, 17 and 18 of the M6.
- Improving access to services in rural areas;
- The need to address areas of poor integration between different forms of transport and interconnecting issues with the frequency of public transport connections especially in the more rural areas of the Borough;
- To reduce delay on the road networks by minimising the need to travel and promoting alternative methods of transportation;
- Improving passenger and interchange facilities at our railway stations;
- Improving the frequency of rail services; and
- Improving facilities for cycling at our stations.

Health and Wellbeing

3.24 The health of Cheshire East residents is generally better than the England average. [6] Residents enjoy a good overall quality of life. Despite this, there are some parts of Cheshire East where the experience is different. Around 6% of our population live in neighbourhoods classified as being in the 20% most deprived nationally. [7] There are some significant health inequalities between parts of Cheshire East, with life expectancies varying considerably between the relatively more deprived parts of Crewe and the less deprived areas of settlements such as Wilmslow.

3.25 In addition to an individual's lifestyle and health choices, we must also consider the 'social determinants of health'. For example the quality of someone's housing can affect their health; the amount of income a family has can impact on their ability to enjoy a healthy standard of living; access to good transport may influence someone's ability to see their doctor or attend a local service. Our challenge is to enable everyone to have the same opportunities as their neighbours and for no-one to be disadvantaged because of where they live or any other factor such as their age, gender, physical ability, ethnicity and so on.

3.26 There are a number of key challenges for the Core Strategy to address for the health and wellbeing of Cheshire East residents; these can be summarised as follows:

- Enable everyone to have access to the same opportunities as the next neighbourhood or settlement area;
- Ensure that we have an adequate supply of suitable extra care housing and improved access to services frequently used by older people;
- Demographic changes will have to be planned for to keep residents fit and active and enable Cheshire East residents to enjoy a healthy older age and lower the risk of long term illness;
- Reducing the impacts of the differences in prosperity in Cheshire East through increased access to services, employment and educational opportunities;

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6   Association of Public Observatories 2010
7   2007 Index of Multiple Deprivation

- Improved air quality across Cheshire East, with a focus on reducing pollution and emissions in problematic areas;
- Improved access to health services, recreational facilities and open spaces to enable residents to live their life in a healthy way; and
- Increased provision of green infrastructure, amenities, services, public transport and other key determinants of health and wellbeing in the Borough.

Open Space, Sport and Leisure

3.27   Open spaces and the opportunities they offer are highly valued by the community and link crucially with both physical and mental health. The challenges facing open space provision are broad ranging and centre round how to deal with the aspirations and expectations of the communities living in the densely populated residential areas of Cheshire East. Many of the challenges are not new and have emerged from previous consultation exercises such as the development of park and play strategies and previous open space audits. Some newer challenges such as biodiversity and climate change now have to be examined in more detail. A supporting 'Open Space Study' document is currently being produced, the contents of which will be taken into account in due course. The key challenges for the Core Strategy to address are:

- To ensure quality and variety in outdoor play spaces;
- A need for local facilities to be accessible on foot;
- To deal with the open space deficiencies and refurbish and improve certain facilities and areas;
- Address skills issues regarding grounds maintenance and the need to respond to cleanliness and damage issues promptly;
- Improve communication and liaison between the various providers and users of open space;
- Take advantage of opportunities for increasing the biodiversity of open spaces;
- To conserve, enhance and where necessary provide additional Green Infrastructure in the Borough, including open spaces, countryside, woodlands, lakes, private gardens and the setting of the Peak District National Park; and
- Utilising our landscape, for example green infrastructure for urban cooling and functional flood plains, as well as the identification of carbon sinks that absorb and store emissions.

Environment

3.28   The built and natural environment play an important part in the character of Cheshire East and includes areas of high landscape quality, soil and water quality and its built heritage. The Borough has a wide and varied landscape that is of significant value both for wildlife habitats and as a recreation resource.   It has a diverse and varied history, reflected in its social and architectural legacy.

3.29   The aquatic environment is another important resource, creating a valuable habitat in its own right and a link between other fragmented habitats, as well as acting as a source of water for human activities. However, despite the numerous benefits of water, it poses a threat through flooding.

3 Key Challenges

3.30 There are therefore many environmental challenges within Cheshire East that have been summarised as:

- To conserve and enhance the geodiversity and biodiversity of the Borough, paying particular attention to important wildlife and habitat sites and areas under threat;
- To conserve and enhance the numerous historically important sites and their settings. Particularly those sites designated as Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, Scheduled Monuments, registered Historic Parks and archaeological sites;
- To manage and mitigate flood risk in the Borough;
- Safeguarding land from development that is required for current and future flood management:
- Reducing flood risk to and from new development through location, layout and design, and through the incorporation of sustainable drainage systems (suds). This is especially important for infrastructure;
- Conserving water through measures used in the construction and use of new developments;
- To manage the significant development pressures on land within the Borough to balance the need for development and the requirement to protect existing natural and man-made environments, particularly those protected by statutory designations;
- To make effective use of existing buildings, previously developed land and existing infrastructure;
- Ensure new development meets a high standard of energy efficiency, so reducing carbon emissions, through using the energy hierarchy, and using the siting and layout of the development to maximise solar gain and natural light, for example;
- Incorporate low and zero carbon energy requirements into new developments, through decentralised energy supply, as well as through the use of combined/district heating networks; and
- To protect the environment by minimising pollution on land, in water and in the air.

4 Spatial Vision

4.1   The Local Development Framework, and in particular the Core Strategy, provides the mechanism through which the spatial elements of the Sustainable Community Strategy can be delivered. The Spatial Vision of the Core Strategy provides a picture of the type of place we wish Cheshire East to be in 2030 and beyond. From this vision, the Core Strategy objectives and growth options will be developed.

4.2   A draft Spatial Vision for Cheshire East is set out below:

Draft Spatial Vision for Cheshire East

Cheshire East in 2030 will continue to be a thriving area with sustainable urban and rural communities set within attractive countryside. In 2030 and beyond, Cheshire East will be an economically prosperous area, with a strong and diverse employment base and low unemployment. It will be home to both multi-national companies and a large number of small and medium enterprises and will continue to benefit from its strategic location close to the Greater Manchester and Potteries conurbations and with excellent road and rail links to the rest of the country.

Cheshire East will continue to be a desirable place to live, with lively and attractive towns and villages, surrounded by beautiful countryside. The population of the Borough will have increased significantly and this growth will have been largely accommodated in sustainable urban extensions and through the sensitive redevelopment of previous developed land. The infrastructure to support this growth will have been delivered in partnership with other organisations and affordable housing to meet local needs will have been provided in mixed communities united by a strong local identity. Crime will have reduced and people will feel safe in their neighbourhoods and town centres.

Cheshire East will have a thriving and diversified economy; employment opportunities will have increased with the development of new high quality employment sites that meet the needs of the 21st Century economy and through the redevelopment of our town centres. Based primarily on its landscape and heritage assets, Cheshire East's importance as a tourism destination will have increased.

People in the towns and villages will have a high quality of life with good access to education, jobs, services, shops and public transport, mostly within walking and cycling distances. The transport infrastructure will have been improved and there will be reduced congestion and better access to public transport throughout the Borough, with an extensive network of pedestrian routes and cycleways.

People will lead healthy and active lifestyles benefiting from improved access to sporting facilities, high quality open spaces and the open countryside while being supported by a good network of local health centres.

4 Spatial Vision

The town centres of Crewe, Macclesfield, Congleton and Wilmslow will be thriving retail and leisure destinations, reducing the need to travel to larger centres. Smaller centres will provide a range of shops and services catering for local needs in the suburban and rural areas.

Cheshire East will play a lead role in reducing carbon emissions and tackling climate change, through increased generation of renewable energy and the incorporation of community heat and power systems, energy efficient buildings and more sustainable patterns of development that enable more people to travel by public transport, cycle or on foot.

The Borough will be coping well with the challenges of an ageing population, partly by retaining larger numbers of younger people and families (through the provision of an appropriate range of housing in terms of size and tenure), who will help support the older communities but also through increased investment in accommodation for the elderly.

By 2030, **Crewe** will have been transformed into a vibrant sub-regional centre with significant investment in the town centre, employment, housing, education and infrastructure.

Crewe town centre and the corridor to the railway station will be redeveloped to provide substantially improved retail leisure and cultural facilities.

The railway station will have been remodelled so that it is fit for purpose in the 21st Century including an enhanced bus interchange and safer passenger facilities.

The Basford employment sites will have been developed to create a regionally significant employment development including a science orientated business/innovation park.

Sustainable urban extensions will have been developed providing an integrated approach to the growth in the town's population and a range of housing choices in an attractive and sustainable environment. The provision of social and community infrastructure will have been an integral part of the new housing development.

The West End and other deprived areas of Crewe will have undergone regeneration including the improvement of the physical fabric of these areas covering housing, public realm and connectivity.

Significant change will also have taken place in the town of **Macclesfield**. The redevelopment of the town centre will have taken place to better meet the needs of the community, improving the town's retail, office, tourism and leisure facilities and its culture and heritage. More people will live and work in the town centre, adding vibrancy during the day and into the evening, which together with environmental improvements will have created a safe and desirable place for residents and visitors alike.

4 Spatial Vision

The potential of the South Macclesfield Development Area will have been realised providing new housing, job opportunities and leisure facilities. Employers, landowners and developers will have worked with the Council to improve the local transport infrastructure.

Outside Crewe and Macclesfield, a network of vibrant and prosperous smaller towns will exist that have reinforced their roles as local service centres providing employment, housing and a range of shopping, education, healthcare, cultural, leisure and other services to the local area. **Alsager, Congleton, Handforth, Knutsford, Middlewich, Nantwich, Poynton, Sandbach** and **Wilmslow** will be the main centres for growth, with new housing and employment development in sustainable locations. Here, smaller independent traders will have continued to thrive, contributing to a strong sense of place. New high quality homes and business premises will have met local needs and those wishing to live and work here.

In some of our larger villages, which provide a reasonable range of shops and services, such as **Alderley Edge, Audlem**, **Bollington, Bunbury, Chelford, Disley, Goostrey, Haslington, Holmes Chapel, Mobberley, Prestbury, Shavington** and **Wrenbury,** some modest growth in housing and employment will have taken place to meet local needs, to reduce the level of out-commuting and to secure their continuing vitality.

The rural economy will have grown stronger and diversified, based primarily on agriculture but supplemented by appropriate small-scale tourism, recreation and other rural businesses. At the same time, our many areas of landscape value and sites of nature conservation importance will have been protected from development.

5 Spatial Objectives

5 Spatial Objectives

5.1 Building on this vision, a number of key objectives for Cheshire East have been developed. These are:

5.2 **Reducing the Borough's impact on climate change by establishing sustainable patterns of development, and by prudently managing natural resources, promoting renewable energy and energy efficiency.** This will be delivered by:

- Building homes that are close, or easily accessible, to where people work, shop and enjoy recreational activities;
- Focusing development in locations that have efficient and reliable public transport;
- Building homes and commercial premises that are energy efficient and produce lower carbon emissions and are designed to take account of the effects of climate change;
- Increasing the use of renewable energy and low carbon energy, e.g. wind power, biomass and solar power;
- Avoiding developing land that may be at risk from the effects of climate change, e.g. areas liable to flooding;
- Promoting the management and containment of waste within the Borough; and
- Addressing the local causes of water, air, light and noise pollution and the contamination of land.

5.3 **Promoting economic prosperity by creating conditions for business growth**. This will be delivered by:

- Harnessing emerging growth opportunities to develop a sustainable and diverse employment base in the Borough;
- Capitalising on the attractiveness of environment of the Borough and accessibility to support indigenous businesses, attract inward investment and facilitate the growth of new firms;
- Providing an adequate supply of employment sites of various types and sizes across the Borough; and
- Securing the infrastructure to develop the strategic employment sites such as Basford at Crewe, Midpoint 18 Phase 3 at Middlewich and the South Macclesfield Development Area.

5.4 **Delivering sufficient housing in terms of quantity, quality, tenure, affordability and location to meet the Borough's needs**. This will be delivered by:

- Providing for a significant number of new dwellings in all parts of the Borough to 2030 to support economic growth and development;
- Ensuring that there is an appropriate mix of house types, sizes and tenures;
- Ensuring that there is enough affordable housing for those who need it;
- Ensuring that there is an adequate supply of housing for people with disabilities and other special needs; and
- Ensuring that new housing development is well designed and energy efficient.

5 Spatial Objectives

5.5   Supporting the vitality and accessibility of our town centres. This will be delivered by:

- Delivering major regeneration schemes in Crewe and Macclesfield in order to provide an enhanced retail offer and improved environmental quality;
- Maintaining and enhancing the distinct character and physical environment of the town centres of the Borough's smaller towns to ensure they remain vibrant, attractive and accessible;
- Focusing shops, community and leisure facilities in town and local centres;
- Improving the environmental quality of our town and local centres, e.g. by improving the public realm; and
- Improving the accessibility of our town centres, e.g. by improvements to bus and rail stations and services.

5.6   Developing improved transport and infrastructure networks. This will be delivered by:

- By 2030 ensuring that a comprehensive and sustainable transport network will be in place that is efficient, safe, affordable, accessible, easy to understand and supports the Borough's long term growth;
- Giving priority to walking, cycling and public transport and providing a genuine choice of modes; and
- The community infrastructure needs arising from the Borough's growth will have been adequately funded and provided in a timely and co-ordinated manner.

5.7   Working in partnership to provide cultural, social, community and physical infrastructure. This will be delivered by:

- Providing for and improving the quality of cultural, sport, recreation and leisure facilities; and
- Improving the links between existing and new neighbourhoods.

5.8   Conserving and enhancing the natural and built heritage. This will be delivered by:

- Enhancing and managing the built, historic, cultural and natural resources and assets and ensuring a high quality, well designed, energy efficient and safe public realm and buildings;
- Provide and maintain high quality and accessible green infrastructure;
- Protect and expand a resilient network of wildlife sites that are adapted to climate change and create a more bio-diverse public realm; and
- Retain and enhance local character and distinctiveness.

5 Spatial Objectives

> ## Question 1
>
> **Do you agree with these seven key objectives?**

> ## Question 2
>
> **Are there any other key objectives that should be considered?**

> ## Question 3
>
> **Can you identify any additional ways of delivering these key objectives?**

6 Strategic Options

6 Strategic Options

6.1 As we have seen, in its Core Strategy Cheshire East will need to respond to many challenges over the next twenty years including revitalisation of the economy, climate change, population growth, increasing housing need and an ageing population.

6.2 Determining future levels of housing provision and employment land for individual planning authorities have until recently been the responsibility of the regional planning authority. However, in July 2010 the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government announced the revocation of the Regional Spatial Strategies (RSS) with immediate effect. It is therefore now for Cheshire East to consider and decide the appropriate level of housing and job growth for the Borough, although the Council will have to justify the housing and job numbers that are finally decided upon. The Core Strategy will still need to identify broad areas of land to deliver the Council's housing numbers and new employment land for at least 15 years from the date the plan is adopted.

6.3 There are a number of issues to take into account in deciding the appropriate scale of growth. The Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) suggests that there is a substantial requirement for new housing to meet the needs of the existing population within Cheshire East, even before considering the possibility of migration in to the Borough from outside the area. Research shows that approximately 75% of the overall identified need is locally generated . It has identified a high level of need for affordable housing (1,243 per annum) and also a high level of need for general market housing (around 2,800 per annum). The Council has subscribed to the sub regional strategy "Unleashing the Potential" that envisages substantial economic and population growth. This strategy proposes a 25% growth in jobs and population of Crewe together with growth in Macclesfield and surrounding area and in the Weaver Towns including Middlewich. This ambition for growth is also reflected in the Sustainable Community Strategy.

6.4 In determining the level of growth, it is also important to take into account the likely capacity of the development industry to deliver growth, the capacity of the existing physical and social infrastructure to accommodate growth and the need to preserve cherished parts of the environment.

6.5 The Council is currently undertaking an Employment Land Review which will identify the nature and scale of employment land needed in the Borough to meet its requirements up to 2030. Whilst the amount of land required in future for Cheshire East has not yet been quantified, we know that currently within Cheshire East there are around 306 hectares of land either allocated, having planning permission or under construction for employment purposes. Over half of this figure, however, is accounted for by four large sites, as follows:

- Basford East (43 hectares): allocated for employment uses, however development is dependent upon completion of Crewe Green Link Road.
- Basford West (55 hectares): site with planning permission for employment uses

6 Strategic Options

- Midpoint 18 Phase 3 (53 hectares): Site with outline planning permission primarily for employment development. However, development will be dependent upon the completion of the Middlewich Eastern Bypass.
- South Macclesfield Development Area (22 hectares): site allocated for mixed use development with a focus on employment uses. Development is dependent upon a new highway.

6.6 Three of these four sites are, therefore, severely constrained by infrastructure requirements and the actual timing of their development is extremely uncertain. Whilst we also know that Cheshire East as a whole is performing relatively well, contributing around 7% of the North west's economic output, there are significant variations at a local level. For example the Crewe economy performs well below the Cheshire East average, but some wards display high levels of worklessness, ill health and poverty. There are also pockets of deprivation in the north of the Borough. In parts of the Borough there is a dependence on a small number of large employers. This represents a high risk, particularly in times of recession and points to a need to diversify and encourage the growth of new businesses.

6.7 One of the objectives of the Council's draft Economic Development Strategy is to 'unlock development opportunities' in line with the Sustainable Community Strategy. The main priorities to achieve this objective are to:

- Stimulate regeneration in our town centres, recognising their retail, leisure and employment role, both in terms of economic development and cohesive communities
- Actively working to bring forward and promote the availability of strategic employment sites that are commercially attractive to investors, developers and occupiers
- Supporting development of smaller employment sites in appropriate locations
- Challenging the loss of existing employment sites for other uses through the planning process
- Ensuring the availability of a range of workspace for start-up and micro businesses that meet their needs in terms of location cost, quality and flexibility

6.8 In order to achieve these objectives, to tackle issues of deprivation and to diversify and strengthen the economy, a significant growth in jobs across Cheshire East will be required, together with the allocation of deliverable sites for employment uses.

6.9 Initial work on housing and job growth for the North West was undertaken at the regional and sub-regional level to inform the preparation of the Single Regional Strategy (RS2010). That work has been abandoned, however it does give an indication of the possible ranges for growth for Cheshire East. Having regard to that work and to the context set out above, three scenarios for housing and job growth have been formulated for discussion and consultation. The three options are based on low, medium and high levels of growth respectively and are set out in table 6.1 below.

6.10 The forecasts show that a range of between 1,150 and 1,600 net additional dwellings per annum (p.a.) should be provided in Cheshire East. This equates to a difference in provision of some 9,000 dwellings up to 2030. For comparison purposes, past housing completions in Cheshire East show an average completion rate of 1,147 dwellings p.a. for

6 Strategic Options

the 10 year period between 2000 and 2010. It should be noted however that between 2006 and 2008 there were severe restrictions on new housebuilding in place in the former Macclesfield and Congleton Borough Council areas.

6.11   The forecasts for job growth show an average range of between 375 and 948 jobs provided per annum up to 2030. However, the relationship between housing and employment is a complex one, not least because of peoples' commuting patterns. These forecasts will need to be translated into suitable land provision for employment in the Core Strategy. The Council's Employment Land Review work will be instrumental in determining the nature and location of employment land provision.

6.12   For the purposes of this consultation exercise we would like your views on whether the Council should pursue a low, medium or high growth strategy for housing and employment to 2030.

Growth Strategy	Average Housing p.a.	Average Change in Jobs p.a	Implications
Low	1150	350	This option would provide for a continuation in the average levels of housing provision achieved during the past decade. Therefore, it would not provide for all the locally generated housing needs of the existing population of Cheshire East. Opportunities for additional affordable housing and job growth would be more limited, resulting in less scope to create the better balanced and sustainable communities desired within the Borough.
Medium	1350	650	This option would provide for the approximate housing needs of the existing population but would not allow for any net migration into the area. The levels of employment growth would help to reduce out commuting by creating a better balance of job opportunities to housing within communities in the Borough, but will not deliver the levels of growth needed to deliver the agreed economic strategy.
High	1600	950	This option is most likely to deliver the economic growth aimed at in the Sub regional Strategy 'Unleashing the Potential'. It will achieve the highest level of affordable housing and will be the option most likely to reduce out-commuting. It will also best achieve funding for new transport, social and green infrastructure provision.

Table 6.1 Suggested Growth Strategy Options

6 Strategic Options

6.13 In reaching this decision it is important to remember the key challenges identified in section 3 that need to be addressed and the possible consequences that will arise for Cheshire East residents if insufficient provision is made for housing and employment. Of central importance is the need to maintain and enhance the vibrancy of our communities. This means providing a level of growth that would increase the opportunity to live and work within our communities, reduce out commuting and the possibility of dormitory communities, allow economic restructuring and increased productivity, as well as improvements to the level and range of facilities present in communities and their accessibility, particularly by public transport.

Question 4

Which of these growth scenarios provides the most appropriate starting point from which to develop the Core Strategy and why?

Question 5

Why are the other growth scenarios not as appropriate?

Question 6

Are there any other alternative scenarios for growth that should be considered?

7 Spatial Options

7.1   This section considers alternative scenarios for how we develop the towns and villages of Cheshire East over the next 20 years or so. The options are presented to stimulate debate about the potential opportunities for growth and to consider how well they will deliver the spatial objectives and address the challenges facing the Borough. There is no "Preferred Option" at this stage; this will be developed following consultation on the Issues and Options Report and in the light if the Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulations Assessment

7.2   Firstly, a baseline position is established which looks at what would happen if all towns and villages grew in proportion to their existing size. Three alternative options are proposed to consider the effects of focusing different levels of growth in different towns. All three options take as their starting point the development of Crewe as the key driver for future growth as proposed in the Crewe Vision, and the vision for the regeneration of Macclesfield set out in the Macclesfield Economic Masterplan. The three options consider alternative levels of growth in Crewe, Macclesfield and the Key Service Centres.

7.3   All three options propose low levels of growth in the Local Service Centres and small villages to support the strategy for sustainable development which focuses development towards those settlements with a good range of services and facilities. The level of growth proposed would be sufficient to deliver sufficient affordable housing to meet the needs of the rural areas. However, the baseline position shows that up to 30% of the population of the Borough currently resides in these small communities and there is evidence that there is a demand for more market housing to meet the needs of small rural communities. To enable an assessment to be undertaken of a more dispersed pattern of development, a variant is proposed that can be applied to any of the three options that considers the impact of distributing higher levels of development to rural communities in Local Service Centres and small villages.

7.4   The growth options consider the rate of growth of towns in terms of new housing and economic development. There will also need to be a complementary investment in and growth of services such as schools, health care and leisure and community facilities to support any growth in population.

7.5   An Infrastructure Plan is being prepared to support the implementation of Local Development Framework. This will set out the significant items of infrastructure that will be required to enable development to take place and consider the funding and phasing requirements.

7.6   Delivering the Crewe Vision will require significant investment to improve the road network around Crewe to improve the linkages to the M6, in particular the Crewe Green Link Road and the Barthomley Link Road. Investment will also be required to improve in particular the train station at Crewe and roads to the town centre. In view of the current economic climate and reduction in the amount of central government investment that is likely to be available for infrastructure in the future, the Infrastructure Plan will consider how the investment can be secured and the likely timescales. Contingency plans will need to be drawn up to consider how development in Crewe can be phased should the necessary infrastructure be delayed.

7 Spatial Options

7.7 Developing a strategy for the future growth of the Borough provides the opportunity for us to consider how we can best locate and design development so as to minimise its impact on the environment in particular to reduce CO_2 emissions. We also need to take account of the impact that climate change will have on the area in the future and build measures into developments that will reduce the impacts of climate change, particularly of increased incidents of flooding and higher temperatures. This can be achieved by:

- Ensuring that sustainable patterns of development are selected by ensuring that there is easy access from the home to employment areas, town and local centres, schools and colleges by means of transport other than the car e.g. by public transport, walking and cycling
- Making the best use of land and other resources
- Reducing the amount of waste
- Avoiding developing areas at risk of flooding
- Ensuring that new development is well designed, energy and water efficient
- Including sustainable drainage solutions into the design of the scheme to reduce run-off rates
- Promoting the enhancement of the green infrastructure networks, increasing woodland cover, safeguarding wetlands and considering the impact of development on the entire water cycle.
- Including the development of renewable energy and low carbon energy as part of new development, making use of local sources of energy such as geothermal heat , biomass and water.

7.8 The Options presented in this section refer to the designations of Principal Towns, Key Service Centres and Local Service Centres and villages. The Cheshire East Settlement Study has considered a number of factors such as the population, number of shops, schools and community facilities to determine the role of each town and village. The Settlement Study forms part of the evidence base for the Core Strategy. The proposed hierarchy is set out below:

Designation	Description	Settlements
Principal Town	The largest towns with a wide range of employment, retail, education opportunities and services, serving a large catchment area with high level of accessibility and good public transport.	• Crewe • Macclesfield
Key Service Centre	Towns with a range of employment, retail, education opportunities and services, with good public transport.	• Alsager • Congleton • Handforth • Knutsford • Middlewich • Nantwich • Poynton • Sandbach • Wilmslow

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Designation	Description	Settlements
Local Service Centre	Smaller centres with a limited range of employment, retail, education opportunities and services, with a lower level of access to public transport.	• Alderley Edge • Audlem • Bollington • Bunbury • Chelford • Disley • Goostrey • Haslington • Holmes Chapel • Mobberley • Prestbury • Shavington • Wrenbury

Table 7.1 Cheshire East Settlement Hierarchy

Question 7

Do you agree with the proposed Cheshire East settlement hierarchy?   Yes No

Question 8

Comment

7 Spatial Options

Baseline Position

7.9 The baseline scenario looks at what Cheshire East would look like if each of the towns and villages grew in proportion to their current size. This scenario is not presented as an option; it helps our understanding of the current distribution of development. It will be used to aid comparisons of the alternative options to help understand the differences between the choices for the distribution of future development. This scenario would generally continue trends in development which have occurred over the past twenty years and more, although for some settlements that have been tightly constrained by Green Belt there would be a higher rate of development than has been experienced in recent years. The baseline position would have a very dispersed pattern of development with about 30% of new development in Local Service Centres and villages.

Development Distribution

7.10 The table below indicates the approximate proportion of new dwellings and jobs that would be identified for each settlement tier.

Settlement Hierarchy	Proportion of Development	Dwellings (20 Years)		
		High	Medium	Low
Principal Towns	32%	10,250	8,650	7,350
Key Service Centres	39%	12,500	10,550	8,950
Local Service Centres	11%	3,500	2,950	2,550
Smaller Villages	18%	5,750	4,850	4,150

Table 7.2 Housing Development Distribution

Settlement Hierarchy	Proportion of Development	Jobs (20 Years)		
		High	Medium	Low
Principal Towns	32%	6,100	4,150	2,250
Key Service Centres	39%	7,400	5,050	2,730
Local Service Centres	11%	2,100	1,450	750
Smaller Villages	18%	3,400	2,350	1,250

Table 7.3 Job Distribution
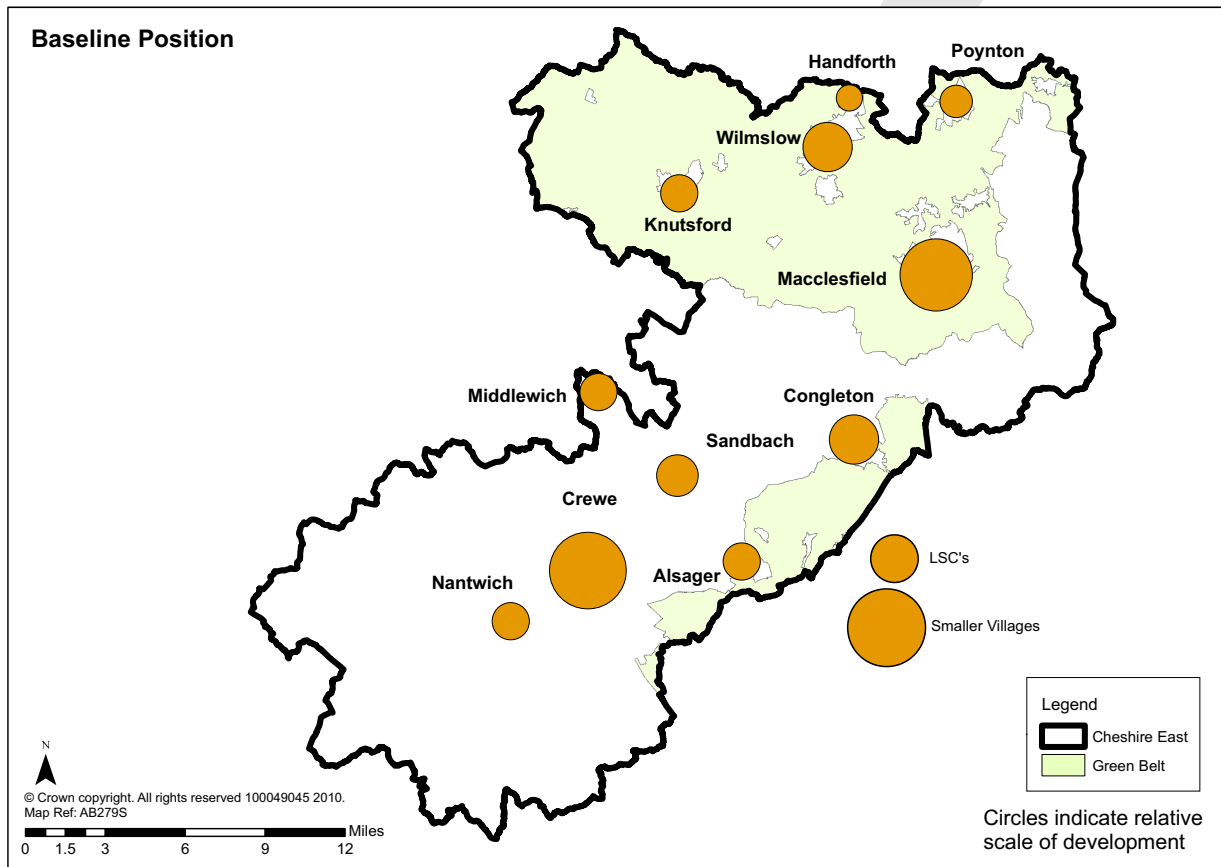
7 Spatial Options

Figure 7.1 Baseline Position - Development Proportions and Dispersal for Principal Towns and KSCs (MAP TO BE UPDATED)
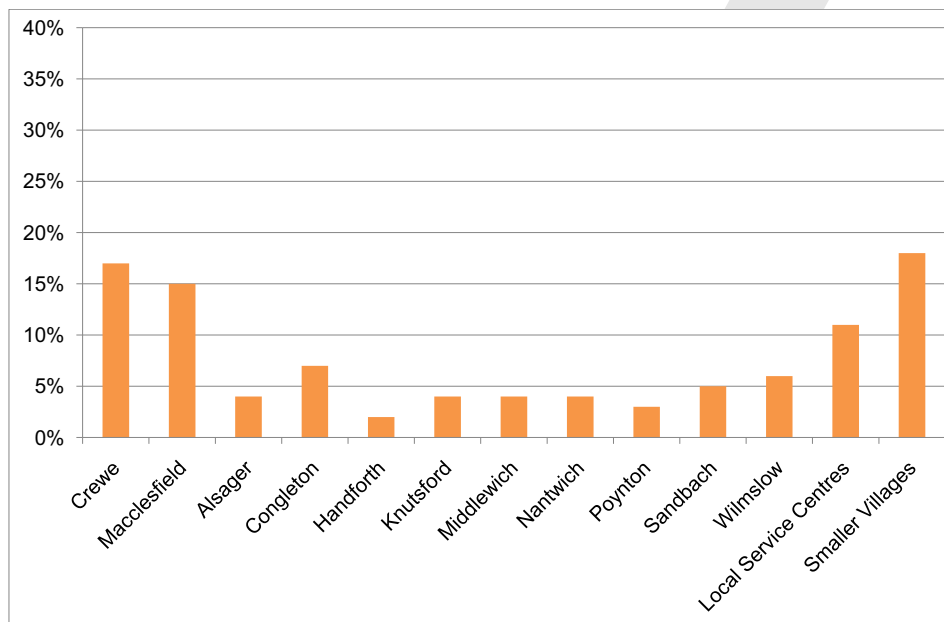
7 Spatial Options

Figure 7.2 Baseline Position - Development Proportions by Place

What would this scenario deliver?

7.11 Growth would be in proportion to the size of the existing settlement. This would result in a reasonable amount of development in both Crewe and Macclesfield and each of the Key Service Centres. There would be a continuation of the dispersed pattern of development that exists in Cheshire East with about 30% of new development taking place in Local Service Centres and small villages. The potential outcomes of this option are as follows:

- *Sustainable Development* - Development would be spread throughout all the settlements of the Borough with a high proportion of new development in Local Service Centres and Villages. As a consequence more people would have to travel longer distances to work, shop and schools and to access community services.
- *Economy* - The level of development in Crewe might not be sufficient to secure the infrastructure or investment for the delivery of the strategic employment sites at Basford in Crewe. The higher level of growth in Local Service Centres and villages may lead to an increase in small scale rural employment particularly if high speed broadband is delivered, however this is unlikely to deliver the same number of jobs that larger development in the principal towns could. It may lead to increased journeys to work in rural areas from people resident in towns.
- *Housing* - New housing would be delivered in all settlements in the Borough and would deliver a good range to meet local needs in terms of affordability, mix of house types and tenures. This option would result in a significant amount of incremental development on the edge of villages.

- *Town Centres* - The scale of growth for Crewe and Macclesfield may not provide the impetus for planned redevelopment of their town centres. Levels of development proposed in Key Service Centres and Local Service Centres should help support the retention of shops and services in these centres.
- *Transport and Accessibility -* this pattern of growth will result in increased car usage and will not support investment in improved public transport networks. More people will have to travel further to access services and there may be increased public sector costs in providing services to a dispersed community eg in terms of transport to school and hospital.
- *Infrastructure* - It is unlikely that the scale of growth would be sufficient to result in the critical mass of development required to encourage public and private investment in larger scale infrastructure provision or improvements especially in Crewe and Macclesfield. This option would not deliver the aims of the Crewe Vision initiative and may result in a pattern and distribution of development which would result in increased traffic levels dispersed across the Borough.
- *Natural and Built Heritage* - The focus of safeguarding and enhancing heritage and environmental assets would remain. The level of development in Local Service Centres and small villages would result in an impact on the character of these settlements and the adjacent countryside in a large number of locations. Development in rural locations is likely to be low density and would take up a greater area of land.
- *Green Belt* - There will be a requirement to release Green Belt land around Macclesfield and Key and Local Service Centres within the Green Belt including the settlements of Alsager, Congleton, Handforth, Knutsford, Poynton and Wilmslow, as there are very few brownfield sites available. There are very few sites available in villages in the Green Belt.

Risk Assessment

- Inability to deliver investment in infrastructure to deliver employment sites at Basford, Crewe and Midpoint 18 at Middlewich.
- Lack of critical mass of population in Crewe and Macclesfield to attract investors into the town centres
- Cost of delivering public services to increased rural population, especially for old people and children
- Increased car dependency and lack of investment in public transport
- Need to release a large number of sites in the Green Belt
- Impact on the character and landscape setting of a large number of small villages
- More lower density housing development requiring a larger area of land
- Unlikely to deliver reductions in CO_2 emissions

7 Spatial Options

Option 1: Growth in Crewe and Key Service Centres outside of Green Belt

7.12 Under this option, a high proportion of development over the next 15 - 20 years would occur in the southern part of the Borough with the focus of development on delivering the Crewe Vision and maximising Crewe's role, not just as the sub-regional centre for south Cheshire, but also as the main driver of growth for the whole of Cheshire East. It would build on the town's recent economic successes and the availability of a supply of skilled labour, provide a wider choice of homes and supporting services.

7.13 The Key Service Centres in the southern part of the Borough (Alsager, Congleton, Middlewich, Nantwich and Sandbach) would also be the focus for growth. This would be help to deliver the redevelopment of a number of large vacant sites, but would also require development of greenfield sites on the edge of these towns.

7.14 There would be limited growth in Macclesfield and Key Service Centres in the northern part of the Borough with no release of sites from the Green Belt.

7.15 There would be a limited amount of development in and on the edge of the Local Service Centres and small villages where this could be accommodated without releasing the Green Belt.

Development Distribution

7.16 The table below indicates the approximate proportion of new dwellings that would be identified for each settlement tier.

Settlement Hierarchy	Proportion of Development	Housing (20 Years)		
		High	Medium	Low
Principal Towns	46%	14,400	12,400	10,600
Key Service Centres	45%	15,700	12,700	10,350
Local Service Centres	7%	1,600	1,600	1,600
Smaller Villages	2%	300	250	450

Table 7.4 Housing Development Distribution

Settlement Hierarchy	Proportion of Development	Jobs (20 Years)		
		High	Medium	Low
Principal Towns	46%	8,550	6,000	3,200
Key Service Centres	45%	9,300	6,100	3,150
Local Service Centres	7%	950	800	500

7 Spatial Options

Settlement Hierarchy	Proportion of Development	Jobs (20 Years)		
		High	Medium	Low
Smaller Villages	2%	200	150	150

Table 7.5 Job Distribution
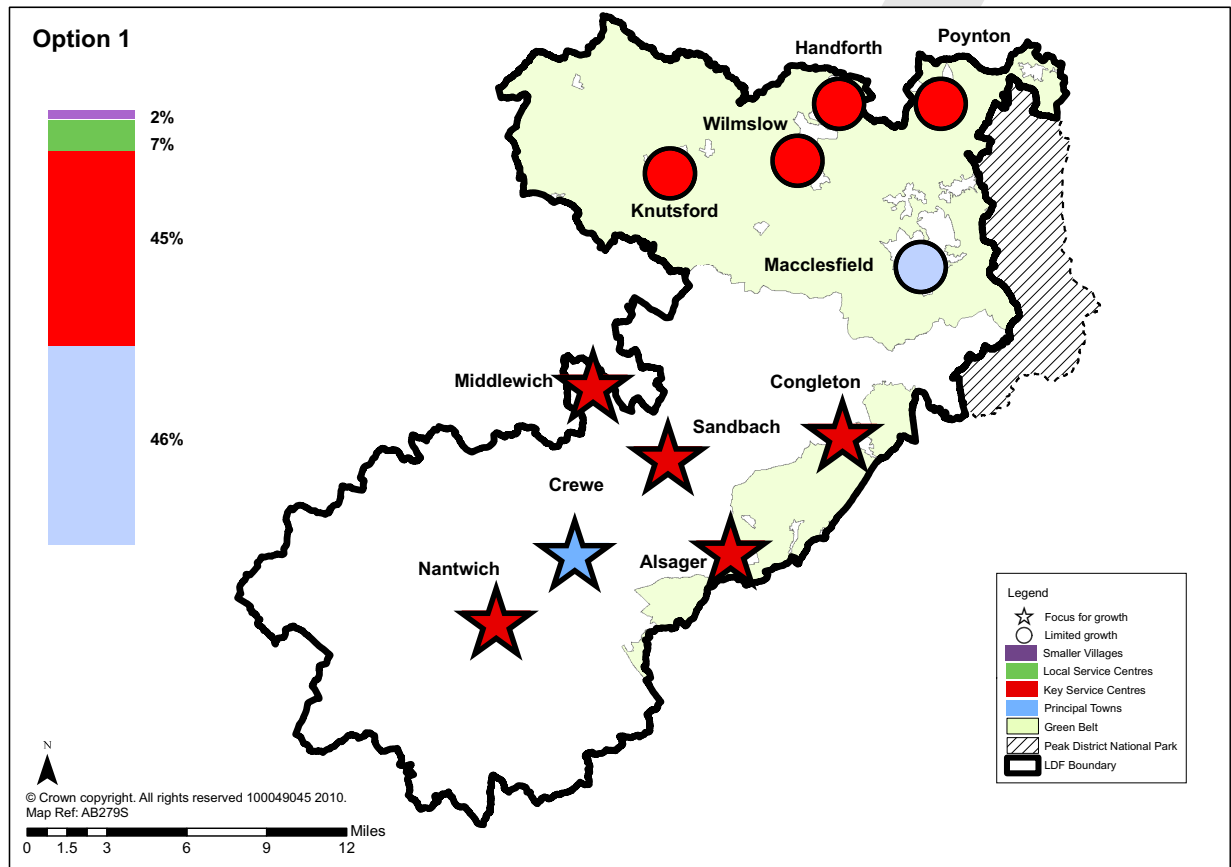
7 Spatial Options

Figure 7.3 Option 1 - Development Proportions and Dispersal for Principal Towns and the KSCs
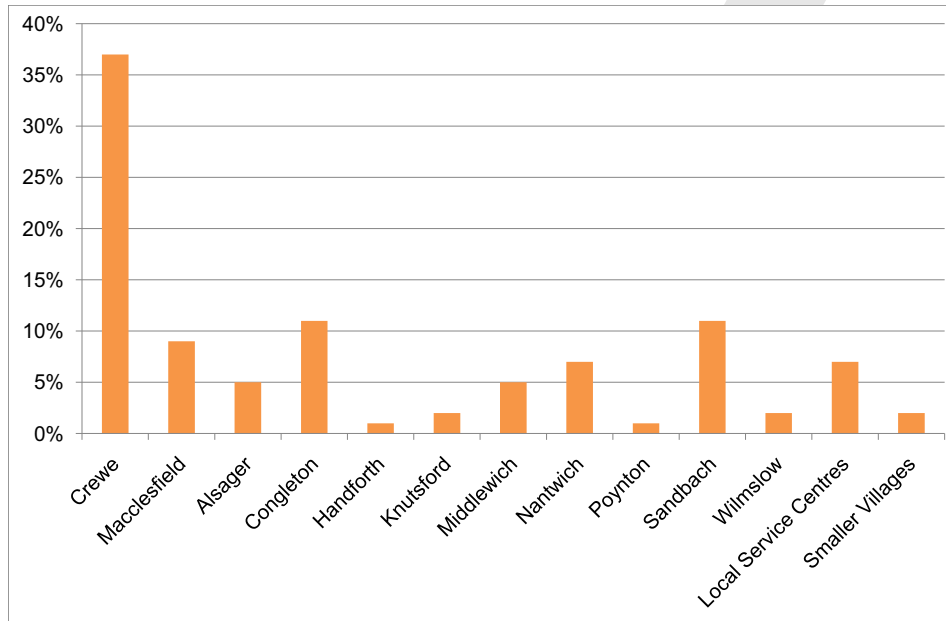
7 Spatial Options

Figure 7.4 Option 1 - Development Proportions by Place

What will the Option deliver?

7.17 The potential outcomes of this option are as follows:

- *Sustainable Development* – Crewe will become the focal point and driver for new growth in Cheshire East with the aim of delivering new employment areas of regional importance to attract inward investment into the Borough. Five of the key Service Centres with be developed to provide a good range of jobs, homes and services. There will be low levels of development in Macclesfield and the Key Service Centres in the north of the Borough which may not be sufficient to meet the needs of the local population and the current problems of high house prices and commuting patterns are likely to continue.

- *Economy* - This option would deliver the aspirations for economic growth set out in the Crewe Vision and support the delivery of the regionally important employment sites at Basford at Crewe and Midpoint 18 at Middlewich. Growth in Macclesfield would be focused on the South Macclesfield area and in the town centre. A sustainable and diverse employment base would be developed in the 5 Key Service Centres in the south of the Borough. There are limited opportunities for investing in new employment areas in Key Services Centres in the north of the Borough.

- *Housing* - New housing would be delivered in Crewe and the 5 Key Services Centres in the south of the Borough and would deliver a good range to meet local needs in terms of affordability, mix of house types and tenures. There would be limited provision of new housing in Macclesfield and the Key Services Centres in the north, and this is likely to exacerbate problems of affordability and limited choice in these towns. A limited amount

7 Spatial Options

of new housing would be developed in the Local Service Centres and small villages mainly to provide affordable housing for rural areas.

- *Town Centres* - Significant investment in Crewe would act as a strong incentive to attract investors to revitalise Crewe town centre. Development in the 5 Key Service Centres in the south of the Borough may help to bring more people into these centres and attract investment. There is uncertainty about whether the limited growth in Macclesfield and the Key Service Centres to the north of the Borough would be sufficient to attract investment into these centres.
- *Transport and Accessibility -* Crewe is readily accessible by car and public transport from the towns and villages of the south of the Borough with good links to the motorway network. However linkages with the towns in the northern part of the Borough are not as good as they tend to look towards Manchester and they are not likely to gain as much benefit from the growth of Crewe.
- *Infrastructure* - Significant growth in Crewe would require investment in major new infrastructure, for example the completion of the Crewe Green Link Road and the Barthomley Link Road. There would also be a need to consider improvements to roads to the town centre which are constrained by narrow roads over the railway lines. New transport links between the north of the town and the Basford employment areas could be delivered, and park and ride facilities on the edges of the urban area considered. Improvements to public transport including Crewe railway station are also a priority. A focused approach to development makes the delivery of infrastructure more feasible.
- *Natural and Built Heritage* -   The focus of safeguarding and enhancing heritage and environmental assets would remain. An increase in Crewe's rate of development would be an opportunity for extending its green infrastructure and improving the quality of the environment. There would be a loss of greenfield sites on the edge of Crewe and the 5 Key Service Centres. There would be very limited impact on the character of small villages.
- *Green Belt -* Green Belt boundaries would not be changed as a result of this option. However this could lead to a requirement to build at higher densities to accommodate the necessary growth or the redevelopment of existing areas in settlements in the Green Belt.

Risk Assessment

- Need to secure investment in road, rail and public transport infrastructure to support the delivery of growth in Crewe on this scale.
- Development likely to be of sufficient scale to deliver investment in infrastructure to deliver employment sites at Basford, Crewe and Midpoint 18 at Middlewich.
- Need to secure investment in community facilities such as schools, hospitals and health care to serve the increased population
- Lack of growth of population in Macclesfield and Key Service Centres in north of Borough to attract investors into the town centre
- Insufficient housing growth in Macclesfield and Key Service Centres in north of Borough to meet local needs leading to increase in house prices and continuing problems with affordability
- Loss of employment sites in Macclesfield and Key Service Centres in north of Borough to housing

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- Increased levels of commuting into Crewe from longer distances
- Loss of greenfield land on the edge of Crewe and 5 Key Service Centres
- Maintaining accessibility to services in rural areas

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Option 2: Growth in Crewe and Macclesfield and Key Service Centres outside of the Green Belt

7.18 This option would seek to enhance the role of the two Principal Towns in the Borough. It would look to reinforce the role of Crewe as the sub-regional centre for the south of the Borough and Macclesfield for the north. Both towns have had recent economic success and both have the ability to provide a pool of labour, a wider choice of homes and a good level of services. But in order to provide a similar level of growth in Macclesfield as in Crewe, it would be necessary to make changes to the Green Belt, probably in the area to the south west of the town.

7.19 The Key Service Centres in the southern part of the Borough (Alsager, Congleton, Middlewich, Nantwich and Sandbach) would also be the focus for growth, also this would be at a lower level that Option 1. This would help to deliver the redevelopment of a number of large vacant sites, but would also require development of greenfield sites on the edge of these towns.

7.20 There would be limited growth in the Key Service Centres in the northern part of the Borough with no release of sites from the Green Belt.

7.21 There would be a limited amount of development in and on the edge of the Local Service Centres and small villages where this could be accommodated without releasing the Green Belt.

Development Distribution

7.22 The table below indicates the approximate proportion of new dwellings that would be identified for each settlement tier.

Settlement Hierarchy	Proportion of Development	Housing (20 Years)		
		High	Medium	Low
Principal Towns	54%	18,900	15.400	12,400
Key Service Centres	36%	10,900	9,450	8,300
Local Service Centres	7%	1,600	1,600	1,600
Smaller Villages	3%	650	550	700

Table 7.6 Housing Development Distribution

Settlement Hierarchy	Proportion of Development	Jobs (20 Years)		
		High	Medium	Low
Principal Towns	54%	11,200	7400	3,800

Settlement Hierarchy	Proportion of Development	Jobs (20 Years)		
		High	Medium	Low
Key Service Centres	36%	6,450	4550	2,500
Local Service Centres	7%	950	800	500
Smaller Villages	3%	400	250	200

Table 7.7 Job Distribution
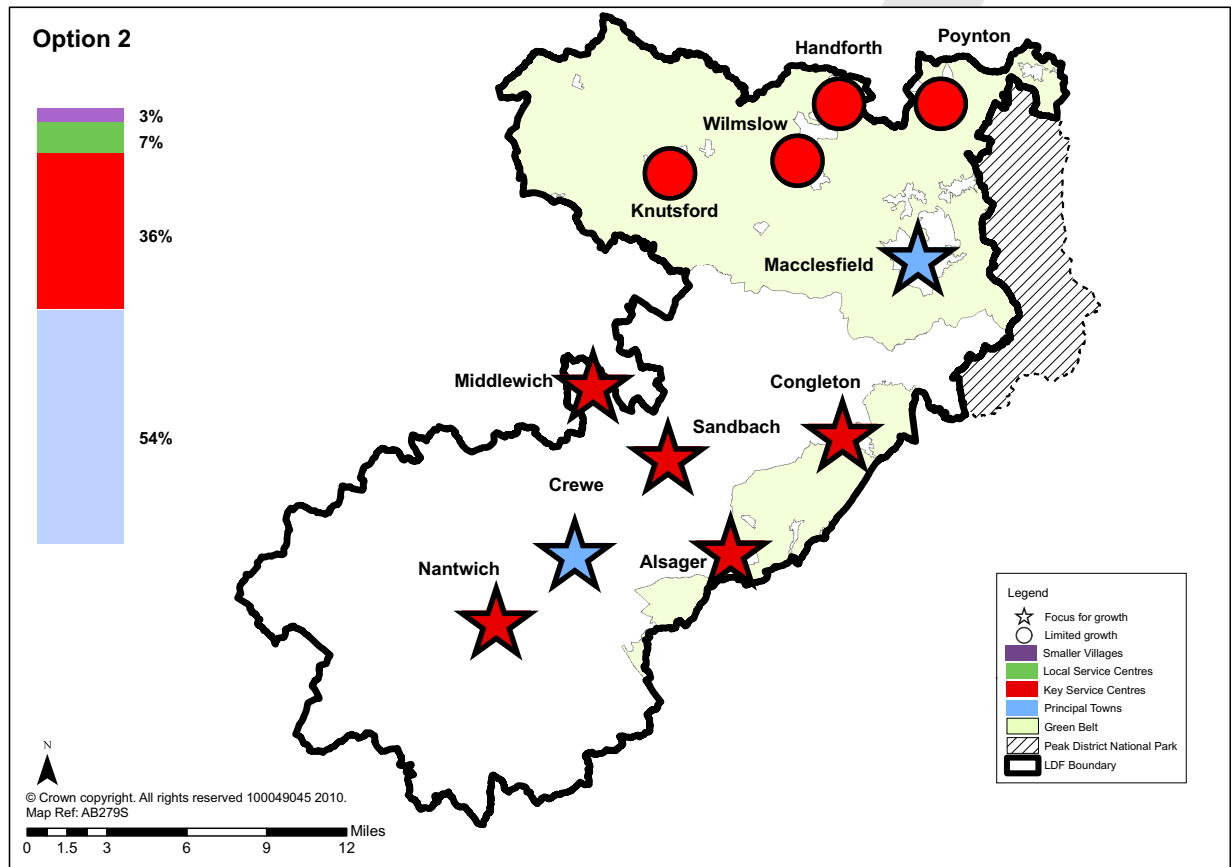
7 Spatial Options

Figure 7.5 Option 2 - Development Proportions and Dispersal for Principal Towns and KSCs
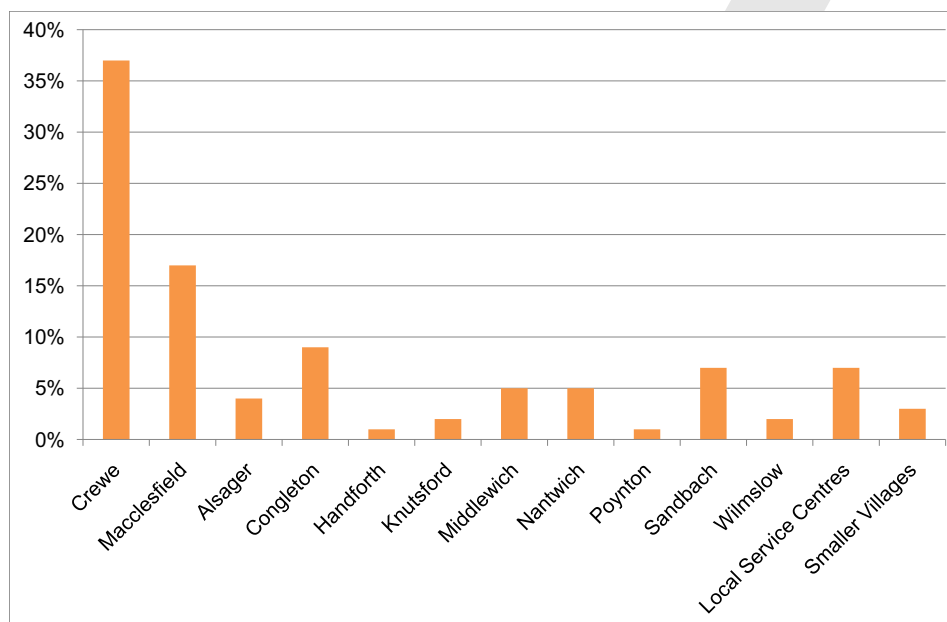
7 Spatial Options

Figure 7.6 Option 2 - Development Proportions by Place

What will the Option deliver?

7.23   The potential outcomes of this option are as follows:

- **Sustainable Development** – Crewe will become the focal point and driver for new growth in Cheshire East with the aim of delivering new employment areas of regional importance to attract inward investment into the Borough. Macclesfield will become a focus for new growth in the northern part of the Borough, but on a lesser scale than Crewe. Five of the Key Service Centres with be developed to provide a good range of jobs, homes and services but with a lower level of growth than in Option 1. There will be low levels of development in the Key Service Centres in the north of the Borough which may not be sufficient to meet the needs of the local population and the current problems of high house prices and commuting patterns are likely to continue.

- **Economy** - This option would deliver the aspirations for economic growth set out in the Crewe Vision and support the delivery of the regionally important employment sites at Basford at Crewe and Midpoint 18 at Middlewich. Growth in Macclesfield would be focused on the South Macclesfield area and in the town centre. Increased housing development will provide a larger local workforce to attract investment in the local economy. A sustainable and diverse employment base would be developed in the 5 Key Service Centres in the south of the Borough. There are limited opportunities for investing in new employment areas in Key Services Centres in the north of the Borough.

- **Housing** - New housing would be delivered in Crewe, Macclesfield and the 5 Key Services Centres in the south of the Borough and would deliver a good range to meet local needs in terms of affordability, mix of house types and tenures. Housing development

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in Macclesfield would help to support the economic development of the town. There would be limited provision of new housing in the Key Services Centres in the north, and this is likely to exacerbate problems of affordability and limited choice in these towns, although development in Macclesfield will meet some of this demand. A limited amount of new housing would be developed in the Local Service Centres and small villages mainly to provide affordable housing for rural areas.

- *Town Centres* - Significant investment in Crewe and Macclesfield would act as a strong incentive to attract investors to revitalise Crewe and Macclesfield town centres. Development in the 5 Key Service Centres in the south of the Borough may help to bring more people into these centres and attract investment. There is uncertainty about whether the limited growth in the Key Service Centres to the north of the Borough would be sufficient to attract investment into these centres.

- *Transport and Accessibility -* Crewe is readily accessible by car and public transport from the towns and villages of the south of the Borough with good links to the motorway network. Macclesfield has a good transport links with the towns in the north of the Borough.

- *Infrastructure* - Significant growth in Crewe would require investment in major new infrastructure, for example the completion of the Crewe Green Link Road and the Barthomley Link Road. There would also be a need to consider improvements to roads to the town centre which are constrained by narrow roads over the railway lines. New transport links between the north of the town and the Basford employment areas could be delivered, and park and ride facilities on the edges of the urban area considered. Improvements to public transport and particularly Crewe railway station are also a priority. A focused approach to development makes accompanying infrastructure delivery more feasible. New development in Macclesfield would require a new road link from arterial roads to serve the development.

- *Natural and Built Heritage* -   The focus of safeguarding and enhancing heritage and environmental assets would remain. Development in Crewe and Macclesfield would be an opportunity for extending their green infrastructure and improving the quality of the environment. There would be a loss of greenfield sites on the edge of Crewe, Macclesfield and the 5 Key Service Centres. There would be very limited impact on the character of small villages.

- *Green Belt -* Land in the Green Belt would be released around Macclesfield to deliver this option. There would be a requirement to build at higher densities to accommodate the necessary growth or the redevelopment of existing areas in other settlements in the Green Belt.

Risk Assessment

- Need to secure investment in road, rail and public transport infrastructure to support the delivery of growth in Crewe.
- Development in Macclesfield likely to be able to support new infrastructure required to serve the development and attract investment to the town centre
- Development likely to be of sufficient scale to deliver investment in infrastructure to deliver employment sites at Basford, Crewe and Midpoint 18 at Middlewich.
- Need to secure investment in community facilities such as schools, hospitals and health care to serve the increased population

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- Lack of growth of population in Key Service Centres in north of Borough to attract investors into the town centres
- Insufficient housing growth in Key Service Centres in north of Borough to meet local needs leading to increase in house prices and continuing problems with affordability
- Threat of loss of employment sites in Macclesfield and Key Service Centres in north of Borough to housing
- Increased levels of commuting into Crewe from longer distances
- Loss of greenfield land on the edge of Crewe, Macclesfield and 5 Key Service Centres
- Maintaining accessibility to services in rural areas

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Option 3: Growth in Crewe and Macclesfield and Accessible Towns

7.24   This option would focus development in the principal towns and Key and Local Service Centres in locations that have a good standard of accessibility that will enable people to travel to work, shops and services by means other than the private car i.e. public transport, cycling and walking. The following towns have good standards of accessibility by rail and will be the main focus for development in this option:

- Crewe, Alsager, Congleton, Nantwich and Sandbach;
- Macclesfield, Alderley Edge, Handforth, Knutsford, Poynton and Wilmslow;

7.25   This option would seek to enhance the role of the two Principal Towns in the Borough. It would look to reinforce the role of Crewe as the sub-regional centre for the south of the Borough and Macclesfield for the north. In addition to good standard of accessibility, both towns have had recent economic success and both have the ability to provide a pool of labour, a wider choice of homes and a good level of services.

7.26   This strategy will require the release of the Green Belt in Macclesfield and other Key and Local Service Centres, including Alderley Edge, Handforth, Knutsford, Poynton and Wilmslow.

Development Distribution

7.27   The table below indicates the approximate proportion of new dwellings that would be identified for each settlement tier.

Settlement Hierarchy	Proportion of Development	Housing (20 Years)		
		High	Medium	Low
Principal Towns	50%	16,300	13,750	11,500
Key Service Centres	38%	13,100	10,800	8,750
Local Service Centres	9%	1,900	1,900	2,000
Smaller Villages	3%	650	550	700

Table 7.8 Housing Development Distribution

Settlement Hierarchy	Proportion of Development	Jobs (20 Years)		
		High	Medium	Low
Principal Towns	50%	9,700	6,650	3,500
Key Service Centres	38%	7,800	5,200	2,650
Local Service Centres	9%	1,150	900	650

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Settlement Hierarchy	Proportion of Development	Jobs (20 Years)		
		High	Medium	Low
Smaller Villages	3%	400	250	200

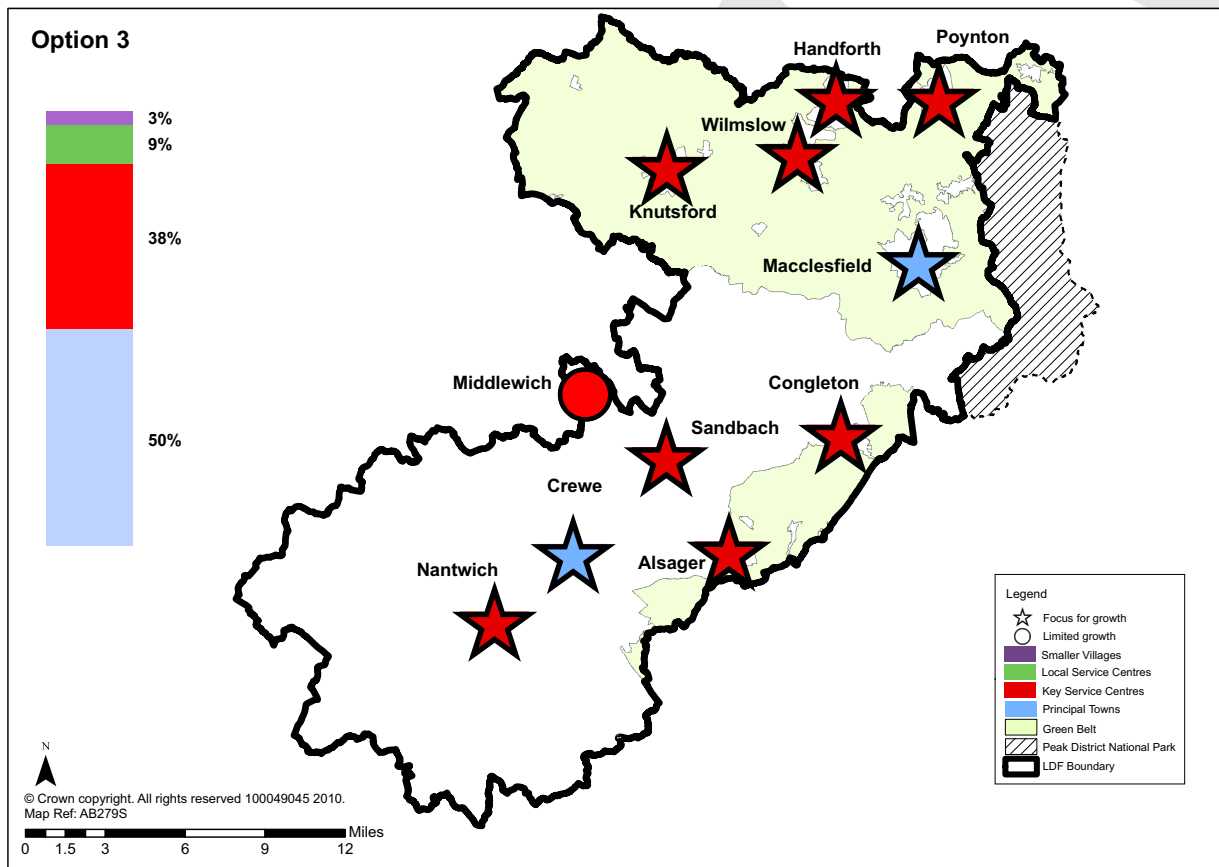**Table 7.9 Job Distribution**

Figure 7.7 Option 3 - Development Proportions and Dispersal for the Principal Towns and KSCs
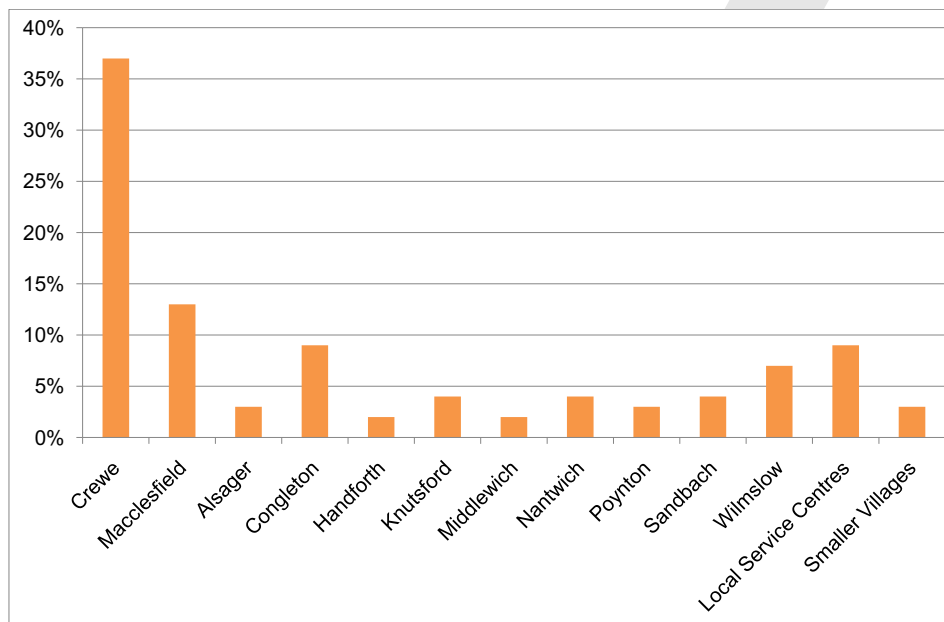
7 Spatial Options

Figure 7.8 Option 3 - Development Proportions by Place

What will this option deliver?

7.28   The potential outcomes of this option are as follows:

- ***Sustainable Development*** - Crewe will become the focal point and driver for new growth in Cheshire East with the aim of delivering new employment areas of regional importance to attract inward investment into the Borough. This option will give a greater spread of development to Key and Local Service Centres throughout the Borough, thus helping to provide development in these towns to meet local needs. There would be more emphasis on delivering new housing development at a higher density in town centres and around transport nodes so that more people had easy access to public transport.
- ***Economic Development*** - This option would deliver the aspirations for economic growth set out in the Crewe Vision and support the delivery of the regionally important employment sites at Basford at Crewe. It would not however deliver Midpoint 18 at Middlewich as this is a location dependent on road transport and not accessible by alternative means without significant investment. There would be a significant level of growth in Macclesfield. A sustainable and diverse employment base would be developed in the accessible named Key and Local Service Centres throughout the Borough.
- ***Housing*** - New housing would be delivered in Crewe and Macclesfield and the named Key and Local Service Centres throughout the Borough and would deliver a good range to meet local needs in terms of affordability, mix of house types and tenures. The housing levels would be lower in the Key Service Centres in the south of the Borough than in other options. A limited amount of new housing would be developed in the Local Service Centres and small villages mainly to provide affordable housing for rural areas.

- *Town Centres* – Significant investment in Crewe and Macclesfield would act as a strong incentive to attract investors to revitalise their town centres. Development in the Key Service Centres throughout the Borough may help to bring more people into these centres and attract investment.
- *Transport and Accessibility -* All the towns identified have rail services. Concentrating development in these towns coupled with improvements to the public transport infrastructure particularly improvements to the railway passenger facilities and services should lead to a reduction in commuting to work by car. All the Key Service Centres have a good range of shops and community services and facilities.
- *Infrastructure* - In addition to the investment in infrastructure required to support the delivery of growth in Crewe, this option would require investment in passenger facilities at the railway stations and improvement to the frequency of services.
- *Natural and Built Heritage* - The focus of safeguarding and enhancing heritage and environmental assets would remain. An increase in Crewe's rate of development would be an opportunity for extending its green infrastructure and improving the quality of the environment. There would be a loss of greenfield sites on the edge of Crewe, Macclesfield and the named Key and Local Service Centres. There would be very limited impact on the character of small villages.
- *Green Belt -* This option will result in changes to the Green Belt in a number of locations including Macclesfield, Alderley Edge, Handforth, Knutsford, Poynton and Wilmslow.

Risk Assessment

- Need to secure investment in road, rail and public transport infrastructure to support the delivery of growth in Crewe
- Investment in public transport, particularly rail, is required to deliver increased levels of commuting by public transport, otherwise there is the risk of increased levels of travel by car and increased congestion on roads
- Does not provide the development needed to deliver the infrastructure to deliver Midpoint 18 at Middlewich
- Need to secure investment in community facilities such as schools, hospitals and health care to serve the increased population
- Sufficient housing growth in Crewe and Macclesfield and Key Service Centres throughout the Borough to meet local needs and to provide a good range and mix of housing, including affordable housing
- Sufficient housing development in Local Service Centres throughout the Borough to meet local affordable needs
- Loss of greenfield land on the edge of Crewe, Macclesfield and the named Key and Local Service Centres
- Need to release land from the Green Belt in a number of locations
- Maintaining accessibility to services in rural areas

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Variant: Rural Dispersal

7.29   All three options propose low levels of growth in the Local Service Centres and small villages to support the strategy for sustainable development which focuses development towards those settlements with a good range of services and facilities. The level of growth proposed in the three options would deliver sufficient affordable housing to meet the needs of the rural areas. However, the baseline position shows that up to 30% of the population of the Borough currently reside in these small communities and there is evidence that there is a demand for more market housing to meet the needs of local communities. To enable consideration to be undertaken to a more dispersed pattern of development, a variant is proposed that can be applied to any of the three options. This variant considers the impact of distributing higher levels of development to rural communities in Local Service Centres and small villages.

7.30   Under this variant there would be a reduced level of growth in Crewe and Macclesfield and the Key Service Centres and this development would be dispersed to all or most of the Local Service Centres and a number of small villages. This variant would require the development of a large number of small sites; these may be sites selected by the local community as envisaged by the Coalition Government proposal. Careful controls would be required on the development of these sites to ensure that they deliver housing to meet local needs, for example through a Local Community Trust or through planing conditions or legal agreement. Otherwise many of the sites are likely to be developed for high value executive housing.

7.31   At this stage it is difficult to quantify the amount of development that could be delivered through this variant. If controls over the occupiers of the dwellings were not in place or proved to be ineffective, it it likely that there would be a high level of demand for the development of new housing. Table 7.10 below shows the levels of growth in Local Service Centres and villages that could occur if 30% of the housing requirement were distributed to rural communities.

7.32   It is uncertain whether this variant will deliver an increased number of jobs in rural communities. Provided that high speed broad band infrastructure is delivered, there would be more scope for businesses to be run from the home or community enterprise hubs. Otherwise, the variant is likely to give rise to increased journeys to work by car on minor rural roads.

7.33   A more dispersed pattern of growth in housing will result in an increased demand for public services to be delivered to rural areas giving rise to increased costs in school transport, health and social care, for example. The cost of providing utility services such as water, sewerage and telephones is usually greater in rural areas. This variant may lead to support to existing services in rural areas, such as local shops and community organisations however, it may result in a higher proportion of the future population of the Borough having to travel further to access services such as shops, schools, health care and sports and leisure facilities. A more dispersed pattern of growth will be more dependent on the car for transport and mean that it is less feasible to develop public transport options.

7.34   This variant would require the release of a large number of small sites on the edge of Local Service Centres and small villages. Sites will have to be carefully selected to ensure that their development did not impact on the landscape setting of the village or any sites of nature conservation or historic importance.

7.35   There may be a small number of sites available within settlements in the Green Belt, however, if this variant were to be applied throughout Cheshire East there may be demand to release a considerable number of sites from the Green Belt.

Development Distribution

7.36   The table below indicates the approximate proportion of new dwellings that would be identified for each settlement tier.

Settlement Hierarchy	Proportion of Development	Housing (20 Years)		
		High	Medium	Low
Principal Towns	46%	13,750	12,400	10,600
Key Service Centres	24%	7,350	6,200	5,500
Local Service Centres	17%	5,750	4,850	3,900
Smaller Villages	13%	5,100	3,500	3,000

Table 7.10 Housing Development Distribution

Settlement Hierarchy	Proportion of Development	Jobs (20 Years)		
		High	Medium	Low
Principal Towns	46%	8,150	6,000	3,200
Key Service Centres	24%	4,350	3,000	1,700
Local Service Centres	17%	3,400	2,350	1,200
Smaller Villages	13%	3,050	1,700	900

Table 7.11 Job Distribution
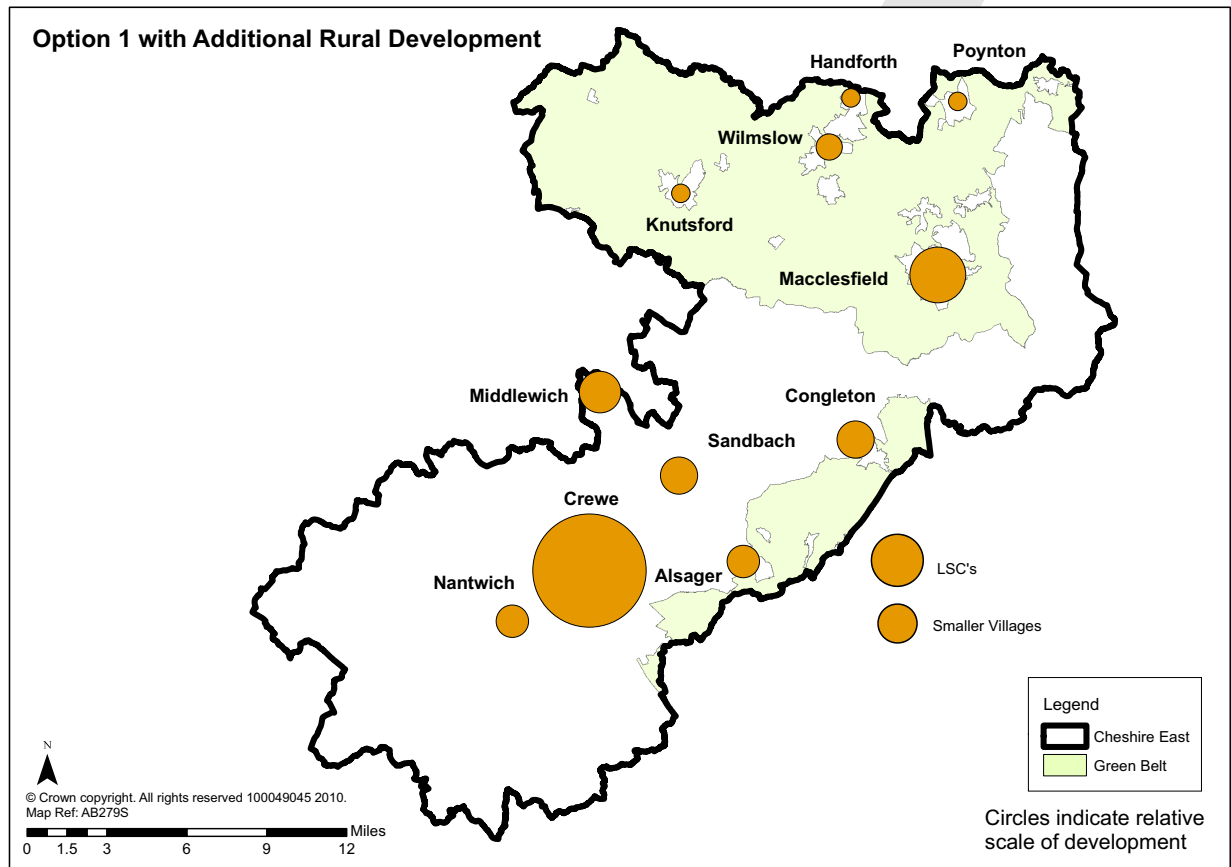
7 Spatial Options

Figure 7.9 Option 1 with Rural Variant - Development Proportions and Dispersal for the Principal Towns and KSCs (MAP TO BE UPDATED)
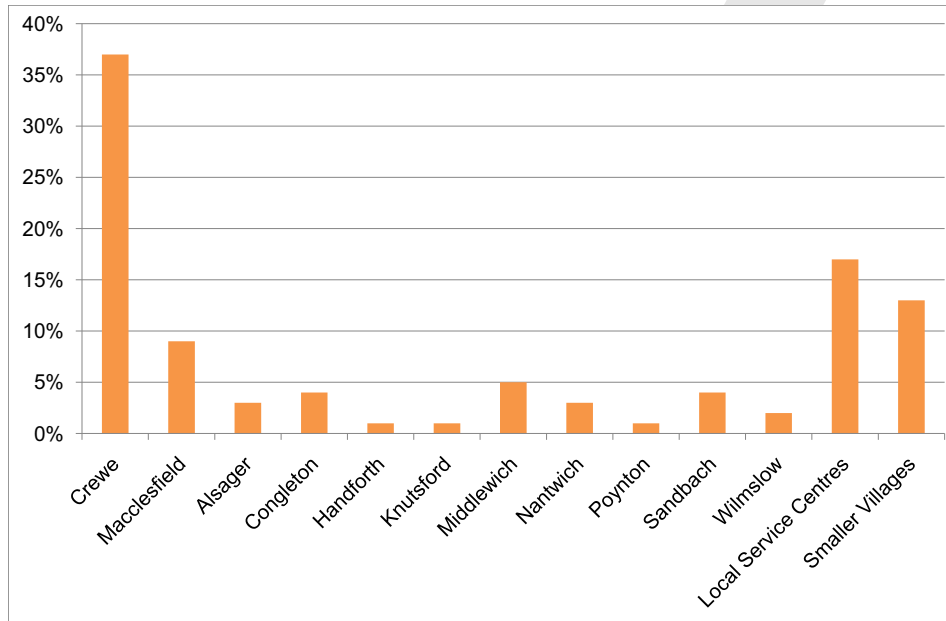
7 Spatial Options

Figure 7.10 OPtion 1 with Rural Variant - Development Proportions by Place

What will the variant deliver?

7.37 The potential outcomes of this option are as follows:

- *Sustainable Development* – This variant would result in a more dispersed pattern of development with potentially a considerable increase in the population of the Borough living in small rural communities with few services.
- *Economy* – There is potential for the rural economy to expand with rural enterprise hubs and home working. However, there is no certainty that a dispersed pattern of development would deliver the same levels of economic growth that could be achieved by growth focused in the main towns.
- *Town Centres* – This variant would result in a lower level of development in the Principal Towns and Key Service Centres. Depending on the amount of development that is diverted to rural areas, in may be that the scale of investment in the Principal Towns and Key Service Centres may not be sufficient to secure the required investment in their town centres.
- *Housing* – This variant would provide for a more dispersed pattern of housing development with the greatest scope for providing affordable housing and market housing in rural areas to meet local needs. However careful controls would be required otherwise this variant would result in development of high priced executive housing. If very high levels of housing were delivered under this variant, it may result in the housing needs of residents of Key Service Centres being provided in Local Service Centres and villages.
- *Transport and Accessibility* - This option may result in more commuting as people travel to major settlements for work. It is likely to result in more car journeys as rural

7 Spatial Options

areas are less well served by public transport and there are limited opportunities for journeys by foot or by bicycle. More journeys will involve travel on minor rural roads.

- *Infrastructure* – More people living and working in rural communities may put pressure on rural infrastructure such as water supplies and sewage treatment. This variant may result in insufficient development in Principal Towns and Key Service Centres needed to deliver major infrastructure improvements to the road network or public transport improvements Major investment would be required to provide high speed broadband to provide attractive working conditions in rural areas.
- *Natural and Built Heritage* – Great care would be needed in delivering this variant to ensure that sites did not impact on the landscape setting or historic character of many small villages.
- *Green Belt -* This variant would result in the release of a number of sites on the edge of settlements in the Green Belt.

Risk Assessment

- Demand for high value executive housing in rural locations may lead to development not meeting the housing needs of local communities without careful controls
- Reduced levels of accessibility to public services and increased public sector costs eg. for school travel and health care
- Increased investment needs in utility services in rural communities
- No certainty that this variant will deliver growth in employment and economic development in rural areas. It could result in the diversion of employment from other areas.
- Employment in rural areas dependent on securing high speed broadband service in these areas.
- No certainty that this variant will support the retention of shops and services in rural communities
- Increase in travel to work, schools, shops and leisure activities by car using minor rural roads.
- Will not support increase accessibility by means of transport other than the car
- Likely to be differing views in communities to this variant with difficulties in reaching consensus in the selection of suitable sites
- May reduce the amount of development available in the Principal Towns and Key Service Centres and reduce the level of investment in town centres and employment areas

7 Spatial Options

Comparison of Spatial Options

7.38 To assist with the understanding of the three options, Figure 7.11 below sets out the proportion of development that would take place in each settlement tier under the three options, the baseline position and the variant for rural dispersal. Figure 7.12 shows the implications of each option for each town and the Local Service Centres.

7 Spatial Options
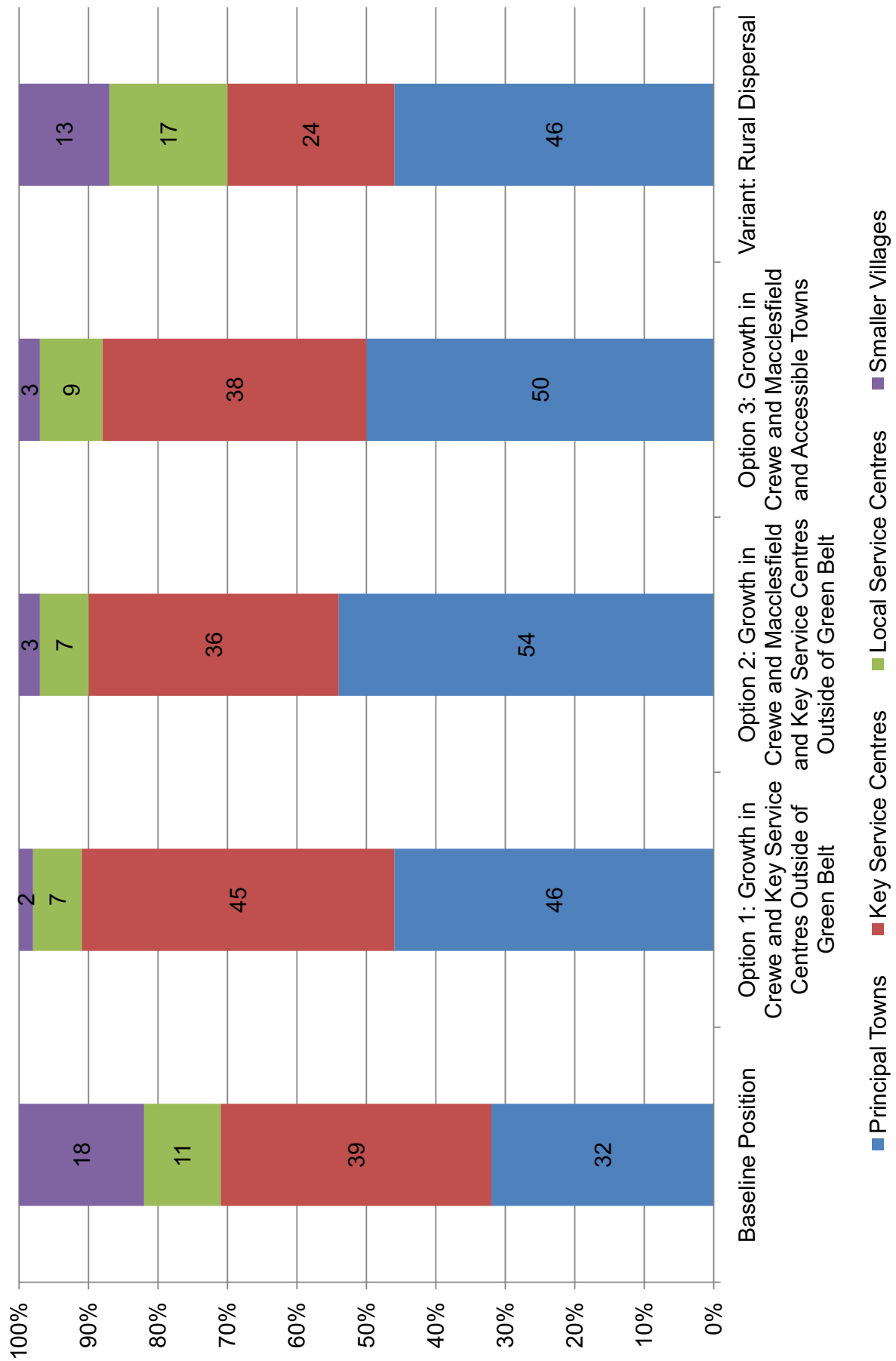
Figure 7.11 Implications for Towns and Villages by Spatial Option

Legend: Principal Towns, Key Service Centres, Local Service Centres, Smaller Villages

Spatial Option	Smaller Villages	Local Service Centres	Key Service Centres	Principal Towns
Variant: Rural Dispersal	13	17	24	46
Option 3: Growth in Crewe and Macclesfield and Accessible Towns	3	9	38	50
Option 2: Growth in Crewe and Macclesfield and Key Service Centres Outside of Green Belt	3	7	36	54
Option 1: Growth in Crewe and Key Service Centres Outside of Green Belt	2	7	45	46
Baseline Position	18	11	39	32

7 Spatial Options

Figure 7.12 Implications for Spatial Options by Place

Legend:
- Baseline Position
- Option 1: Growth in Crewe and Key Service Centres Outside of Green Belt
- Option 2: Growth in Crewe and Macclesfield and Key Service Centres Outside of Green Belt
- Option 3: Growth in Crewe and Macclesfield and Accessible Towns
- Variant: Rural Dispersal

7 Spatial Options

Question 9

Which of the three spatial options do you prefer? 1 / 2 / 3

Question 10

Please give your reasons

Question 11

Do you agree that a higher level of development should be dispersed to Local Service Centres and villages as proposed in the Variant Option? Yes / No

Question 12

Please give your reasons

Abbreviations

CO_2	Carbon Dioxide
HRA	Habitats Regulations Assessment
KSC	Key Service Centre
LDF	Local Development Framework
LSC	Local Service Centre
NHPAU	National Housing and Planning Advice Unit
NPHP	National Population and Household Projections
ONS	Office for National Statistics
REFP	Regional Economic Forecasting Panel
RS2010	Regional Strategy
RSS	Regional Spatial Strategy
SA	Sustainability Appraisal
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SBI	Site of Biological Importance
SCS	Sustainable Community Strategy
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SHLAA	Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment
SHMA	Strategic Housing Market Assessment
SM	Scheduled Monument
SPA	Special Protection Area (for birds)
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest

Glossary

Glossary

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CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

REPORT TO: CABINET

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Date of Meeting: 18 October 2010
Report of: Phil Lloyd, Director of Adults, Community, Health and Wellbeing
Subject/Title: Rationalisation and Temporary Closure of Buildings in Adult Services
Portfolio Holder: Roland Domleo

_____

1.0 Report Summary

1.1 The Cabinet Report of 19 July outlined a range of options for delivering the same level of service from fewer buildings in Adult Services. In particular, the report referred to the possible closure of Jubilee House and 291 Nantwich Road and the transfer of services to the nearby Hilary Centre. The matter was discussed at the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 12 August 2010 and it was noted that those affected by the proposals would be consulted and a recommendation be brought to Cabinet.

1.2 The East Cheshire Acute Health Trust temporarily closed Tatton Ward of Knutsford Hospital on 6 September (reported to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 9 September 2010). At that meeting the Director of Adults, Community, Health and Wellbeing indicated that there would be financial and practice impacts on Cheshire East Council and undertook to explore these and report back. This report details that impact.

2.0 Decision Requested

2.1 Cabinet agree to the closure of Jubilee House and the transfer of services to the Hilary Centre once minor works are carried out to ensure the suitability of the Hilary Centre.

2.2 Cabinet note that as a result of discussions with users of 291 Nantwich Road it is not proposed to close that facility at this stage but to re-examine the future of that building in March 2011.

2.3 Cabinet agree to the temporary closure of Bexton Court, a Community Support Centre that is linked to Tatton Ward subject to the consideration of this matter by Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 10 November 2010 and discussions with those directly concerned about alternative options.

2.4 Cabinet notes that currently the East Cheshire Acute Trust is intending to re-open Tatton Ward in January 2011 and Cabinet agrees Cheshire East Council work with the Trust on its plans for the future of Tatton Ward and link its own approach to Bexton Court to this process.

3.0 Reasons for Recommendations

3.1 The transfer of services from Jubilee House to the Hilary Centre will both improve the experience of customers and deliver a financial benefit to the authority. The detailed option appraisal was attached in Appendix 5 of the report received by cabinet on 19 July. Extensive discussions have taken place with those affected (including local Members) and the emerging view is that the Hilary Centre is a better location. For example, it has a garden and vehicle access is better. There is minor improvement work to make to the building that will cost £40k . Once these are completed the centre can begin to provide the service. This will mean much more intensive use of the Hilary Centre which has a very low usage because of the shift to personalisation and people having access to their own budgets to purchase care.

3.2 The position in relation to Bexton Court is more complicated. The Council has closed two Community Support Centres (CSC) that provide short term residential respite care and day care for older people – Santune House in Shavington and Cypress House in Handforth. It had not intended to close Bexton Court because that is the centre for specialist dementia services in the North of the area (newly refurbished Lincoln House provides these services in the South). However, difficulties in securing clinical cover for Tatton Ward, which is directly linked to Bexton Court, led the East Cheshire Acute Health Trust to close the ward on 6 September for four months.

3.3 The financial and service delivery positions of the Council are not affected seriously in the short term by the closure of Tatton Ward. However, there remains a risk that the Ward may not re-open so the Council must move to consider how it would react to either an extended or permanent closure of Tatton Ward. To await such a decision would leave the Council risking a significant loss of income while still maintaining a property and a service that are not essential to its overall provision of care. There is, however, a linked matter and that is the withdrawal of £150,000 of money provided by Primary Care Trust towards delivery of community support centres. The loss of this money does have an immediate impact and one that the Council must accommodate. Saving on the running costs at Bexton Court does assist in this matter.

3.4 This matter was reported to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 9 September and that Committee noted comments from the Director to the effect that there would be practice and financial implications for the Council from this decision. The financial impact is that rent of £173k per annum is linked to the lease of the wing of Bexton Court that is known as

the Tatton Ward . This also covers the provision of catering and domestic facilities with staff posts at risk. Negotiations are continuing to work out what the loss will be during this temporary closure and the implications of a longer/ permanent closure on the viability of Bexton itself.

3.5 The loss of this link facility also makes the Bexton Court facility more isolated. The Trust is re-providing the beds in Macclesfield and it therefore makes sense for the Council to shadow this change and look to provide more beds closer to Macclesfield. It will prove possible to do this because there still remains significant capacity in the CSC system. The suggestion is that a wing be opened at Mountview in Congleton to provide specialist dementia respite. This will compensate for the very low occupancy at Mountview. In short, nobody will be denied a service as a result of this temporary closure of Bexton Court.

3.6 There are day services for 8 people per day provided at Bexton Court for 24 service users in total. Of these only 11 are local to Knutsford and all could be accommodated in alternative provision This may involve temporarily using space in the nearby Stanley Centre where there is also spare capacity. This would not involve mixing the Bexton Court day service users with the day services for those with a learning disability, who are the main users of the Stanley Centre.

3.7 The re-opening of Bexton Court can be accomplished in line with the actions of the Acute Trust to re-open the Tatton Ward.

4.0 Wards Affected

4.1 Jubilee House – Crewe South, North, East and West; Bexton Court, Knutsford; 291 Nantwich Road, Crewe South, North, East and West

5.0 Local Ward Members

5.1 Knutsford – Councillors Hunter, Ranfield and Wilkinson; Bucklow Ward- Councillors Knowles, Macrae, and Walton; Crewe South Councillors Flude, Cannon and Howell; Crewe East, Councillors Conquest, Martin and Thorley, Crewe North, Councillors Beard, Bebbington and Jones; Crewe West, Councillors Cartlidge, Parker and Weatherill

6.0 Policy Implications including - Climate change
- Health

6.1 Rationalisation of buildings reduces carbon impact without impact on service level. Positive impact from moving the North dementia specialist services closer to a centre of population and demand, albeit temporarily.

6.2 No direct impact on individual health although the environment for service delivery at the Hilary Centre is an improvement. There are wider

implications for the closer working between health and social care that will be explored through the changes proposed in this report.

7.0   Financial Implications (Authorised by the Borough Treasurer)

7.1   The net costs of running Jubilee House and the Hilary centre are £284k and £168k respectively. Following a restructure of the staff that is underway across these day services and Salinae (running costs of £329k) the overall net full year saving to the council of this proposal is £294k. Further work is underway to quantify what proportion of this can be delivered in 2010/11, with the earliest estimate at ths point being approximately £75,000. Capital investment required in the Hilary Centre is £40k to be funded from existing capital resources e.g. Building Block Review.

8.0   Legal Implications (Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)

8.1   There is no statutory requirement for consultation in respect of the possible closure of a Community Support Centre. However, it is appropriate to seek the views of affected service users and for these to be taken into account before any final decision is taken as to closure. Any consultation must contain four elements, known as the Sedley Requirements (R v Brent London Borough Council, ex parte Gunning (1985) 84 LGR 168) and it would be good practice for these principles to be followed in this matter. The Sedley Requirements are as follows:

a) The Consultation must be at a time when proposals are still at a formative stage
b) The proposer must give sufficient reasons for any proposal to permit of intelligent consideration and response
c) That adequate time must be given for any consideration and response
d) That the result of the consultation must be conscientiously taken into account in finalising any proposals

8.2   An appropriate process has been undertaken in respect of the proposed changes at 291 Nantwich Road and Jubilee House and the conclusions of the discussions with service users is reported within the appendices to enable cabinet to take this information into account when making it's decisions.

8.3   In respect of Bexton Court since there is no duty to consult in respect of a permanent closure, it follows that there is no duty to consult in this instance. However, ideally, the views of service users would have been sought prior to a decision being made to temporarily close the centre. Given the circumstances that have arisen in this particular case and the financial difficulty in keeping this centre open, this has not been possible. Officers should, however do as much as possible to keep service users informed and to involve them in decision. Therefore officers need to

communicate any decision in respect of temporary closure to service users as soon as possible and they need to ensure that appropriate discussion is had with them in respect of options for alternative provision.

8.4   Should the plan for Bexton Court change, service users' views should be sought and taken into account before any decision is taken to close the centre permanently.

8.5   The Authority has a duty under the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 to take into account the impact of these proposals upon affected service users and to carry out an Equality Impact Assessment before reaching any final decision to substantially vary service provision.

8.6   The temporary closure of Bexton Court itself is unlikely to result in any compulsory redundancies. It is understood that redeployment opportunities are available across the Care4CE service and therefore the likelihood is that staff will be temporarily relocated in a similar role and locality in order to care for residents who are similarly relocated.

8.7   The changes to service provision will necessitate staffing provision being reconsidered. Expressions of interest for voluntary redundancy have already been invited as part of the wider Voluntary Redundancy process. In the longer term, and as part of a wider process not solely connected to the closure of the centres referred to in this report, there may be " bumped " redundancies and, as a last case scenario, compulsory redundancies. There would need to be consultation with staff and the unions and utilisation of contractual mobility clauses where applicable. There may be individual employment law issues which would have to be addressed. HR and Legal Services should be consulted at the outset in general and in connection with individual cases.

9.0   Risk Management

9.1   The risks arising from these changes are similar to any large increase in demand e.g. from a harsh winter. These will be examined through a full closure and temporary closure programme based on expertise built up from recent experience of CSC closure.

9.2   A significant risk is that the East Cheshire Acute Hospital Trust decides that it cannot support the re-opening of the Tatton Ward. If this occurs then the Council will have to re-evaluate its options including that of permanent closure of Bexton Court and possibly the Stanley Centre.

9.3 CQC (Care Quality Commission) has confirmed that notice is not required for a temporary closure but we would need to get agreement to re-open, and satisfy CQC that the building was still fit for purpose.

9.4 Risk and adverse impacts on particular groups will be covered by an Equality Impact Assessment.

11.0 Background and Options

11.1 Detailed proposals relating to the proposals to transfer the services from Jubilee House and 291 Nantwich Road were contained in the Cabinet report 19 July. Since then there have been a number of meetings with service users to explain in more detail the proposals, to obtain their views and to listen to any concerns. Appendix 1 is a summary of the feedback from the focus groups held with users of the Hilary Centre and Jubilee House. No objections were raised to the proposals and reassurances were given on many of their concerns.

11.2 More anxieties have been raised, however, by service users, their carers and local members about the proposals to transfer services provided from that building to Jubilee House. Great value is placed on having a dedicated provision for services users with mental health needs in Crewe. This is unique to this area and not replicated in other parts of the borough, where service users are accessing more socially inclusive activities. In view of the concerns raised, we wish to defer the decision about the proposal to close 291 Nantwich Road until March 2011 to allow more time to work with those concerned to explore the options to them. The loss in revenue of this delay is £10k per annum and the capital receipt from the sale of the building.

11.3 Bexton Court is a Community Support Centre situated on the same site as the Community Hospital in Knutsford. It is a specialist centre for older people with dementia, providing 23 beds for assessment and respite for carers and day care for up to 8 service users a day. A previous proposal to close this centre was subject to a 12 week consultation process in 2008 and met with considerable resistance locally and the decision was subsequently deferred, by Cheshire County Council pending Local Government Review. However as a specialist service, Bexton Court has provided care for citizens from across the borough and also for older people living across the boundary in Cheshire West and Chester (CWAC). There are currently 26 regular respite users, 6 of whom are from CWAC. There are 24 who use the day service, 7 using both. In total, therefore 43 people are provided with a service. Appendix 2 shows the home locations of those using respite and illustrates their proximity to other Cheshire East Community Support centres from where a dementia service can be reprovided. Of the 21 day service users, 11 live in Knutsford, 4 in Wilmslow, 4 in Macclesfield, 3 Holmes Chapel, 1 in Poynton and 1 in Congleton.

11.4   Appendix 4 illustrates the continuing reduction in take up of the short stay provision resulting from the ability of service users and carers to have direct payments to make alternative arrangements, the competitive market, and the range of alternative services eg Extra Care Housing. The impact on the unit cost is demonstrated in Appendix 3. The lower the occupancy, the higher the unit cost. Loss of income from the Trust and PCT will increase the unit cost further.

11.5   Several years ago, an under-utilised wing of Bexton Court was leased to The East Cheshire Trust to provide 18 community beds. This ward is managed by the hospital at Macclesfield but the catering and domestic services are provided by staff at Bexton Court. The services are in effect mutually dependent and neither viable without the other, hence the impact of the temporary closure of the Tatton Ward.

11.6   There are also issues with the building itself. There have been recent problems with the roof, the conservatory is leaking and work is pending on the drainage. If Bexton is retained a further £70k will need to be spent to install a mister sytem to satisfy fire safety requirements.

11.7   In terms of staffing issues, the temporary closure in itself is unlikely to result in any compulsory redundancies. The likelihood is that staff will be temporarily relocated in a similar role and locality in order to care for residents who are similarly relocated. Redeployment opportunities are available across the Care4CE service. Expressions of interest for voluntary redundancy have already been invited as part of the wider Voluntary Redundancy process. In the longer term, and as part of a wider process not solely connected to Bexton Court, there may be " bumped " redundancies and, as a last case scenario, compulsory redundancies. There would need to be consultation with staff and the unions and utilisation of contractual mobility clauses where applicable. There may be individual employment law issues which would have to be addressed. HR and Legal Services will be consulted at the outset in general and in connection with individual cases.

11.8   In the light of the risk that Tatton Ward may not re-open discussions are now under way to develop a longer term vision jointly with Health partners. In particular we are exploring the scope jointly to provide staffed beds at Hollins View to avoid the 'revolving door' situation for those who have borderline health and social care needs.

11.9   In spite of the closure of two community support centres this year in Macclesfield, Appendix 4 illustrates that we still have over capacity. The intention is to convert a wing at Mountview to provide 11 dementia beds within existing capacity by some minor adaptations to provide the necessary security to the building and garden. The day service users can be accommodated in the specialist day services already provided at Redesmere, in Handforth; Mayfield in Macclesfield; a new service in

Mountview in Congleton and Lincoln House in Crewe. Alternative local arrangements are being explored for those day service users from Knutsford who don't wish to travel to any of these services. As people increasingly take up Personal Budgets and Personal Health Budgets continual consideration of occupancy levels and the need for building based solutions will require frequent monitoring.

11.10   A report will be brought to Cabinet in November to make proposals for a new dementia centre from the north of the borough to replicate the service developed at Lincoln House in Crewe.

11.11   Discussions are taking place with Cheshire West and Chester about the implications of a temporary closure for their citizens.

13. *Access to Information*

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer:

Name: Phil Lloyd
Designation: Director- Adults, Community, Health and Wellbeing
 Tel No: 01270 686553
 Email: phil.lloyd@cheshireeast.gov.uk

Cheshire East Council

Feedback from Jubilee House Service User Discussions

Discussions were held with all service users at Jubilee House on each day of the week between 17th September and 23rd September.

The purpose of the open discussions was to talk about the proposed move of day service from Jubilee House to the Hilary Centre, and provide answers to questions that had been raised.

59 Service Users took part over the 5 days. People who are currently not attending have been contacted and 10 Carers contacted asked if they have any questions or concerns.

The areas of discussion covered:

Assurance was given that as the Manager is responsible for the Service at both Jubilee House and Hilary Centre, every effort will be made to accommodate people on their current days so that friendships and contacts are not disturbed.

Facilities are available in the Hilary Centre, reassurance was given that there will be room of all the current activities, plus the addition of a garden and conservatory. The building will also be re-decorated in readiness for the additional people, and some furniture and other equipment will be transferred over to the Hilary Centre, to help make the environment feel more familiar.

Meals will be provided of a similar standard as at Jubilee House, and there is a dining area already there.

Transport arrangements will not change, unless there is an authority wide decision or until people have an individual review of their eligibility.

For those people who have used bathing facilities at Jubilee House a home visit by and OT will be requested to see if they can have their shower/bath at home, and if this is not possible, there are facilities already at the Hilary centre, similarly for those people who have used hairdressing facilities at Jubilee House, individual solutions will be sort through mobile hairdressers.
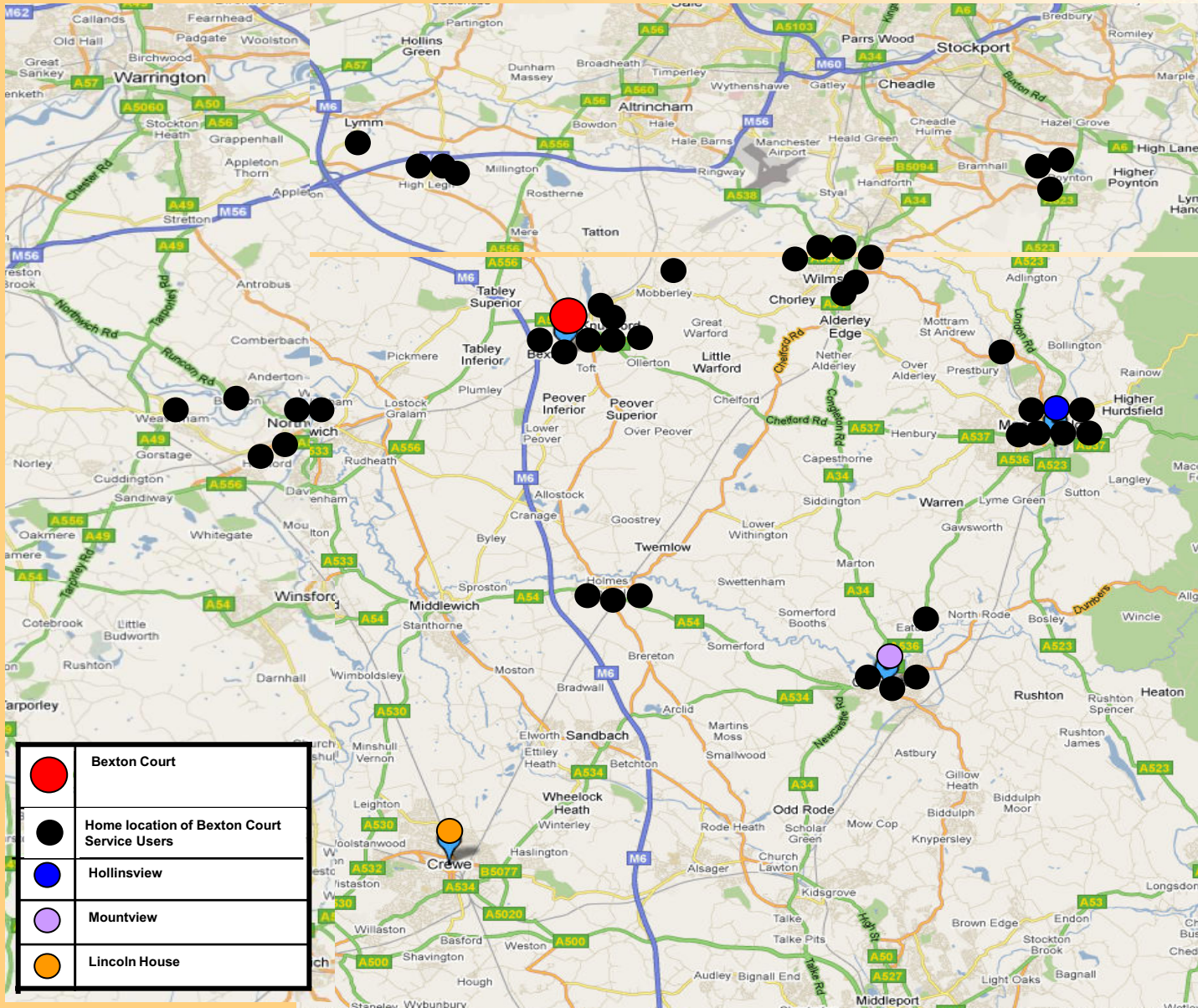
The general feeling following the discussions was that people were reassured by the information and were starting to think through some of their options.
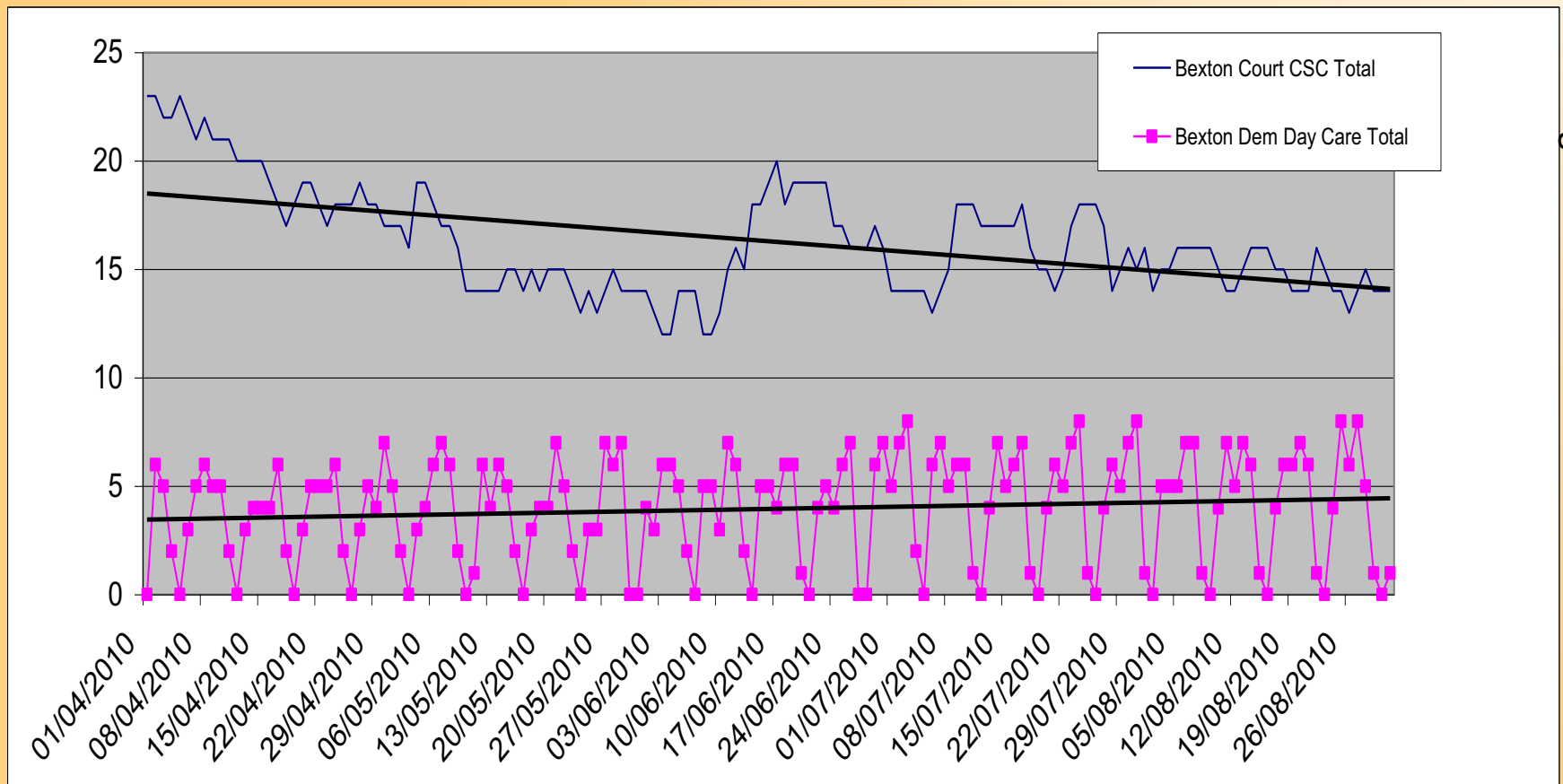
Marion Goddard
Service Manager
27.9.2010

Appendix 2

Appendix 3

Daily Activity - Bexton Court
April 2010 - August 2010

	Bexton Court Dementia (CSC)	Bexton Court Dementia Day Care
Minimum Weekday	12	1
Maximum Weekday	23	8
Minimum Weekend	14	0
Maximum Weekend	22	2

Appendix 4

Unit Costs Bexton Court
April 2010 - August 2010

	Average (Apr 10 - Aug 10)	Apr 2010-11	May 2010-11	Jun 2010-11	Jul 2010-11	Aug 2010-11
Bexton Court Dementia Day Centre						
Actual GROSS UNIT COST	£35.75	£32.60	£43.38	£32.60	£37.45	£32.74
Weekly Cost	£250.27	£228.17	£303.66	£228.17	£262.15	£229.17
SLA OCCUPANCY	70%	65%	62%	71%	79%	72%
100% Occupancy	£24.91	£21.35	£26.76	£23.07	£29.67	£23.72
100% Weekly Costs	£174.39	£149.46	£187.32	£161.47	£207.70	£166.02
85% Occupancy	£29.31	£25.12	£31.48	£27.14	£34.91	£27.90
85% Weekly Costs	£205.17	£175.84	£220.37	£189.97	£244.36	£195.31
Bexton Court Dementia (CSC)						
Actual GROSS UNIT COST	£122.16	£94.55	£130.36	£115.28	£132.24	£138.35
Weekly Cost	£855.09	£661.83	£912.53	£806.97	£925.67	£968.44
SLA OCCUPANCY	71%	86%	66%	69%	69%	65%
100% Occupancy	£85.52	£81.12	£85.75	£80.03	£91.25	£89.45
100% Weekly Costs	£598.64	£567.85	£600.24	£560.19	£638.76	£626.16
85% Occupancy	£100.61	£95.44	£100.88	£94.15	£107.35	£105.24
85% Weekly Costs	£704.28	£668.06	£706.17	£659.05	£751.48	£736.66

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