

Cabinet

Agenda

Date: Monday, 20th December, 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 at the time of notification. 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.

Please contact Cherry Foreman on 01270 686463
E-Mail: cherry.foreman@cheshireeast.gov.uk with any apologies or requests for further information or to give notice of a question to be asked by a member of the public

4. **Minutes of Previous meeting** (Pages 1 - 2)

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 6 December 2010.

5. **Key Decision 59 Macclesfield Economic Masterplan** (Pages 3 - 12)

To consider the development of an economic masterplan for Macclesfield, and action plans in relation to the Town Centre and the South Macclesfield Development Area.

6. **Key Decision 63 All Change for Crewe - Implementing Crewe Vision** (Pages 13 - 20)

To receive and endorse All Change for Crewe – A Strategic Framework for Economic Growth 2010-2030, and the development of a Partnership Board.

7. **Stopping Up of Streets** (Pages 21 - 26)

To consider the Council's policy of removing highway rights from private streets and publicly maintained highways.

8. **Winter Learning - Response to Environmental Scrutiny Committee Review** (Pages 27 - 36)

To consider a report detailing the operational response to the recommendations of the Environmental Scrutiny Committee.

9. **Obesity and Diabetes Review - Response to the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Review** (Pages 37 - 44)

To receive an update giving the initial responses from the Portfolio Holders for Health and Wellbeing and Children and Families, and the Primary Care Trust.

10. **Family Support Services - Children and Families Scrutiny Review** (Pages 45 - 92)

Cabinet is requested to receive the report and recommendations of the Children and Families Scrutiny Committee and, in accordance with the draft Overview and Scrutiny Committee final reporting procedure, to come back to the next (or subsequent) meeting of the Cabinet with a formal response to each recommendation.

11. **Cheshire East Day Care Options Appraisal** (Pages 93 - 124)

To examine the options available for the provision of day care centres in Cheshire East.

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, 2 and 3 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. **Key Decision 59 Wilson Bowden Development Agreement** (Pages 125 - 130)

To consider the report of the Strategic Director Places.

14. **Managing Workforce Change** (Pages 131 - 136)

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

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CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **Cabinet**
held on Monday, 6th December, 2010 in Committee Suite 1,2 & 3, Westfields,
Middlewich Road, Sandbach CW11 1HZ

PRESENT

Councillor W Fitzgerald (Chairman)

Councillors Rachel Bailey, D Brown, H Gaddum, A Knowles, P Mason, and
R Menlove.

Councillors in attendance:
Councillor B Silvester and A Thwaite.

Officers in attendance:
Chief Executive, Borough Treasurer and Head of Assets, Director of Adult,
Community Health and Wellbeing, Director of Children and Families, Head of
HR and Organisational Development, Head of Regeneration and Interim
Borough Solicitor.

91 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors R Domleo and J
Macrae.

92 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

93 PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME/OPEN SESSION

There were no questions from members of the public.

94 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**RESOLVED**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 15 November 2010 be approved
as a correct record.

95 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**RESOLVED**

That that the press and public be excluded from the meeting during
consideration of the following item pursuant to Section 100(A)4 of the
Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that it involves 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.

96 WORKFORCE CHANGE

Consideration was given to the report of the Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development.

RESOLVED

1. That Cabinet supports the decision of the Chief Executive to release the employees whose roles are listed as 1 to 72 in Appendix A of the report under the arrangements agreed in relation to voluntary severance provisions for employees in the Council.
2. That Cabinet notes the employee listed as 73 in Appendix A of the report who may become compulsorily redundant and would receive payments under the arrangements agreed in relation to severance provisions for employees.

The meeting commenced at 2.00 pm and concluded at 2.10 pm

W Fitzgerald (Chairman)

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Cabinet

Date of Meeting:	20 th December 2010
Report of:	John Nicholson, Strategic Director - Places
Subject/Title:	Macclesfield Economic Masterplan
Portfolio Holder:	Cllr Jamie Macrae, Prosperity

1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 The report provides an update on the development of an Economic Masterplan for Macclesfield that has been produced with the support of external consultants over the past 10 months. It seeks the endorsement of the Action Plans in relation to the Town Centre and the South Macclesfield Development Area and agreement to commencement of work to implement these plans with partners.

2.0 Decisions requested

- 2.1 That Cabinet:
- endorse our Economic Masterplan and supporting Action Plans
 - approve the regeneration actions for Macclesfield town centre
 - endorse the proposed strategy for South Macclesfield Development Area (SMDA)
 - agree the commencement of work to deliver the Action Plans with partners

3.0 Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 At its meeting on 21st December 2009, Cabinet approved the development of an Economic Masterplan for Macclesfield and the appointment of consultancy capacity to support the development of this and review, along with our current town centre development partner Wilson Bowden, the options for delivery of the town centre scheme within the parameters of the existing Development Agreement. This is dealt with in a Part 2 related report
- 3.2 The Cheshire East Local Development Framework will set out an updated planning policy framework for the town, to incorporate the proposals from the Economic Masterplan. However, this will not be formally adopted until 2013.
- 3.3 This report sets out the Council's approved policy position for SMDA and Macclesfield town centre, which will be considered as a material consideration

in determining any planning applications on these sites or likely to impact on the development proposals for these sites, pending the adoption of the LDF.

- 3.4 As one of the Council's economic and spatial priorities, the performance of Macclesfield is key to enhancing the economic prosperity and well-being of Cheshire East as a whole. The town centre plays a particularly important role as a key retail, commercial and cultural hub, and its future regeneration needs to be considered alongside the potential of SMDA and the council's ownership interests.
- 3.5 Reflecting competition from other towns, and in order to ensure that the needs and ambitions of communities in Macclesfield, and of the Council itself, are addressed as holistically, effectively and promptly as possible, the Council needs to continue to take a pro-active approach in leading on the delivery of actions that promote regeneration within the town.

4.0 Wards Affected

- 4.1 Macclesfield Town, Broken Cross, Macclesfield West, Macclesfield Forest, Pretbury & Tytherington.

5.0 Local Ward Members

- 5.1 Cllr Arnold, Cllr Asquith, Cllr Beckford, Cllr Bentley, Cllr Broadhurst, Cllr Findlow, Cllr Gaddum, Cllr Goddard, Cllr Hardy, Cllr Jackson, Cllr Livesley, Cllr Narraway, Cllr Neilson, Cllr Smetham, Cllr Tomlinson

6.0 Policy Implications

- 6.1 The scope of regeneration and redevelopment in Macclesfield, encompasses a broad range of policy issues including spatial planning, highways and transport, environmental services, assets and leisure.
- 6.2 The strategic issues and detailed action plans will feed directly into local and sub-regional policy, including the emerging sub-regional Local Enterprise Partnership for Cheshire & Warrington.
- 6.3 Development proposals emerging from the Town Centre and SMDA work will be required to demonstrate appropriate analysis of implications for wider public policy issues including sustainability, environmental impact, health, culture, transport, learning, etc. All key stakeholders have been engaged in the process both to identify issues, but also opportunities to maximise both the community and commercial benefit and deliverability of proposed schemes.
- 6.4 The work undertaken will provide the opportunity for Cheshire East Council and its local delivery partners to identify and more coherently address key strategic

and operational actions, for the benefit of Macclesfield's residents and businesses, as well as Cheshire East as a whole.

6.5 The saved policies in the Macclesfield Local Plan currently provide the planning policy framework for the town. The masterplan has been prepared to support the implementation of strategic site allocations contained in the Local Plan.

6.6 The delivery of a Masterplan also has to take account of national and regional planning policy set out in Planning Policy Statements, particularly PPS4 & 6 and the Regional Spatial Strategy, which remains valid at this point.

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

7.1 In order to deliver the two key Action Plans for Macclesfield Town Centre and SMDA, as identified through the Masterplanning process, support and resources will need to be harnessed from across other public, private and voluntary sectors partners.

7.2 The costs of securing the provision of some additional capacity to pump-prime the development of an Economic Prosperity Forum will be funded from the Economic Development projects earmarked reserves as follows: £20k in 2011/12 and £20k in 2012/13. The appropriate financial approvals in accordance with the Finance and Contract Procedure Rules will be requested from the Places Director as part of the delegated decision process.

7.3 Given that the Council holds a freehold interest in part of the South Macclesfield Development Area and the adjoining retail planning allocation, totalling 26.5 hectares, there are likely to be implications for the Council in terms of potential income resulting from possible sale or lease of this land. Further detailed costings will be provided when a delivery mechanism has been developed.

7.4 In relation to a revised Development Agreement for the town centre, there are likely to be implications for the Council in terms of potential:

- loss of car parking income
- costs of possible third party challenges
- need for further external specialist advice

8.0 Legal Implications (Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)

8.1 Section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000 of the Act gives Local Authorities power to take steps which they consider are likely to promote the economic social or environmental well being of their area or its inhabitants. In doing so, no action can be taken which would contravene any specific statutory prohibition restriction or limitation. Regard must also be had to the Community Strategy. The actions proposed in this report are likely to fall within this power but individual assessment of each one will be required at the appropriate time.

- 8.2 There are also legal implications in relation to the Wilson Bowden Development Agreement, which are detailed in the separate Part 2 report.

9.0 Risk Management

- 9.1 A full and ongoing risk assessment will be undertaken as a part of the delivery of the Action Plans.

- 9.2 In terms of the more strategic risks associated with taking forward the proposed approaches to addressing the regeneration priorities of the Council, the key risks are:

- Legal: there are risks in relation to the Wilson Bowden Development Agreement, which are detailed in the separate Part 2 report.
- Public Funding: over the next 3-5 years there will be a major reduction in the availability of public funding, including the Council's own resources. There will therefore be a need to maximise private sector funding and well-considered use of public funding, to maximise leverage and impact.
- Other policy developments: a key part of the emerging Local Development Framework will be a new Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). Unless there are any exemptions to CIL, there will be a requirement for all new developments to contribute a formula-based tariff towards wider infrastructure as well as on-site infrastructure. This could impact on the viability of schemes such as that at SMDA.
- Timing: Whilst the Masterplanning exercise has drawn out some key proposals for Macclesfield town centre and SMDA, there is a risk that other proposals may come forward that, if successful in obtaining planning consent, could impair the deliverability of certain uses at SMDA.

10.0 Background

- 10.1 A consultancy team led by CBRE was appointed to work with the Council in the development of the 'Macclesfield Economic Masterplan'. The Masterplanning process has been critical in drawing out a wide range of issues that are being used to inform the Action Plans and negotiation of variations to the development arrangements for the town centre including the current Development Agreement. The process has included technical analysis, market analysis, deliverability review, consultation with the public, key stakeholders and local members, and the development of separate but linked Action Plans for the Town Centre and SMDA
- 10.2 Commercial developers and investors are being selective in their investment strategy for new development and regeneration schemes at this stage. However, they are actively analysing future opportunities for when the market picks up, placing greater emphasis on schemes where local authorities are

actively engaged in terms of both planning schemes and considering joint ventures, to minimise risk in terms of deliverability. This puts Macclesfield, and the town centre in particular, in a strong competitive position.

- 10.3 The current economic conditions, and previous experiences with SMDA as evidenced by there being no tangible developer interest over the last fifteen years, indicate that no employment use led development proposals will emerge at that location unless the Council takes a lead in reviewing future uses. The future uses of the site should be considered within the context of our plans for the town centre and the advantages of developing the two proposals in parallel are detailed in the report.
- 10.4 In order to ensure that the needs and ambitions of communities in Macclesfield, and of the Council itself, are addressed as holistically, effectively and promptly as possible, the Council needs to take a pro-active approach with commercial development partners to the planning of new schemes. Whilst this does not presuppose that implementation will commence immediately, it will position the town and Council much more strongly in this respect, both in relation to its current position and the position of other towns.

Town Centre Issues and Actions

- 10.5 The key findings of the Economic Masterplanning in relation to Macclesfield town centre identify that :
- a) it is under significant pressure from competing towns in the South Manchester belt.
 - b) it lacks a co-ordinated and significant leisure offer with restaurants and cinema being the key missing offer.
 - c) the potential Wilson Bowden scheme is regarded as a positive opportunity, however the layout and scale of the current application which is in abeyance needs to be addressed.
- 10.6 The review of the town centre shows the primary development opportunities that have been identified as a result of other considerations that include accessibility/ severance, the coverage of the conservation areas and local topography. As a result of this analysis, the consultants recommend that the Market Square and the Chester Gate area become the traditional heart of the town offering uses that address and enhance the area's heritage and conservation assets . The southern portion of the town around Park Green and the land to the west to Churchill Way become the leisure quarter with the central area being the retail quarter focussed on the new retail development with strengthened links between each of the identified parcels and the rail station through Sunderland Street. However, the nature of the constraints identified suggests that town centre regeneration will come forward in a phased approach.
- 10.7 Successful public and stakeholder consultation exercises indicated that the majority of people agreed that Macclesfield was not achieving its full potential

as a sustainable and vibrant community. It was also suggested that there was a lack of focus and vision for the direction of the town and little co-ordination in a Macclesfield context, but there was strong support for further efforts on town centre management with greater use of the Market Square being a consistent priority and there was a clear steer that the vision in branding and heritage aspects of the town centre needed to be co-ordinated and improved substantially.

- 10.8 The consultants recognise that whilst there would be major benefits resulting from a major new town centre scheme, in most similar developments, there is a risk of displacement affecting the towns existing retail base. However, this can be mitigated through the provision of support to existing independent retailers to help make them respond positively to new competitive pressures.
- 10.9 There is a clear identification that the quality of the town centre environment and how it is promoted needs to be addressed, and this could be done through the formation of a small group of key partners including the Council and local retailers. This has been raised at November's Macclesfield Business Breakfast event and is under active consideration.
- 10.10 Through the process of option testing, it is clear that a new town centre retail scheme, to include a cinema, must be focused on the current Churchill Way, Exchange Street and Duke Street car parks, with a department store and multi-storey car park being located in adjacent positions, probably to the south of the site. Beyond this, there would need to be strong access and design linkages back into Mill Street to ensure that the southern portion of Mill Street creates a retail loop strengthening the new retail and the historic Mill Street, and promoting a sense of 'place'.
- 10.11 In summary, there needs to be a vision for the town, an enhanced town centre environment, support for activities that improve and promote the town centre, and encouragement for visitors and shoppers to use car parks and the retail centre. The following key actions are identified:
 - a) ensure design and linkages are appropriate across the town centre as part of any new retail scheme.
 - b) limit the impact of any new multi storey car park to ensure that the town centre is supported throughout.
 - c) continuation of the employment land study and retail capacity assessment to underpin the assumptions within the economic masterplan for the town centre uses.
 - d) develop measures and strategies to combat increases in congestion by improving linkages to and across the town by modes of transport other than a car.
 - e) in order to capture the full economic opportunities active dialogue with developers and prospective occupiers should be encouraged by all organisations to ensure skills gaps are identified and overcome.
 - f) ensure that appropriate investment and business support is in place to reduce the numbers of business phase as part of displacement pressures as a result of a new development opportunities.

- g) co-ordinate budgets to ensure that priority projects are co-ordinated within existing and proposed Council future allocations. Given the pressure placed on local authorities for the next two to three years it is imperative that funding sources such as the Regional Growth Fund, opportunities coming through the LEP and local business initiatives are captured. These could help ensure that investment in Macclesfield is in the right areas to enable it to hold its own against competitor locations, which it has not been able to achieve in recent years, contributing towards its recent decline as identified in the baseline and consultation analysis.

South Macclesfield Development Area Issues and Actions

- 10.12 The Economic Masterplan report identifies that the principal issue hampering any form of development at SMDA is the cost of infrastructure required to open up the site and, consequently, the additional abnormal costs associated with overcoming the ground conditions to create the development platform.
- 10.13 However, aside from these issues, the site has suffered in the context of the market, with highly competitive sites and towns within the south Manchester belt, such as Cheadle Royal and Handforth Dean, drawing in investment and occupier demand for premium office space and Congleton, to the south-west, which is better positioned in terms of lower cost, better located industrial sites.
- 10.14 The net result of these two issues has been the failure to deliver any of the local planning allocation throughout the adopted plan period.
- 10.15 Whilst it is less attractive as a location for commercial development, it is more so in relation to socio-economic connections, being located adjacent to some of Macclesfield's most disadvantaged communities.
- 10.16 As part of the wider consultation process with the public, stakeholders and local members, it was established that some development was desired on the site, and that the preferred option was for a mixed development comprising retail, leisure, housing and a new football stadium, alongside a new link road connecting Congleton and London Road, passing through the current football stadium site in order to avoid the costs and constraints related to crossing the railway line.
- 10.17 Subsequent exploration of the alternative development options indicate that they are undeliverable due to viability and site constraints, which suggests that the only alternative would be for very piecemeal development on the Council's land, or none at all.
- 10.18 The common issues and opportunities identified include:
- Traffic access and congestion issues to the site and to the south of the town centre
 - The need for a new link road
 - Relationship with / impact on the town centre and need for a comprehensive strategy
 - Need for new leisure development

- 10.19 The rationale for the mix of uses requires that there must be element of retail development in order to overcome the need for the strategic link. The other uses on the site must prove viable in their own right in terms of the quantum of housing development.
- 10.20 In relation to such development, there remain issues in terms of the retail capacity assessment, which will guide the development of retail policies in the LDF, and is inter-connected and 'balanced' with town centre retail development. There are also issues around employment land supply, with the consultant's analysis of market demand suggesting that SMDA's current allocation as an employment site is surplus and actually distorts the market potential of other employment sites in the town.
- 10.21 In terms of the market perspective the SMDA opportunities must not interfere with the ability to strengthen and grow Macclesfield town centre. The report identifies the limits on employment/commercial activity and therefore the town centre must always remain the higher priority of the two sites. However the SMDA will not be delivered without the Council considering a volume of retail and other high value uses to assist in the deliverability of the scheme.
- 10.22 Since 1997, the SMDA has been identified principally for employment-generating uses, but only one application has come forward since then, which was rejected because of transport issues. The preferred option arising from the Masterplanning process is for a mixed use development that comprises retail, commercial leisure/recreation (e.g. cycle track, training pitches) and housing, together with a new link road and a new football stadium at a different location from the current one. Development proposals would be expected to comprise all of these proposed uses; the only means by which all of these can be delivered is if land uses, such as housing and retail, cross-subsidise others and the associated infrastructure costs. A sequential test would have to be undertaken prior to the allocation of the site for retail uses and such an allocation should be phased after the delivery of the town centre redevelopment proposals.
- 10.23 In terms of delivering the preferred option, the funding strategy relates to enabling development with receipts from site sales to residential developers being supplemented by funding from a range of sports and arts organisations connected to a new football stadium development, as well other potential regeneration sources such as the Regional Growth Fund.
- 10.24 In order to be deliverable, the Council must determine the availability of the Council's land resources, consider the use of compulsory purchase powers to assist in the delivery of the whole of the SMDA and act as a conduit through which feasibility monies and current application skills can be used to deliver gap funding and investment into the project. In addition, the Council will have a role in undertaking the employment land study, an interim development brief to guide development uses and scale and also shape the LDF in such a way as to support the stadium development if the feasibility testing in the short term proves the scheme can be delivered.
- 10.25 In terms of this costing issue, the feasibility that is required beyond this project must look at the detailed cost of the link road, its alignment, and the land required to deliver the solution

- 10.26 Although the Council is a key landowner at SMDA, to take the preferred option forward will require a new referencing exercise and negotiations with other landowners, to address the matter of assembling the site for the wider project.
- 10.27 The third issue to resolve would be the quality of the land in terms of bringing it into a state suitable for development site. The cost of this preferred solution will need to be considered as part of the planning considerations on the acceptable uses.
- 10.28 In summary to take forward the preferred option, the following short-term actions are identified in order to determine planning, funding and the delivery route.
- Establish the SMDA link road options and costs and additional linkages between the town centre and SMDA.
 - Determine the land ownership in both quantum terms and deliverability terms. This needs to be taken further in terms of the level of support from the Local Authority to use its CPO powers to assist in the assembly of the site should it prove viable.
 - The Council needs to explore, through the viability of the development including the precise funding gap required and determine whether this gap is potentially fundable in the short term.
 - In order to determine the viability argument, funding bodies need to be approached to determine the likely levels of support.
 - The potential of the landfill area needs to be explored and tested both in terms of feasibility, profitability, etc
 - The Council and Macclesfield Town Football Club need to resolve the route to development in terms of the lead partner, development partners and use of Council land and resources.
 - Prepare and consult on an interim development brief which will take into account all of the constraints and opportunities and provide a clear indication to the developer partner and principal parties what the uses could be and how these uses would assist in achieving the viability of the overall project.

11.0 Access to Information

11.1 Background papers

Macclesfield Economic Masterplan

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

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CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Cabinet

Date of Meeting:	Cabinet 20 th December 2010
Report of:	Strategic Director - Places
Subject/Title:	'All Change for Crewe': Implementing Crewe Vision
Portfolio Holder:	Cllr Jamie Macrae

1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 The report provides an update on progress towards the development of an economic vision for Crewe and seeks endorsement to move the project forward from development to delivery phase under the working title – “*All Change for Crewe*”.
- 1.2 Since the last report to Cabinet on 22nd February 2010, the SQW consultancy team, who have been supporting the Council in the development of the Crewe Vision, have completed their work with stakeholders and the steering group to complete the Data and Evidence Report, Strategic Framework and an Action Plan. The Crewe Vision strategic framework and priorities have now been finalised and endorsed by a wide range of public and private sector partners.
- 1.3 *All Change for Crewe* sets out ambitious plans for Crewe's growth, seeking to make it a nationally significant economic centre by 2031 with a total population in excess of 100,000, a large skilled working age population, plus business density, start-ups and GVA that matches or exceeds national levels. The aim is to increase GVA (Gross Value Added per Worker) by 85% over 20 years, growing the economy by £850 million per year by 2031.

2.0 Decisions requested

- 2.1 To receive and endorse *All Change for Crewe* – a Strategic Framework for Economic Growth 2010 – 2030.
- 2.2 To endorse the development of a Partnership Board proposal for Crewe which, it is envisaged, will be tasked with providing additional private sector stimulus and leadership to the regeneration of Crewe and the delivery of the key priorities and projects identified in *All Change for Crewe*.

3.0 Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 The report to Cabinet on 14th July 2009, approving the visioning work, identified the need to ensure that Crewe strengthens its place in regional level plans and priorities and that Cheshire East Council should provide leadership to fulfil Crewe's potential by maximising public and private sector investment in the town.

- 3.2 Crewe is a spatial and economic priority for Cheshire East Council. With the highest levels of deprivation in the borough, containing nine out of the Borough's 14 neighbourhoods that are within the bottom fifth of the English index of multiple deprivation, Crewe continues to punch below its "economic weight", despite some successes such as Crewe Business Park. *All Change for Crewe* presents a framework for action that can be used by all stakeholders within Crewe's economy to drive change for the benefit of its residents and the wider Cheshire East community.
- 3.3 The Council set out early spatial priorities around Crewe, Macclesfield and Sustainable Towns. Over the past 18 months, significant work has been undertaken in clarifying, scoping and starting to address some of the key challenges and opportunities, building upon previous approaches and experience. In taking these priorities forward to their next stage, it is important to project the authority as one that seeks to promote economic development and regeneration and therefore is effectively 'open for business' in that we are pro-active in responding to development and regeneration opportunities.
- 3.4 It is important that the issues that Crewe faces are addressed coherently by the authority, and other partners, in order to meet key performance targets and wider aspirations set out in the Sustainable Communities Strategy and Corporate Plan.

4.0 Wards Affected

- 4.1 Crewe North; Crewe South; Crewe East; Crewe West; Rope; Doddington; Nantwich

5.0 Local Ward Members

- 5.1 Councillors Beard, Bebbington, Jones, Cannon, Flude, Howell, Conquest, M.Martin, Thorley, Cartlidge, Parker, Weatherill, Silvester, Simon, Westwood, Brickhill, Hammond, Walker, Dykes, A.Martin, A.Moran.

Local ward members have been involved through briefing meetings, attendance at stakeholder events and through LAP meetings.

6.0 Policy Implications including - Climate change - Health

- 6.1 The scope of *All Change for Crewe* encompasses a broad range of policy issues including climate change, housing, health and wellbeing, economic development and spatial planning.
- 6.2 *All Change for Crewe* will feed directly into local, sub-regional, regional and potentially national policy, including the emerging sub-regional Local Enterprise Partnership for Cheshire & Warrington.
- 6.3 The vision's references to the scale, type and pace of growth in terms of employment, housing and population will be directly reflected in emerging planning policy through the Local Development Framework (LDF), and is identified as a consistent priority in each of the options in the Core Strategy, which is currently being consulted upon.

- 6.4 To deliver successful, sustainable economic growth, it is important that *All Change for Crewe* is not considered as just an economic development strategy, so it is being developed as a cross cutting, umbrella programme that will spearhead delivery of all Cheshire East strategies within Crewe such as the Sustainable Community Strategy “Ambition for All”, the Local Transport Plan, and other service’s delivery plans, including housing, education and health.

7.0 Financial Implications (Authorised by the Borough Treasurer)

- 7.1 In order to deliver *All Change for Crewe*, support and resources will need to be harnessed from across the public, private and voluntary sectors, principally through our Local Strategic Partnership and Local Area Partnership.
- 7.2 The costs of securing additional executive capacity (as explained in paragraph 10.13) to lead on the delivery of *All Change for Crewe* will be funded from the Economic Development projects earmarked reserves as follows: £25k in 2010/11, £60k in 2011/12 and £40k in 2012/13. The appropriate financial approvals will be requested as part of the financial performance reporting process.

8.0 Legal Implications (Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)

- 8.1 Section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000 of the Act gives Local Authorities power to take steps which they consider are likely to promote the economic social or environmental well being of their area or its inhabitants. In doing so, no action can be taken which would contravene any specific statutory prohibition restriction or limitation. Regard must also be had to the Community Strategy. The actions proposed in this report are likely to fall within this power but individual assessment of each one will be required at the appropriate time.
- 8.2 Depending on the delivery structure adopted for a Partnership Board for *All Change for Crewe*, and the more detailed delivery plans for each component project, legal implications for Cheshire East Council (CEC) will vary, with some responsibility resting with lead organisations for each project. The *All Change for Crewe* Programme Board will not be constituted as a legal entity and its decisions will be advisory and not legally binding on CEC or any other organisation. It is proposed that the CEC Board member should be a councillor with delegated powers to agree the actions of *All Change for Crewe* staff within agreed operating guidelines.

9.0 Risk Management

- 9.1 In undertaking any regeneration programme or project, there are a wide range of inherent risks that need to be considered at project scoping stage, and handled through a robust project management approach which incorporate risk logs which are already used to identify and manage risks and their potential impact.
- 9.2 In terms of the more strategic risks associated with taking forward the proposed approaches to addressing the regeneration priorities of the Council, the key risks are:

- Management of Expectations: the *All Change for Crewe* programme will operate over a 20 year period where there are major infrastructure requirements. It will be important to maintain momentum and ensure clear communication of plans and progress.
- Public Funding: over the next 3-5 years, there will be a major reduction in the availability of public funding. Many projects have already been delayed or cancelled. There will therefore be a need to maximise private sector funding and well-considered use of public funding, to maximise leverage and impact.
- Governance: these must be robust, supported by stakeholders and well connected to the key priorities of Cheshire East to ensure the risk of divergence of priorities is minimised.
- Staff and Executive: the success of the programme will be very dependent on the quality of the executive team supporting in the co-ordination and delivery of the overall and component projects.

9.3 Risk Logs are being developed for the *All Change for Crewe* programme and each component project, and will be used to identify and manage risks and their potential impact.

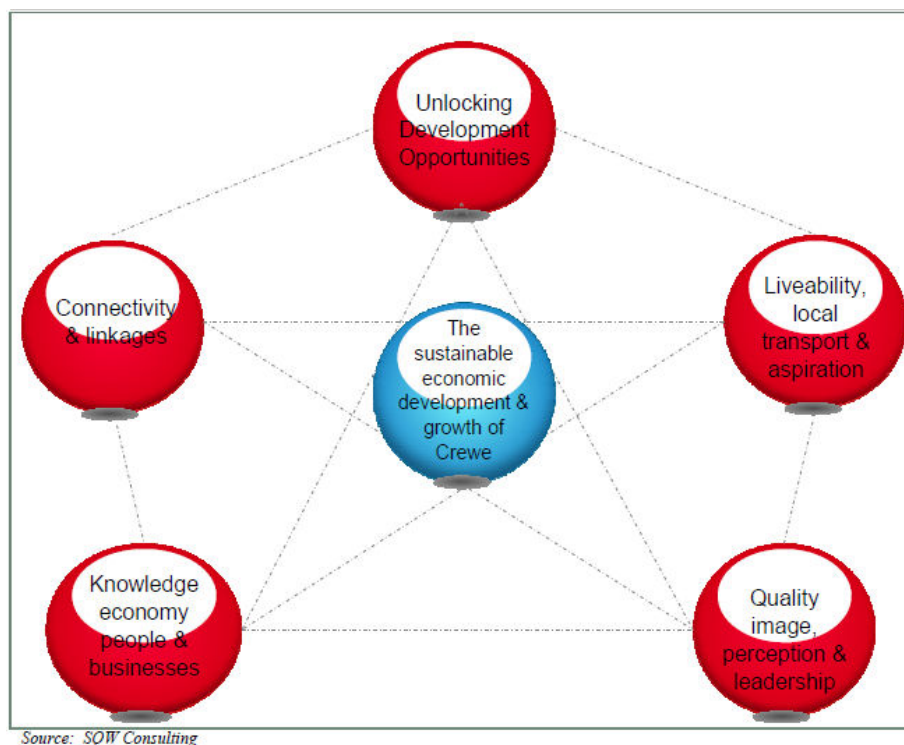
10.0 Background and Options

10.1 *All Change for Crewe* sets out ambitious plans for growth which will set Crewe out as a nationally recognised growth location. With unrivalled rail connections in all directions – within 90 minutes of London - and excellent north-south links, Crewe has some real strengths on which to build. However, a declining industrial heritage in Crewe is both an opportunity and a threat – a positive approach is already being taken to stimulate education, skills, infrastructure and investment, if it is to realise its potential to unlock development opportunities and increase employment growth and economic productivity.

10.2 The Strategic Vision is based on five priorities that need to be developed together:

- **A knowledge economy and a knowledgeable workforce** – support for innovation and diversification into growth sectors will establish a business environment that attracts and retains high-tech firms that are underpinned by a “smart” workforce.
- **Connections and linkages** – Crewe requires a fully fit-for-purpose strategic transport and ICT network. It must be able to fully exploit its connections to city-regions such as Manchester, Liverpool, Birmingham and London.
- **Quality image, perception and leadership** – Crewe must be actively marketed to potential investors, but this must be backed up by a significant change in image, quality and leadership from all sectors of the community.
- **Unlocking development opportunities** – the town centre, Basford sites, housing areas and other employment land need to be developed in a coherent and integrated manner that delivers long-term value for the town.
- **Liveability and local transport**- Crewe requires a first class quality of life offer that attracts retains and includes all parts of its community for example by tackling local congestion and school performance.

- 10.3 These have previously been presented informally to both Cabinet and Environment & Prosperity Scrutiny Committee, and have been endorsed by them. Strategic partners and local members have been similarly informed, also with their support. The priorities are summarised in the diagram below, which have been adopted in the structure of our draft Economic Development Strategy, so there is a clearer consistency between economic development priorities at different spatial levels. The implementation of these priorities requires the focused support of regional and sub-regional partners across all sectors in order to achieve the ambitious goals.



Priority projects

- 10.4 *All Change for Crewe* will initially focus on 12 priority projects that relate to these five strategic priorities. It is proposed, subject to available resources, that these projects will commence in their development or implementation in the next few months, whilst their impact will range from short-term to long-term, according to their scale and complexity. Each of these will have their own project lead, project champion (from the proposed Partnership Board) and project management process, including planning, performance management, risk management, etc.
- 10.5 The priority projects are:
- Crewe railway station re-development
 - Vibrant Town centre and regenerated corridor to the station
 - Development of Basford – focusing on high knowledge/science base industry
 - Sustainable Urban Extensions – generating housing growth
 - Next Generation Broadband – linked to wider Cheshire East initiative
 - School education to be proud of
 - Major employer care programme – linked to sub-regional delivery arrangements
 - 21st Century leaders and raising aspirations programme

- 10.6 In order to progress these initiatives it is vital that other public sector partners and the private sector are committed and, where possible, contributing financially to making them happen.

Priority Projects	Outcomes		
	Short Term (1-2 years)	MediumTerm (3-5 years)	Long Term (3-5 years)
Crewe railway station re-development scheme			
Vibrant town centre and regenerated corridor to the railway station			
Development of Basford strategic sites and associated access works			
Sustainable urban extensions			
Next Generation Broadband			
Ensuring people have skills businesses need			
Major employer care programme			
Crewe Science, Technology & Innovation Infrastructure			
21C leaders and raising aspirations programme			
Regeneration of the West End & other deprived areas			
School education to be proud of			
Ambitious internal and external marketing campaigns			

Key progress

- 10.7 Despite the challenging economic and funding climate, significant progress has been made on a number of fronts, some of which are more tangible than others, but all of which contribute towards achieving the longer-term objectives of *All Change for Crewe*. These include:

- Lobbying note developed and submitted promoting Crewe Green Link Road South, which has resulted in the scheme being placed in the 'development pool' for further consideration by DfT.
- Ransom strip negotiations progressing further in relation to Basford East, and close liaison with site landowners.
- Lobbying to promote Crewe and wider Cheshire East interests in relation to rail re-franchising.
- Liaison with Keele Univ, South Cheshire College and MMU to develop early opportunities in relation to 'Knowledge economy & knowledgeable workforce' objective.
- Focus on Crewe Sustainable Urban Extensions in LDF Core Strategy Options.
- Supporting Raising Young People's Aspirations KTP, in partnership with the LAP, MMU, Wulvern Housing and others.
- Lyceum Square refurbishment completion
- Queen's Park restoration ongoing.

Public engagement

- 10.8 There has been extensive engagement with local organisations and businesses in the development of *All Change for Crewe*, but there is a recognised need to promote the messages of the programme, its projects and to capture views on how we best deliver these. During November and early December, a programme of public engagement has taken place, managed and staffed by officers with member input. A questionnaire seeking views was developed, and responses invited, with promotion through normal routes, including Crewe Chronicle, local radio and Cheshire East's own outlets.

- 10.9 At the point of writing this report, the public engagement process was on-going, but by the date of submitting the report to Cabinet, this will have been completed and responses analysed, to provide further feedback to the Council.

Delivery and Governance

- 10.10 *All Change for Crewe* is currently managed as an officer Steering Group that meets every six weeks, with limited input from external organisations at this point. In order to engage more actively with partners, it is proposed that a Partnership Board is established to play a leadership role for Crewe Vision and drive forward the above priorities. The Partnership Board would be responsible for the overall strategic direction of *All Change for Crewe*, championing Crewe and supporting the delivery of individual projects.
- 10.11 A number of possible delivery structures for *All Change for Crewe* have been reviewed from a simple partnership to an Urban Regeneration Company. The eventual structure will comprise:
- An advisory Crewe Partnership Board as an informally constituted arrangement, meeting every 2-3 months and reporting regularly to a wider partnership of Crewe stakeholders
 - A Board of approximately 11 Directors, of which at least half will be from the private sector, including a Chair. They will be appointed as a result of a selection process and on the basis of:
 - their commitment to support the future of Crewe and the *All Change for Crewe* programme.
 - their understanding of the local area
 - their experience of enabling the delivery of transformational change
 - their skills in specific areas of expertise.
- 10.13 In addition, to provide additional capacity and, in particular, a commercial perspective to add to the existing skills of officers, we are seeking to appoint an individual or consultancy that will provide a leading executive input into the regeneration of Crewe, reporting into the proposed Partnership Board. This will raise the profile and development opportunities in Crewe to the development and investment sector, not just locally, but at UK level also.

11.0 Access to Information

Any background information relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer:

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CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

REPORT TO: CABINET

Date of Meeting: 20 December 2010

Report of: John Nicholson, Strategic Director, Places

Subject/Title: Stopping Up of Streets

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Rod Menlove, Environment Portfolio Holder

1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 The report seeks to bring together and summarise the Council's policy of removing existing highway rights from private streets and publicly maintained highways.

2.0 Decision Requested

- (a) To note the obligations of the highway authority and the implications of Stopping Up Orders and support the emerging policy in this area.
- (b) The Cabinet or its relevant Portfolio Holder will consider requests from residents who indicate a wish to remove the highway rights and extinguish general public access to highway within the Borough and in cases where it is considered that the highway rights are unnecessary, and where the local residents agree to meet the necessary costs, will apply to the Magistrates' Court for an order to stop up that length of the highway. Each case will be considered on its own merits, which will include the level of support by local residents and the views of Ward Members.

3.0 Reasons for Decisions Requested

- 3.1 To reduce the need to maintain highway at the public expense where local residents wish to seek a Stopping Up Order and the highway rights are considered to be unnecessary.

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 None arising immediately from this report.

7.0 Financial Implications 2009/10 and beyond (Authorised by the Borough Treasurer)

7.1 There are no immediate significant costs in the work proposed. Costs associated with progressing stopping up orders may be recovered from those making the request. Should the Council instigate the action, then we would need to carry the costs.

8.0 Legal Implications (Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)

8.1 Section 36 of the Highways Act 1980 provides that all highways which prior to the commencement of that Act were highways maintainable at public expense continue to be so. Highways can also become maintainable at public expense in other ways, such as those described in 10.1 below. Section 41 places a statutory duty on Highways Authorities to maintain the highway, and case law has established that the physical extent of the highway which is to be maintained consists of “the top two spits”. Drains and gullies in the road are generally the liability of the Highway Authority, with public sewers being the responsibility of the public utility company, although this can depend on the individual circumstances. Section 56 provides a mechanism for any person alleging that a highway is maintainable at public expense and is out of repair to serve notice on the Highway Authority and to complain to the Crown Court for an order to put the highway in proper repair. Section 130 places a statutory duty on Highways Authorities to assert and protect the rights of the public to the use and enjoyment of the highway.

8.2 Section 116 of the Highways Act 1980 provides a mechanism for the Highway Authority to apply to the Magistrates’ Court for an order stopping up a highway where the highway is ‘unnecessary’. (There is a further provision for a diversion order where the highway can be diverted so as to make it nearer or more commodious to the public, but for the purpose of this report, the relevant provision of that Section is the power to make a ‘stopping up’ order, and the need to prove that the highway is “unnecessary”).

In practice, this would involve satisfying the Court that all the relevant notice procedures had been followed, and that there was no detriment to the general public at large, not simply the local residents in the area, by the stopping up of an area of highway. Because each case would be considered on its merits, it could not be taken for granted that each application would succeed, as the Court would need to be convinced on the evidence in each case, and it is possible for applications to be opposed. Although ultimately, the decision would be for the Court to make, the Council as Highway Authority would need to form a preliminary view on the strength of the case, before agreeing to apply to the Court. The Council would also have to balance its duty under Section 130

(outlined above) against a Section 116 application. Under Section 117, the Highway Authority may, at the request of a person who desires a highway to be stopped up, make the application to Court and as a condition of making the application can require that person to pay the reasonable costs in connection with doing so. Section 93 of the Local Government Act 2003 supplements those powers to charge by providing a power to charge for undertaking a preliminary examination of cases in order to determine whether or not a court application should be made.

- 8.3 The implication of a stopping up order is that the former highway is no longer maintainable at public expense. Maintenance in this context would include liability for winter maintenance. Accordingly, there should be a future saving in maintenance costs.

9.0 Risk Management

- 9.1 The Authority must ensure that private rights of access and common use are preserved in any stopping up order.
- 9.2 The issues outlined in the legal implications section above must also be borne in mind.

10.0 Background and Options

10.1 Highway Rights

The term 'highway rights' is used to mean the public's right to travel across land; the term 'highway land' is used to describe the land over which highway rights exist.

A highway, over which the public has rights of passage and re-passage, may be publicly maintained (usually referred to as an adopted highway) or may be privately maintained. It may have one or more owners, not necessarily the Highway Authority; see 10.4 below for further explanation.

Any road that has been open for public use to pass and re-pass unhindered for a period of 20 years is commonly considered to have 'highway rights' established over it. These 'highway rights' can only be extinguished by "stopping up". The majority of the highway network has been in existence as publicly maintainable since 1835; additions are continually being made by adopting new roads from developers under currently Section 38 of the Highways Act 1980, by dedication under Section 37 or by making up under the Private Street Works Code Section.

Where a 'private street' is a thoroughfare and has been in general use for more than 20 years it is safe to presume 'highway rights' are established; this is more difficult in the case of culs-de-sac where it may be more difficult to prove general use by anyone other than residents and their visitors.

For a road to remain private the owner(s) must have prevented general access for at least one day every year and made a declaration by advertisement, sign or lodging a document with the highway authority stating that the road will be closed to the public at a particular time each year. Where this has occurred no highway rights will have been established.

10.2 Previous Highway Authority Policy

Some records show that the former Cheshire County Council had a policy of positive encouragement to adopt private streets at public expense in the 1950s, this came to an end in 1972 when it was determined that any new adoptions should be at the owners' expense. This effectively means that before any street is adopted it is made up to the current standard of construction. The policy also excludes maintaining private streets.

10.3 The Need to Stop Up Highway Land

Before any highway land can be treated as private land it is necessary to extinguish or 'stop up' the highway rights over the land. If this is not done, any activity such as building on or enclosing the land or gating the road would constitute a criminal offence and may result in the perpetrator incurring costs as a result of enforcement action.

One of the first considerations to be made in 'Stopping Up' a highway is the general public need. Will the 'Stopping Up' inconvenience any one or can the highway be declared surplus to public need?

10.4 Highway Rights, Land Ownership and Private Rights

The Council is by law the highway authority for Cheshire East and as a result it has certain powers and duties to control what happens on highway land. This does not however mean that the Council owns all highway land in Cheshire East. The Council will only own highway land if it has at some point bought the land (which applies to a minority of roads) to build a road or to carry out improvement works.

Most highway land is in private ownership, and as the Land Registry does not always have records of details of who owns highway land it is not always clear or easy to discover who owns the land over which the highway passes. In the absence of any evidence of ownership there is a legal presumption (which may apply), that the adjoining landowner (or frontager) owns a half width of the highway adjoining his land (i.e. up to an imaginary middle line), with the frontager on the opposite side of the road owning his corresponding half. This is known as the *ad medium filum viae* ("to the middle line of the road") presumption.

It is important to carefully consider issues of land ownership because once highway rights are extinguished the owner of the land is free to deal with it as he would any other land in his private ownership. It may be that evidence of ownership comes to light during or at some time after the stopping up process and that land which was thought to be the frontager's under the *ad medium filum viae* presumption actually belongs to someone else.

Developers may retain ownership of estate roads of a residential estate for example and anyone wishing to stop up a highway should be aware of the possibility that another party has a prior and better claim to ownership of the land. The Council is unable to give any guarantees in relation to land ownership.

If the Council does own the land in question it is under a duty to obtain the best possible price for it if it wishes to dispose of it. Approval for the sale of the land, if relevant, would be sought alongside any approval to apply for an order to extinguish the highway rights. Any costs associated with the sale of land to a third party are payable by the third party in addition to the costs of the stopping up application.

In addition to ownership, any private rights over the land need to be considered. The process of extinguishing highway rights does not have any affect on private rights that may exist over the land. The existence of private rights is normally irrelevant while the land is subject to highway rights but once stopped up this may emerge as an issue. Whilst this is perhaps unlikely in most cases, the Council would not be aware of any such private rights and is unable to give any guarantees that someone will not at some stage assert a private right of way (or some other right) over the land.

The Council should not, as a matter of policy, permit the stopping up procedure to be used directly or indirectly to compromise a third party's right of access. There may also be circumstances in which a stopping up would have an adverse impact on private rights enjoyed over highway land. If these possibilities become apparent in considering whether to make a S116 application then the Council may decide not continue with the application or it may require the consent of all affected third parties to agree access rights in common for all frontagers.

Doubt about land ownership issues such as those outlined above will require legal advice.

10.4 Procedure

This Council can make an application to a Magistrates' Court for a stopping up order to extinguish highway rights under Section 116 of the Highways Act 1980.

If there are plans to develop the highway land it is more appropriate and often more cost effective and quicker to seek a stopping up order under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, an application which would be made by the Borough Council this option and would need to be discussed with the planning department, but Section 116 applications are the ones being considered for the purpose of this report..

An application to the Magistrates' Court under S116 of the Highways Act can only be made on the grounds that the highway land in question is "unnecessary" for the public user. The decision to make an application to the court, would normally be made by the Executive Member after consultation with Ward Members and on advice from officers.

If such approval is obtained the Council must publicise the proposals and invite representations from the public. It must also undertake consultations with the

Parish Councils and Statutory Undertakers, such as gas, water, electricity and telecommunications providers. Objections, if they cannot be satisfactorily overcome, will usually result in failure to achieve the Stopping Up order.

10.5 Private Streets in the Borough

There are a number of Private Streets within the Borough that may or may not be of general public benefit. Residents of some have indicated a wish to remove the highway rights and prevent general access. The decision sought in this report outlines how the Council will respond to this approach.

10.6 Public Highways in the Borough

There is currently a general presumption that a new road will not be adopted to be maintainable at public expense if it serves 5 or fewer properties as it fails to meet the public benefit criterion.

11.0 **Overview of Year One and Term One Issues**

11.1 None

12.0 ***Access to Information***

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

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CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

REPORT TO: CABINET

Date of Meeting: 20 December 2010
Report of: Strategic Director - Places
Subject/Title: Winter Learning Response to Environmental Scrutiny
Committee Recommendations
Portfolio Holder: Cllr Rod Menlove

1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 Following the events of the longest and deepest winter for some thirty years, it was agreed that Environmental Scrutiny should be asked to examine our learning and provide recommendations to Cabinet for the future improvement and action.
- 1.2 The proposed operational response to each of the Committee's recommendations is contained in the attached Appendix A.
- 1.3 This report has been produced to obtain Cabinet endorsement of the proposed operational responses, which can then be included in the Council's Winter Maintenance Plan 2010/11 and to provide a response to Environmental Scrutiny Committee.

2.0 Decision Requested

- 2.1 That Cabinet endorses the operational response to Environmental Scrutiny Committee recommendations as detailed in Appendix A.

3.0 Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 To ensure that the learning from last winter's events following comprehensive challenge by Members is in large measure built into future arrangements as far as is affordable and practical.

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 recommendations made by the Environmental Scrutiny Committee do in part affect the Council's Winter Maintenance Plan for 2010/2011 and in particular are supporting a change in the application of current policy for the provision and location of grit bins to take account of the views and experiences of local Ward Members.

7.0 Financial Implications (Authorised by the Borough Treasurer)

- 7.1 There are immediate costs that will be met from the winter maintenance revenue budget, however, in the event of another harsh winter the Council's existing budget may prove inadequate and an overspend may occur; however, clearly the service will do everything possible to avoid this from happening whilst satisfying our responsibilities under the Highways Act

8.0 Legal Implications (Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)

- 8.1 Most highway maintenance and management activities are based upon statutory powers and duties contained in legislation and precedents developed over time as a result of case law, notably the Highways Act 1980, which imposes under Section 41 a duty to maintain a highway at public expense. This duty was expanded from 2003 to include a duty to ensure as far as reasonably practicable that safe passage along a highway is not endangered by snow or ice. Section 56 also allows any person who alleges that a highway maintainable at public expense is out of repair may serve a notice on the highway authority and although defences are available, failure to respond appropriately can result in a court order that the highway authority must put the highway in proper repair within such reasonable period as is ordered. It is crucially important that all those involved in highway maintenance and management, including Members have a clear understanding of their powers and duties, and the implications of these.

Even in the absence of specific powers and duties, highway authorities have a general duty of care to users and the community to manage the highway in a condition that is safe and fit for purpose.

As mentioned above, Section 41 of the Highways Act 1980 places a duty on the Council to maintain its highways. There is the remedy of damages if any party suffers loss, damage or injury and they can show breach of this duty. The Council has a defence if it can show that it exercised reasonable measures to keep the highway safe. If potholes form in roads damaged by ice and snow and the Council could reasonably have been expected to be aware of such defects, then these must be repaired within a reasonable time or the Council could be vulnerable to public liability claims.

Some of the responses set out in Appendix A will form part of the Winter Service Plan, which ensures Cheshire East Council continues to meet its legal obligations.

9.0 Risk Management

- 9.1 The Authority has plans in place to address the risks attached to its statutory duties and routine delivery of services. It maintains a Winter Service Plan to address the duties of a Highway Authority in relation to the removal of snow and ice. The Winter Service Plan 2010/11 is based upon the national Code of Practice Well Maintained Highways 2005 and the Resilience of England's Transport Systems in Winter – interim report July 2010.
- 9.2 The significant words in the Highways Act are 'reasonably practicable'; the Duty does not mean that all highways have to be free from ice or snow at all times. The Government indicate that to pre-treat 30 - 35% of the network is sufficient to demonstrate reasonableness; Cheshire East pre-salts about 40% of the network as primary routes. (There is an additional rural hill community service provided that is beyond the main pre-salt routes, about 35 miles extra). The Winter Maintenance Plan is structured to more than meet the test of reasonableness.

10.0 Background and Options

- 10.1 Cheshire East Council is a highway authority with the duty to maintain the highway as set out by Section 41 of the Highways Act 1980 and as amended by S111 of the Railways and Transport Safety Act 2003. In particular, a highway authority is under a duty to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that safe passage along a highway is not endangered by snow or ice.
- 10.2 The Environment and Prosperity Committee gave consideration to a report on 'winter learning', which was referred to the Committee by Corporate Management Team. To enable the Committee to make recommendations to Cabinet for improvement, the report brought together and summarised the Council's learning from events of the longest and deepest winter in thirty years.
- 10.3 The operational response to each of the Committees recommendations is found at Appendix A.
- 10.4 The only recommendation that has not been brought forward for endorsement by Cabinet relates to the contracting of staff to support footway clearance (Appendix A (k)). As the Highways Maintenance budget is already under pressure to deliver the reactive interventions and preventative maintenance necessary to keep the network safe and clear for the travelling public, it was considered that we should continue to rely on ad hoc arrangements to support this activity should events demand rather than commit additional financial resources. However, we will be able to switch available resources more quickly than last year from street cleansing and grounds maintenance to footway clearance.
- 10.5 Highway officers as shown in Appendix A have identified with the help of local Ward Members a list of "farm contractors" that may be willing as necessary to support snow clearance.

11.0 Overview of Year One and Term One Issues

11.1 None.

12.0 Access to Information

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

- Report to Environmental Scrutiny Committee – Winter Learning 2009/10
- Draft Winter Service Plan 2010/11.
- Well Maintained Highways – The Code of practice for Highway Maintenance Management.
- The Resilience of England's Transport Systems in Winter – interim report July 2010.

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Appendix A

Winter Learning Outcome Report – Response to Environmental Scrutiny Recommendations

Report Summary

The report has been framed to provide a response to each recommendation of the Environmental Scrutiny Committee.

Background

The Committee gave consideration to a report on 'winter learning', which was referred to the Committee by Corporate Management Team. To enable the Committee to make recommendations to Cabinet for improvement, the report brought together and summarised the Council's learning from events of the longest and deepest winter in thirty years.

Recommendations

Following detailed consideration of the report, Members, Environment and Prosperity Scrutiny Committee made the following observations and recommendations to Cabinet:-

- a) With regard to school closures, it was agreed that the Director for Children and Families should be requested to attend a future meeting of the Committee, to discuss the reasons for the closures and what could be done to ensure that, where possible, schools remain open in the future.

Action completed.

- b) That the weather update received on a daily basis from the Meteorological Office be circulated to schools to assist them in determining whether or not a school should close.

All schools now included on distribution list.

- c) A list of farm contractors, who would be willing to assist in clearing the roads be devised.

Below is list of current / future arrangements.

- *W Riley Brown Low Farm Sutton Cheshire : Gritting & Ploughing Snow Ploughs and Snow blowers (Annual deployment in Winter Period)*
- *Whitehills Farm Ltd Macclesfield Forest Cheshire : Gritting & Ploughing Snow Ploughs and Snow blowers (Annual deployment in Winter Period)*

- *G Taylor Pyme Chair Farm Rainow Cheshire : Gritting & Ploughing Snow Ploughs and Snow blowers (Annual deployment in Winter Period)*
- *P Hodgson Whaley Bridge Derbyshire : Ploughs & Snow Blowers (Prospective Annual deployment in Winter Period)*
- *Brian E Wain Blakehouse Farm Siddington Cheshire :Tractor & Snow plough blade*
- *J Leighton Blue Mantle Ltd: Towed spreader 4x4 vehicle & plough, Quad bike & footway spreader.*
- *Paul Lawton, Gawsworth Towed spreader, ploughs for Landover and tractor, + quad bike.*
- *Ian Marshall, Bridgemere. Snow ploughing, tractor and snow plough. (deployment during snowfall)*
- *Phillip Dulson & Son, Ridley Hall, Tarporley. Unimog and CEC snow plough. (deployment during snowfall)*
- *B S Parker, Bath House, Audlem. 2no tractor and CEC ploughs. (deployment during snowfall)*
- *JH & DA Davies, Granford Lane Farm, Aston, Nantwich. Tractor and CEC plough and JCB. (deployment during snowfall)*
- *Graham Latham, Brindley Lea Hall, Faddiley. Gritter, plough and loading facilities. (deployed during snowfall)*
- *Steve Willis, Houndings Lane, Sandbach. 5no tractors / ploughs, 6No JCB's 1No gritter, 4no quad bikes.*
- *Mark Able, Top End Farm, Barthomley. JCB / farm equipment. (Prospective deployment during snowfall)*
- *Attached plan shows overall coverage of these resources.*

Officers will endeavour to deploy these additional resources on a casual basis as conditions dictate. This is only likely to occur in very exceptional weather conditions and it is hoped these farmers will operate at least initially, on a good will basis.

- d) With regard to the Waste and Recycling Service, it was agreed that residual waste should take priority over recycling and garden waste.

No further action required.

- e) That a six day resilience of salt should be held in stock (6,000 tonnes) and accommodation to house that stock be sought.

Currently there are nationwide difficulties in re-stocking of de-icing salt as Local Authorities respond to the recently published “The resilience of England’s Transport Systems in Winter”

Cheshire East’s current position is:

- ***Lyme Green (covered barn) 2000t (in stock)***
- ***Lyme Green (o/s store) 700t (delivery 29th – 30th Nov)***
- ***Green Street 1500 t (delivery 22nd -26th Nov)***
- ***Brunswick Wharf 500t (delivery 6th – 7th Dec)***
- ***Wardle 800t (in stock).***

In addition, CEC’s contractual relationship with Salt Union, Winsford, means that over half the current gritter fleet is stationed and loads directly from Salt Union. This reduces the risk of delivery disruptions and as last year increases our resilience.

The cost of achieving this strategy is £105,000. This has been ordered from the highway revenue budget, however, should we endure a severe winter again, this may prove insufficient and further expenditure may be needed.

- f) Additional salt boxes should be provided and refilled as and when required.

Last winter 288 salt bins were placed on the network in accordance with the current policy, during the severe winter many more requests were received for additional salt bins. As requested over the summer months officers canvassed all elected members to ascertain if and where additional salt bins are required.

The response was for an additional 145 locations. This will require some capital investment in additional bins and revenue expenditure in relation to the refilling.

Capital, purchase and placement. £25,000. The service is currently exploring how this expenditure can be funded.

Revenue, filling each occasion £7,500. Repeated refilling over the winter period will put further pressure on already stretched budgets.

Many of these additional locations for salt bins may not comply with our current policy, and this may lead to further requests throughout the winter season. (*Locations pages 52 – 54, Winter Service Plan).

- g) That the public be made aware of the legal position with regard to them clearing footpaths and shop fronts. National guidance “Snow Code” has now been published, arrangements will be made to publish on Cheshire East website.

There is no law stopping you from clearing snow and ice on the pavement outside your property, pathways to your property or public spaces.

If an accident did happen, it's highly unlikely that you would be sued as long as you:

- ***are careful***
- ***use common sense to make sure that you don't make the pavement or pathway clearly more dangerous than before***

People using areas affected by snow and ice also have responsibility to be careful themselves.

Tips and advice on clearing snow and ice

- ***start early - it's much easier to clear fresh, loose snow compared to compacted ice that has been compressed by people walking on it***
- ***don't use hot water - this will melt the snow, but may replace it with black ice, increasing the risk of injury***
- ***be a good neighbour - some people may be unable to clear snow and ice on paths from their property***
- ***if shoveling snow, think where you are going to put it so that it doesn't block people's paths or drainage channels***
- ***make a pathway down the middle of the area to be cleared first, so you have a clear surface to walk on***
- ***spreading some salt on the area you have cleared will help stop ice forming - table salt or dishwasher salt will work, but avoid spreading on plants or grass as they may be damaged by it***
- ***pay particular care and attention to steps and steep gradients***
- ***use the sun to your advantage - removing the top layer of snow will allow the sun to melt any ice beneath; however you will need to cover any ice with salt to stop it refreezing overnight***
- ***if there's no salt available, sand or ash are good alternatives***

- j) The Grounds Maintenance and Street Cleaning Services be trained to assist in gritting to further increase the resilience of the winter service.

6 Members of Staff have received NVQ certificates for Winter Service

3 more have volunteered to undergo training through BAMN

- k) Formal arrangements for the clearing of certain key footpaths be included in the policy.

There is currently no planned provision within the winter service plan to carry out pre or post treatment to footway network. During the worst periods of last winter all clearing of footways were completed on a reaction basis, and therefore, at certain times can be difficult to mobilise quickly, e.g. Weekends.

When conditions require and as resources allow, footway clearing is allocated to teams on following basis:-

- ***Town centre areas***

- ***Approaches to hospitals and high schools.***
- ***Approaches to railway and bus stations.***
- ***As requested to assist other services – education / adults services etc.***

Over the summer months there has been national debate amongst industry as to whether footway treatment should be pre planned. As requested by committee, officers have explored approximate costs to provide a planned level of service to the areas listed above, during “high Season” (November to March)

One treatment option would be by application of brine solution, by use of quad bikes and spray bars. Investment required would be for brine storage, hire of labour and equipment and appropriate standby provision. Early indications estimate that an investment of £300,000 would be required for a planned service, or continue treatment on a reactive basis. Again should we suffer a severe winter season costs for footway treatment will require a call on corporate contingency funds.

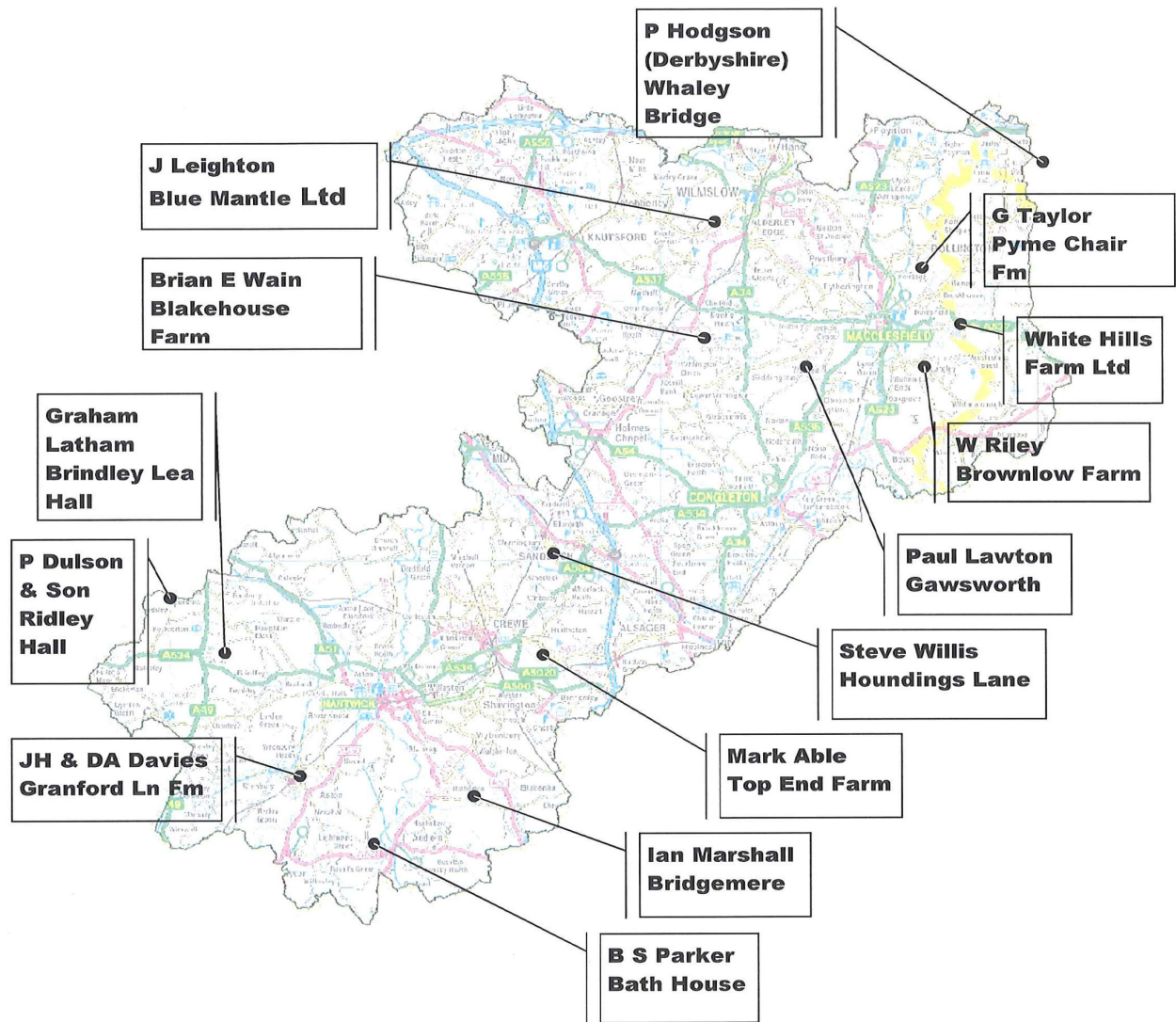
No plans to introduce this additional element of service are currently envisaged.

Additional Measures

In addition Highways Operations have purchased 500 tonne bags which have been filled with salt mixture and will be available for schools Parish Councils and trouble spots as needed. There have already been some requests for bags to be given to some councils and schools.

This will further assist self-help in more rural communities where bags can be dropped where required whilst minimising the impact on our principal gritting operations.

To improve communications, Members are now included on circulation lists, which include 24 hour, 2-5 day forecasts, and intended actions. These are circulated Monday to Friday. In more severe weather conditions weekend reports will be published.



CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

REPORT TO: CABINET

Date of Meeting:	20 December 2010
Report of:	Director of Adults, Community, Health and Wellbeing Services Director of Children's Services
Subject/Title:	Obesity and Diabetes Review Update
Portfolio Holder:	Cllr Hilda Gaddum Cllr Andrew Knowles

1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 This report updates the Cabinet with the initial responses from the Portfolio Holders for Health and Wellbeing and Children and Families and the Primary Care Trust, to the recommendations of the Scrutiny Review Panel set up to look at Obesity and Diabetes

2.0 Decision Requested

- 2.1 That:

(a) Cabinet notes the progress achieved since the Review was undertaken, but also that more remains to be done;

(b) the responses of the Portfolio Holders and the PCT be considered by the Scrutiny Panel in due course;

3.0 Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 To progress the findings of the Scrutiny Review Panel which are aimed at addressing the rise in Obesity and Diabetes and reducing the health and financial impacts of this rise.

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 recommendations are aimed at improving health outcomes.

7.0 Financial Implications (Authorised by the Borough Treasurer)

- 7.1 Not known at this stage.

8.0 Legal Implications (Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)

- 8.1 There is no statutory obligation on Cheshire East Council to take any action in respect of Obesity and Diabetes. Any work done is therefore discretionary.

9.0 Risk Management

- 9.1 The most significant risk is that the budgetary pressures faced by the PCT and Council, will impact upon the services provided that can prevent and reduce the levels of obesity and diabetes within children and young people. The need to reduce budgets in the short term could increase health costs in the long term if the numbers of children and young people growing into adulthood with these conditions is not reduced.

10.0 Background and Options

- 10.1 In 2004 and 2006 the former Cheshire County Council had published two separate but linked scrutiny reports on "Tackling Diabetes in Cheshire" and "Tackling Obesity in Cheshire". Both documents contained a series of recommendations amounting to an Action Plan. The Diabetes report was reviewed in 2006 and although significant progress had been made, further work was required on many of the issues raised in the two reviews.

- 10.2 Accordingly the Cheshire East Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee on 18th November 2009 decided that a "Task & Finish" Panel should be appointed to review the progress in Cheshire East arising from the earlier reports. The terms of reference for the Panel were:

To review the outcomes and recommendations from the Scrutiny Report on Diabetes (2004) and Tackling Obesity in Cheshire (concluded in 2006) taking into account:

- a) Ongoing performance in Cheshire East on the detection, access to services and preventative element of the NHS National Framework for Diabetes (with particular reference to Type 2 Diabetes)
- b) The effectiveness of various initiatives on children's eating habits undertaken in Cheshire East by the relevant agencies and schools.

- c) The “Think Family” strategy currently being developed by Cheshire East Council and partner organisations.

To report on and produce a revised action plan, reflecting progress achieved to date and any developments since 2006.

- 10.3 The Panel commenced its work in February 2010 with the aim of reporting to the July Meeting of the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee. The Panel met on seven occasions and received both oral & written evidence from a number of officers, both of the Council and the Central & Eastern Cheshire Primary Care Trust.
- 10.4 The methodology adopted by the Panel was the careful review of the recommendations from both of the original reports (including recommendations from a review on “Food in Schools” carried out by the former Central Cheshire Local Health Scrutiny Committee) and the review of the Diabetes Action Plan in 2006. The objective was to concentrate on those aspects of the previous reviews, which still required further attention, with regard to obesity. The focus was very much on work with children and younger people, particularly in the school setting.
- 10.5 The areas of unfinished work from the earlier reviews are reflected fully in the Panel’s fifteen recommendations, which are set out in the appendix. The main aspects of the Panel’s findings in this regard may be summarised as follows:
 - a) The importance for a balanced diet of encouraging pupils to take the option of the school meal, including free school meals eligibility
 - b) Pressure on pupils’ time in school and the physical constraints of some school canteens which can impact adversely on the ease of opportunity to take school meals
 - c) The value of schools trying to achieve more participation in physical activities outside curriculum time
 - d) Making school related facilities more open to the local community whenever possible
 - e) The dependence of many exercise and activity programmes on “one – off” opportunistic funding, rather than being consolidated in core programmes, which may impact on longer term viability especially in the current economic climate
 - f) The lack of progress nationally towards a single regulated system of food labelling and nutritional information

- g) The value of investment in preventative measures and promoting healthy lifestyles which has a positive impact on reducing the longer term risks of being diagnosed with diabetes.

10.6 The Appendix outlines the responses of the PCT and relevant Cheshire East Services to the recommendations.

11.0 Access to Information

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

Name: Guy Kilminster
Designation: Head of Health and Wellbeing
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Email: guy.kilminster@cheshireeast.gov.uk

Appendix One

Recommendations and comment from the respective Portfolio Holders and the Primary Care Trust.

1. That the Panel receive a further report on the current year's National Child Measurement Programme results in 2011.

The PCT will be happy to share the results when received – they are due to be published in December and we will summarise soon afterwards. (PCT comment)

2. That secondary schools be encouraged to ensure that lunchtime arrangements are structured so that pupils are offered a reasonable time to consume their meal, and the need for queuing is reduced and ideally avoided.

Schools have been encouraged to use their work for the 'Healthy Schools' award to improve the lunchtime experience for their young people and increase the up take of school meals, by sharing ideas and good practice around how this can be achieved. This has been facilitated through their EIP clusters and monitored through the school completing an annual review of progress and validation visits which were part of the local 'Healthy Schools' programme process. Unfortunately the Healthy Schools Initiative has been ended as a result Government funding reviews and schools will need to now integrate healthy eating into main curriculum activities.

Schools would be further encouraged through PSHE education to understand the benefit of healthy eating and increased physical activity. There will be

clusters of specialist teachers' meetings where this can be developed further as part of their preventative work.

3. That schools be fully encouraged and as far as possible supported to adopt cashless systems for the payment of school meals so that this becomes available if possible in all CE schools.

Some schools have cashless systems which work well and allow the school/catering service and parents information on food choices. It also promotes the up take of free school meals as there is no difference on purchasing a meal through a cashless system, however they are quite expensive to install and this could be prohibitive for some schools (£20,000). To date 6 of the 13 high schools have the cashless system in place with a further school planning to implement it next year. One primary school has gone cashless.

4. That further work should be undertaken with the PCT to identify data which would indicate the degree of progress made under the Government's 'Healthy Weight, Healthy Living' Strategy.

Although there is some data available through GPs this is not sufficiently robust to use for monitoring purposes. As the PCT has not prioritized obesity it is unlikely that we will be allocating resources to improve coverage. (PCT comment)

5. That further work be undertaken to improve the non-curriculum participation rates in PE and Sport through the Partnership Development Managers and specific initiatives, and a report on progress be made in 12-18 months time.

Work is currently taking place with community based Action Leisure session. These are now taking place in school lunch time breaks through a phased implementation process. There were some 850 attendees over a period of 7 weeks. A further detailed report will be produced in 12 months.

6. The Panel has considered in depth the benefits which sport and physical activity bring to leading healthy lifestyles. The Panel has reviewed the range of play, sport and physical exercise opportunities available to children and young people in particular, and is of the view that the Council should be doing everything possible to improve access to these activities. The Panel has taken into account the Council's responsibilities as "corporate parent", including the need to provide free access to sport and physical activities for its Cared for young people, and recommends that the current programmes are developed to maximise these opportunities.

The Health and Wellbeing Service will continue to provide services and activities for children and young people to engage them in active recreation. Opportunities to improve provision and to improve access to sites and facilities will be initiated whenever resources allow.

Where possible additional support and provision has been provided out of school hours, but apart from a facilitator in the form of a Sports development officer this is still not core funded. All the finance for these activities are mainly

funded by External grants or voluntary organisations which means that provision is not sustainable in the long run if grants are unobtainable.

A scheme has been launched to enable cared for children to access the leisure facilities throughout Cheshire East free of charge. Registration started in September 2010.

7. That given the major benefits which the sport and physical activity programmes bring to healthy lifestyles, they be supported and if possible developed and as far as possible brought within the Council's core programmes.

Free swimming for children and young people ran for 17 months and was only stopped when Government funding was withdrawn. The sport and leisure development projects and programmes which have been extended to a wider audience, are still mainly supported by External grants. They will be very dependent upon the work of the Leisure and play development team's success in generating additional funding. Because of the Council's financial circumstances no commitment has been made about core funding of posts required or future revenue budgets.

8. The Panel was of the opinion that more could be done to enable school facilities to be made available to the public and recommends that schools be actively encouraged by the Council to develop these opportunities, their engagement with local communities and to make much more use of their assets as a community resource.

The Extended Services Core Offer aims to improve outcomes for all children, young people and their families, with a focus on narrowing the achievement gap, improving life chances and targeting support effectively to the most vulnerable who are at risk of poor outcomes.

The Government target set for all schools to provide access to a core offer of extended services by 2010, has been achieved in Cheshire East.

Since April 2009, the Extended Services Sustainability Grant has been devolved to Education Improvement Partnerships (EIPs), funding being released by the LA on the approval of a Cluster Plan. In 2009-10 a Sustainability Grant of £844,970 was devolved to EIPs. In 2010-11 the Sustainability Grant totals £1,103,673.

Over the next academic year all schools will be encouraged to audit existing Extended Provision as part of an annual review process.

A significant number of schools have already embraced a more open door and community inclusive approach in addition to the formal Extended Services agenda, covering the use of their facilities. The Children's Services Department has already made efforts to impress upon all agents and external partners that more cooperative and sharing arrangements is the way the Corporate body and Department wants to work towards.

9. That in view of the outstanding success of free swimming and the importance of this activity to physical wellbeing, the Panel recommends that the programme is extended wherever possible and maintained in the future for young and old alike.

The Council extended free swimming for one month (to the end of August 2010) for children and young people after the Government funding ended. Free swimming for over 60s ended on July 31st 2010.

10. That discussions take place with CEC PCT with a view to extending and standardising the Healthquest Scheme across the whole of the Borough.

Crewe and District Borough Council and the PCT worked together to establish the scheme with the GPs and health professionals. It is now provided by the Council and the PCT make a small contribution. Physical Activity is not a PCT priority and it is unlikely that we would be able to find the capacity to assist in extending the scheme or the resources to make an additional contribution. (PCT comment)

11. That further initiatives are put in place to encourage young people to engage in Guiding and Scouting activities.

The Health and Wellbeing Service will work with guiding and scouting organisations to establish how best to achieve this.

12. That the Director of Public Health should be invited to present the Annual Public Health Report at a full CE Council meeting.

The Director of Public Health attended Council on 14th October.

13. That further lobbying be undertaken through the Local Government Association and other appropriate channels to seek one single system of food labelling guidance to reduce confusion and provide clarity, particularly for those with dietary needs such as people with Diabetes and Coeliac disease.

The Council will influence at regional, sub regional and local level for changes in labelling. The Health Improvement team, Environmental Health and Trading Standards are well placed to lobby for Government changes.

14. That the Panel receive a further report on progress with Food Labelling and Advertising in 12 – 18 months time.

15. That further emphasis and resources are placed by the PCT on the prevention and education work amongst younger people with a particular emphasis on avoiding the increasing risks of diabetes deriving from bad diet and lack of physical exercise.

Due to limited resources and being below average for obesity and above average for poor diet and physical activity this has not been identified as a priority area. (PCT comment)

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Cabinet

Date of Meeting:	20 December 2010
Report of:	Children and Families Scrutiny Committee
Subject/Title:	Review of Family Support Services
Portfolio Holder	Councillor Hilda Gaddum

1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 This report encloses the final report of the Task and Finish Group who conducted a Scrutiny Review of Family Support Services.

2.0 Recommendations

That the report be received and the Children and Families Portfolio Holder undertake to come back to the next (or subsequent) meeting of Cabinet with a formal response to each recommendation.

3.0 Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 To progress the findings of the Scrutiny Review Task and Finish Group who reviewed the family Support Services within Cheshire East.

3.0 Wards Affected

- 4.1 All

5.0 Local Ward Members

- 5.1 All

6.0 Policy Implications

- 6.1 Not known at this stage.

7.0 Financial Implications

- 7.1 To be reported upon in the formal response to the report by the Portfolio Holder.

8.0 Legal Implications

- 8.1 To be reported upon in the formal response to the report by the Portfolio Holder.

9.0 Risk Management

9.1 Not known at this stage

10.0 Background and Options

10.1 Children and Families Scrutiny Committee established its first work programme and its priorities in July 2009. A review of Family Support Services was identified as one of a number of projects rated as high priority by Members of the Committee. Subsequently, at the end of 2009, a Task and Finish Group was established to investigate the Family Support Services provided across the board, including health and the third sector.

10.2 The final report of the Task and Finish Group is now attached for Cabinets consideration.

11.0 Access to Information

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

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Designation: Scrutiny Officer

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February 2010 – December 2010

Overview and Scrutiny Review
Children and Families Scrutiny Committee

Family Support Services

For further information, please contact
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1.0 Foreword

Councillor R Westwood – Chairman of the Task and Finish Group

- 1.1 “Prevention” is better than “cure”. An old adage but just as true today as it ever was. The trouble is there are few magic bullets when it comes to ensuring that all families provide the right environment to give children the best possible start in life or, equally as important, when it comes to stopping family problems adversely impacting on children at any stage in their development.
- 1.2 The next best thing is early intervention to help with problems before they become entrenched and/or before they have a significant effect on any children involved.
- 1.3 Children’s Centres are the most obvious example of this approach but investment has also been made in other areas. Another example is the growth in family support or family liaison workers employed directly by schools or by Education Improvement Partnerships and also in the Family Centres. In total the growth in investment in ‘Family Support’ has been explosive, but it has also been fragmented and in Cheshire East’s case, it has been fogged by the demise of four authorities and the rise of one. Clearly too, in the present financial climate some of the investment could be at risk.
- 1.4 All the evidence (and there is plenty of research been or being done) points to the need for more family support, not less, which means the secret of success is going to be getting more for the money spent. This reasoning prompted this review of ‘Family Support Services’ which are available to residents of Cheshire East.
- 1.5 The group of members which undertook the review are listed in the body of the report.
- 1.6 My thanks go to them for their hard work and diligence in conducting their enquiries and formulating this report. As a group we believe implementation of the reports recommendations will enable a more systematic, more effective approach to the delivery of ‘Family Support Services’ which in turn will result in better outcomes from investment in this valuable service.
- 1.7 We commend the report to the Cabinet and request that it be given full and fair consideration.

2 Acknowledgements

- 2.1 The group members would like to thank all the witnesses who gave evidence to the review. A full list of witnesses is given in the body of the report.
- 2.2 Members would also like to thank all those (staff, volunteers and service users) who took the time to fill in the questionnaires, and all the staff members at both Children's and Family Centres who were most helpful on the occasions of the visits.
- 2.3 In particular, members would like to thank Ruth Jenkins for the admirable way she guided the group through the review. Without her expertise the task would have been impossible.
- 2.4 The administrative support was provided by Katie Smith from Overview and Scrutiny. Many thanks to Katie for her help, her patience and her expertise in putting together the evidence and formatting the report.

3.0 Executive Summary

- 3.1 Today, it is widely recognised and agreed by experts across the world that early intervention works, both with regards to improved outcomes and greater efficiency of resources and services being delivered. The evidence is unarguable that a good start in life, in terms of physical, emotional and cognitive development, will result in better individual and social outcomes later in life. An early childhood that is characterised by the deepest attachments to parents or other primary carers who love and care for their child, is likely to result down the line in less dependency on the State, and reduced call on the public purse.
- 3.2 With this in mind, the Task and Finish Group embarked on a research and review process which incorporated interviews, questionnaires and site visits in order to uncover the best way forward for Cheshire East's Family Support Services and early intervention agenda.
- 3.3 The review was heartened to find teams and individuals involved in family support that were dedicated, knowledgeable and skilled, both from within Cheshire East and its partner authorities and third sector organisations. Whilst a number of innovative programs are in place, it is clear that services are currently not well co-ordinated, joined up, performance managed or operating efficiently within a value for money framework.
- 3.4 In an increasingly difficult economic climate, this review asserts that there is a need to bring services together, with an emphasis on co-ordination, improved information and data sharing and targeted intervention based on a continuum of need. If this can be achieved, this review is in no doubt that outcomes for Cheshire East's children, young people and their families will be greatly improved.

The full list of recommendations is below:

Recommendations

- 1. To ensure a more consistent and coordinated approach to the family support provision and in line with the proposals set out in the recently completed 'Family Support Review' an integrated Family Support/Early Intervention Service should be developed under a single principal manager.
- 2. To ensure easier recognition of a quality service and access to the service, Family Support/Early Intervention be developed as a brand with an appropriate logo.
- 3. That Early Intervention be adopted as the prevailing philosophy within the service.
- 4. That under the brand heading a full directory of services be devised and widely distributed on the internet, in customer centres, GP surgeries, libraries, schools and other public places, it should also be made available to staff from other agencies that are likely to make referrals.
- 5. That street signage to Children's Centres should be critically examined for effectiveness and improved as appropriate. Over time the brand should feature on all signs.
- 6. That a monitoring framework should be established across the service (including commissioned services) to monitor performance against demand

across Cheshire East (on a LAP area basis) and to identify service gaps or over provision in a timely fashion. The framework should inform decisions relative to in-house provision and commissioned services.

7. That the role of Children's Centres becomes more targeted. Universal services still need to be provided but the balance needs to shift in order to better support families in the greatest need. The collection of 'reach' statistics needs to be revised to reflect this, moving from 'universal reach' statistics to 'targeted reach' statistics.
8. Improve health workers and social workers knowledge of the role and importance of Children's Centres in order to improve the current referral rates.
9. Make Children's Centres more user friendly for disabled children (with a particular focus on the Early Support Model) to enhance equality and opportunity for disabled children and their families.
10. Ensure Children's Centres are adequately serviced by interpreters and to mitigate possible funding problems engage with the health authority on a shared funding responsibility basis.
11. Recognising that early intervention does not automatically mean early years intervention, ensure that adequate targeted support for families with older children is provided.
12. Ensure that all staff involved in Family Support Services are fully trained in the updated 'Common Core Skills and Knowledge' framework to enable them to work effectively with families.
13. That a detailed 'Parenting Strategy' be developed. This should include preferred parenting programmes to enable a range of options depending on a family's needs and capabilities.
14. That the current usage of buildings be explored with a focus on the range of services to be delivered and the suitability of some of the current buildings. For instance the group are fully supportive of an initial conclusion that two of the four family centres are not fit for purpose and that services currently provided in these centres should be located in other existing buildings (possibly including schools).
15. Recognise that many experienced family Support Workers in Family Centres are inappropriately being used in undertaking long term supervised contact and redeploy them to early intervention/family support and consider commissioning delivery of supervised contact services by the third sector. The choice of third sector provider will be critical.
16. That Cheshire East Council works closely with individual schools and EIPs to work more closely to integrate the Family Support and other services they provide with the mainstream provision provided by the Council.
17. Closely monitor the effect of budget pressures/cuts on school provided family support and the possible counter effect of the Pupil Premium.
18. Seek to find efficiency savings in the area of transport costs for both children and family members associated with supervised contact services.
19. Implement the windscreen method of illustrating the continuum of needs and services and the role of the CAF into the family support assessment process. This method is used extensively within the children's social care process and would likewise benefit the family support/early intervention process.
20. Those children with Child Protection Plans and those deemed vulnerable be systematically identified by the relevant agencies and the appropriate referrals be made to the Family Support Service. In the spirit of early intervention this needs to be done as early as possible to minimise subsequent costs but it also needs to be done systematically by setting child development benchmarks at appropriate ages.

21. That a pilot programme of intensive family support/early intervention be devised and implemented in an area of known deprivation and where a significant number of families needing support are resident. The programme should be devised in conjunction with other council departments and others service providers to have the maximum benefit. For example in conjunction with community development and council play schemes the fire services princes trust scheme and job centre plus, social housing providers etc.
22. That an annual conference for all sections of the Children and Families Service be introduced to ensure that all sections of the service are coordinated and working towards the same vision.
23. That an annual report of what has been achieved for Family Support and Early Intervention be produced and submitted to the Children and Families Scrutiny Committee and to the Cabinet. The report should cover all actions by all agencies in the family Support field (including assessment of current state of data sharing amongst all agencies. A specific example would be Health sharing live birth data including the availability of management information relating to financial data).

4.0 **Outline of Review**

4.1 **Background**

Children and Families Scrutiny Committee established its first work programme and its priorities in July 2009. A review of Family Support Services was identified as one of a number of projects rated as high priority by members of the Committee. Subsequently, at the end of 2009, a Task and Finish Group was established to carry out the review. The first meeting took place in February 2010.

4.2 **Membership**

The Members of the Task and Finish Group were

Councillor Ray Westwood (Chairman)
Councillor David Neilson
Councillor Dorothy Flude
Councillor Darryl Beckford
Councillor Gillian Merry

4.3 **Terms of Reference**

- To gain an understanding of what is meant by family support on a universal, targeted and specialist basis.
- To assess what resources are available within the authority and partner agencies.
- To ensure a planned and co-ordinated approach and provision of Family Support Services (including schools, children's centres, health, third sector, adult, drug, alcohol and domestic violence services).
- To ensure services are provided in a timely manner in accordance with assessed needs.
- To ensure value for money with regards to support that is commissioned and delivered by the authority.
- Identify any gaps or duplication of services with regard to age/need/locality.
- To understand the Children's Trust/Councils role in appropriate early intervention.

4.4 *Intended Outcomes*

To achieve:

- Recognised continuum of family support appropriate to need
- Identified common core skills and processes for family support
- Effective commissioning
- Effective and appropriate and information sharing
- Signposting
- Improved joined up working

5.0 Methodology

5.1 Witnesses:

Members met with the following people during the review:

- R Jenkins – Interim Programme Manager, Redesign of Children’s Services
- D Richards - Universal and Targeted Services Manager, Children and Families
- M Stanley – MAPT Team Leader
- P Ruth – Development Officer, Cheshire Children, Young People and Families, Voluntary and Community and Faith Sector HUB and other key representatives
- R Howell, Strategic Support and Partnership Manager
- A Ellison, Commissioning and Service Development Manager
- A Kent, Liaison Manager (Schools, Settings and Services)
- J Brown, Family Support Worker from Manor Park Primary School, Knutsford
- K Bowdler – Senior Accountant
- J Naden – Senior Family Support Worker
- D Watson – Children’s Centre Network Coordinator
- M Greenwood – Team Manager, Services for Children and Families
- Lorraine Butcher – Director of Children’s Services
- Councillor P Findlow – Former Portfolio Holder

5.2 Visits:

- Children’s Centre, Monks Coppenhall, Crewe
- Children’s Centre, Underwood West, Crewe
- Children’s Centre, Broken Cross, Macclesfield
- Children’s Centre, Congleton
- Family Centre, Ethel Elks, Crewe
- Family Centre, Hurdsfield, Macclesfield

5.3 Questionnaire:

These were circulated to Children’s Centres, Family Centres and third sector settings and were filled out by front line staff and also families using the services.

5.4 Timeline:

Date	Meeting / Site Visit
18/2/2010	Task and Finish Group Meeting Appointment of Chairman Introduction and Terms of Reference
22/3/2010	Task and Finish Group Meeting Terms of Reference and Project Plan agreed Family Support Paper List of organisations in HUB Local and National Indicators
28/4/2010	Task and Finish Group Meeting Vision for the future
1/6/2010	Task and Finish Group Meeting Role and Remit of the HUB Programme of Meetings and Planned Visits Role of the Children's Centres and Summary of Family Support
15/6/2010	Site Visit – Two Children's Centre in Crewe
16/6/2010	Site Visit – Children's Centre in Macclesfield and Congleton
29/6/2010	Task and Finish Group Meeting Third Sector Organisations Family Support Services
5/7/2010	Site Visit – Family Support Centre in Crewe
5/7/2010	Site Visit – Family Support Centre in Macclesfield
27/7/2010	Task and Finish Group Meeting Commissioning Education Improvement Partnerships Family Support services - Resources
7/9/2010	Task and Finish Group Meeting Family Support services – resources
5/10/2010	Task and Finish Group Meeting Family Support Worker Resources Finance Savings and Data Final Report discussion
19/10/2010	Task and Finish Group Meeting to discuss the final report
16/11/2010	Task and Finish Group Meeting to finalise report and recommendations
7/12/2010	Final report to go to Children and Families Scrutiny Committee
20/12/2010	Cabinet to consider final report

6.0 Review Findings

6.1 Introduction

- 6.2 The purpose of this review is to explore how effectively family support services are being delivered and used to support and help children, young people and their families in Cheshire East to achieve their full potential.
- 6.3 Cheshire East faces a challenge of an increasing number of children being cared for. This has risen starkly in the last year and is now 484. Over a year ago the number was 370. The number of children with child protection plans is 157 and has not risen so markedly. It is important to look in more detail at the local services we deliver and commission that provide family support to see if these are being targeted and used to best effect
- 6.4 With this in mind, the Task and Finish Group embarked on a research and review process which incorporated interviews, questionnaires and site visits in order to uncover the best way forward for Cheshire East's Family Support Services and early intervention agenda.

7.0 Definitions

7.1 Family Support

- 7.2 Prior to carrying out any research, the group felt it imperative to fully understand what exactly Family Support is and what services it encompasses. Family support has been considered a 'slippery concept' and a practical definition that can be difficult to pin down.
- 7.3 After seeing a paper, highlighting the key areas of family support, Members agreed to use the following definition, provided by the Audit Commission:

“Any activity or facility provided either by statutory agencies or by community groups or individuals, aimed to provide advice and support to parents to help them in bringing up their children”

The National Parenting Institute, define family support as:

“Services that relate to the emotional wellbeing of families which seek to support the totality of family relationships for the benefit of children”

- 7.4 There has also been the increasing emergence of considerable literature and research concerned with “what works” in improving outcomes for children and supporting parents and families who are experiencing difficulties. This has also been addressed within this review.

- 7.5 One of the main reasons why Family Support can be difficult to define, is due to the fact that it can mean very different things depending on where the service is focused and to what extent it is delivered, in terms of it being universal, targeted and/or specialist.

7.6 **Universal**

- 7.7 Universal services are provided as of right to all children and /or parents / carers including those with targeted and specialist needs. These services are available to everyone. All children and their families will receive universal services, such as maternity services, health visiting and the chance to use Children's Centers in early years, GP services/primary care services and housing services at all ages and school and youth services (in the child's teenage years). Universal services seek, in conjunction with parents and families to meet all the needs of children and young people so that they are happy and healthy and able to learn and develop securely. The person concerned does not have to meet any criteria except be a child, mother, father or carer of a child or young person.

7.8 **Targeted**

- 7.9 Targeted services are services for children and families with additional and vulnerable needs that go beyond what is on offer in universal services. Examples include extra support for parents in the early years, behaviour support or additional help with learning in school. For example, if the person is a young parent, has a disabled child or if there are any other circumstances that may make them feel that they need something more than the services available to everyone.
- 7.10 Many families may at some time have the need for a targeted service of some kind, delivered by a single service; others may have a complex and interlocking needs which mean they need to have access to a range of targeted services

7.11 **Specialist**

- 7.12 Specialist services are where the needs of the child and their family are so great that intensive or complex intervention is required to keep them safe or to ensure their continued development. Specialist services often have a statutory element to them, meaning that either the family and child are statutorily obligated to engage with the service or the local authority or NHS are statutorily obliged to provide it, or both. Not all specialist services have this statutory element to intervention. For example, CAMHs (Child and Adolescent Mental Health services) provides specialist services, but a child or young person is only statutorily obliged to engage with the service in cases where intervention has to be made under the Mental Health Act. Examples of specialist services include statutory Children's Social Care interventions; statutory Youth Offending Service work and services provide for children and young people with complex mental health needs and children with disabilities.
- 7.13 Specialist services are likely in many cases to have their own specialist assessment and referral criteria. Additional detailed assessment should be used to support and inform a CAF (Common Assessment Framework) or statutory assessment and should not require the repetition of assessment already contained in a completed CAF.

8.0 **Vision for the Future**

- 8.1 Throughout this review and study, it became increasingly apparent that a new vision and philosophy was needed to meet the challenges posed to family support services. It was agreed that this new philosophy could be found within the concept of early intervention.

The Social Care Institute for Excellence defines early intervention as:

“Intervening early and as soon as possible to tackle problems emerging for children, young people and their families or with a population most at risk of developing problems. Early intervention may occur at any point in a child’s or young person’s life”

Another definition was adopted in the Policy Review of Children and Young People (2007):

“Early intervention means intervening as soon as possible to tackle problems that have already emerged for children and young people”

- 8.2 It is important to emphasise that early intervention can occur at any point in a child’s life and is not just about early intervention services for children under 5. Early intervention can help children from pregnancy to 18, not only when they are young.
- 8.3 Today, it is widely recognised and agreed by experts across the world that early intervention works, especially when it is an appropriate intervention, applied well and following the early identification of a problem as to have maximum impact and benefit to the child and their family. The evidence is unarguable that a good start in life, in terms of physical, emotional and cognitive development, will result in better individual and social outcomes later in life. An early childhood that is characterised by the deepest attachments to parents or other primary carers who love and care for their child, is likely to result down the line in less dependency on the State, and reduced call on the public purse.
- 8.4 Indeed, the recently produced Maternity and Early Years Review (2010) makes a strong case for focusing investment in children’s earliest years to secure the best outcomes for them. This echoes the findings of the Marmot Review (2010). The Marmot Review highlighted that giving every child the best start in life is crucial to reducing health inequalities across the life course and it made action in this area its top priority. Early action is the key, later interventions, although important are considerably less effective if they have not had good early foundations.

- 8.5 Similarly, the key messages emanating from the recent publication; 'Grasping the Nettle: Early Intervention for Children, Families and Communities' (October, 2010) evidences that early intervention works both with regards to improved outcomes and greater efficiency of resources and services being delivered. They assert that children's centres lie at the hub of a continuum of support for children, families and communities with additional needs. The report also emphasises that children's centres require an effective outreach strategy to ensure that interventions target and support the most vulnerable in the community. Schools are also key for the early identification of children with additional needs.
- 8.6 From a national context, Eileen Munro's Review Part One (September, 2010) identifies early intervention and prevention as important in delivering services and support to families.
- 8.7 Early intervention is also a key priority for the Coalition Government and Graham Allen, MP, was commissioned by the Government in July 2010 to undertake an independent review looking at how children at greatest risk of disadvantage get the best start in life and the best models for early intervention. The review will report in 2 stages, firstly on best practice, dissemination and delivery (in early 2011) and secondly on financial instruments (in mid 2011).
- 8.8 Within Cheshire East it has become apparent that the family support services provided by the Council and a variety of other agencies are not always joined up or well coordinated.
- 8.9 But it has been made clear to the Task and Finish Group that efforts are being made to take stock of the available resources within the Council that deliver early intervention and family support. Alongside this review; there has been an internal management review of family support taking place.
- 8.10 Work has also been underway within Children's social services and driven through the Children's Trust on a programme of Redesign, focussing on developing a model and framework for early intervention and integrated working on a locality basis.
- 8.11 These other pieces of work have provided additional and useful information and data for this review to draw upon.
- 8.12 In summary, services provided by a number of agencies have grown in response to the needs as seen by each agency involved and consequently are not
 - Well coordinated
 - Joined up
 - Performance Managed
 - Operating efficiently, within a value for money framework
- 8.13 The Council has clearly recognised this and currently is seeking to bring services together under one management with an emphasis on coordination and targeted early intervention which will give value for money and operate under an outcome driven performance framework.
The recommendations from this review will aim to compliment the current work.

9.0 Current Situation

9.1 Staffing Resources

9.2 Family support services are relatively well resourced within Children's services in Cheshire East Council and are as follows:

- Children Centres currently have 33 Family Support Workers which equates to 27.85 full time equivalents.
- Social Care Teams currently have 38 Family Support Workers which equates to 30.55 full time equivalents.
- Family Centres currently have 42 Family Support Workers which equates to 36.72 full time equivalents.
- The Youth Offending Service currently has 6 Family Support Workers which equates to 5 full time equivalents.

9.3 However it is important to also note the valuable family support and early intervention services being delivered within schools and EIP's (Education Improvement Partnerships) and also provided by health colleagues as well as those in other services in the Council including Adult Services and Health and Well Being, as well as housing, Women's Refuges and community and third sector settings.

9.4 Workforce

9.5 As mentioned earlier the family support workforce is relatively extensive and diverse. Staff have a range of entry qualifications, post appointment training and development.

9.6 A lot of the staff are very skilled and some have been trained in the delivery of family support and some in the delivery of parenting programmes. There is a need to ensure staff are able to work in partnership with families and are trained in the "common core skills and knowledge" which recently was updated by CWDC (Children's Workforce Development Council). A key aspect to this is "engagement with families".

9.7 Workforce development plans should ensure that staff receive adequate training on engaging and working with parents, child development and the values and uses of research and data (particularly to analyse need for early identification). It is also important that staff delivering family support/early intervention is provided with refresher training in these important core skills. Training within other agencies varies, therefore a consistent approach would be desirable with regard to the training of core common skills.

9.8 Buildings and Assets

9.9 This was a key feature of this review as a number of settings were visited that provide the delivery of family support and early intervention services. Some of these were delivered from purpose built Children's Centres as well as the 4 Family Centres. Two of the Family Centre buildings are traditional purpose built nurseries while the other 2 are buildings one of which is in a temporary building

while the other delivers services in a building not appropriate for the delivery of family support. The current usage of the buildings needs to be further explored with a greater focus on services needing to be delivered rather than having staff located in buildings they have been for many years. There also needs to be greater exploration about whether there could be greater efficiency of the use of buildings. The review notes that Children's Services currently propose a reduction from 4 Family Centres down to 2 which this review supports. We would actively suggest greater use of other buildings (including Children's Centres, schools, Adults, and Health settings) should be explored for service delivery.

9.10 **Parenting Strategy**

9.11 The Family and Relationships Green Paper (20th January, 2010) made a commitment for every local authority to offer an "intensive family intervention service to provide intensive support for families with the most complex needs with the provision of Parenting Programmes being an essential intervention for such a service. A Parenting Programme delivery is seen as a targeted intervention underpinning a range of family support services. Cheshire East does not yet have a well developed or detailed Parenting Strategy to describe its needs, priorities and provision. Although we understand this is actively being progressed as a key action arising out of the review of family support within the service.

9.12 Members are clear that all programmes should be evidence based and should be appropriate to the needs of the family. However there should be a menu of interventions and consideration should be given as to the cost of the delivery of some of the programmes.

9.12 **Services Available**

9.13 **Cheshire East Family Information Service (FIS)**

9.14 The Family Information Service (FIS) and Customer Access have a key role to play in promoting and publicising services that are available and Members received a detailed report of services offered.

9.15 Since April 2008 there have been enhanced duties in all Local Authorities in England to provide high quality, up to date and accurate information to parents and carers on childcare, and other services they may need to support their children and their families. In Cheshire East, this (Section 12 of the Childcare Act 2006) information duty is undertaken by the Family Information Service.

9.16 This duty also requires the Family Information Service to maintain and develop its childcare services, including further development of the brokerage service that we offer, which consists of personal tailored assistance to parents who cannot find childcare that meets their needs, including children with additional needs. Listed below are the sections which FIS are required to meet to deliver the duty:

- Childcare Information - provide comprehensive information advice and guidance to parents & carers on childcare (registered and non-registered) and early years services in their area;
- Advice & Assistance – To provide a Brokerage Service as a when needed;

- Safeguarding Children - Ensure parents and carers have appropriate information to help them take decisions on the suitability of childcare providers;
- Information about other services, facilities & publications - provide relevant services, facilities or publications that will be of benefit to parents, prospective parents, children or young persons;
- Information on services for disabled children - provide information about whether particular childcare is suitable for disabled children and about services, facilities and publications which may be of particular benefit to disabled children, young people or their parents;
- Access to the information service - Ensure that all persons can access the services offered by the Family Information Service;
- Service Delivery - Ensure that the service delivered, through regular self evaluation, is at the highest quality and that the data and information provided is accurate and staff are fully trained to meet the needs of its customers.

- 9.17 The service does produce a variety of information for families, for example, telling them which Childminders pick up from their child's school, and ask other appropriate questions, for example, what entitlements might help them pay for the childcare, that the parent had not initially asked about. More detailed enquiries range from concerns about a child's development or a recent diagnosis, rights as working parents, activities to do after-school or as a family to divorce and separation.
- 9.18 The Family Information Service has also recently taken on the School Choice Advisory role. The role of the Choice Adviser is to work with families & carers to help them understand their child's educational needs and interests by providing and explaining key information in order to help them make an informed choice. This will involve organising information sessions, individual meetings, telephone contacts and drop in sessions for parents. A central component of the work of the Choice Adviser is that the advice they give is independent, impartial and in the best interest of the child, this is why it was best felt that the role should sit underneath the Family Information Service.
- 9.19 A performance self evaluation of the service has been adopted by sending out Childcare Provider and Parental questionnaires, to ensure that the service is meeting the needs of its users, with a high level of standards. The information gathered has helped form the basis of the Family Information Service strategy and planning for the next couple of years and has been used to provide a base to work towards achieving the National Association of Family Information Service Family First Award.
- 9.20 The service is currently meeting the Section 12 duty and the authority is now looking at ways to work closely with other teams and services to raise the profile of the service and to make accessing information, services and activities easier across the early intervention spectrum. Members believe it would be beneficial if this service had a full directory of services regularly updated of family support and early intervention services available by locality. This would be very beneficial for signposting families and other professionals of services available locally.

- 9.21 Members would also wish to see a greater promotion and publicity of family support/early intervention services so that at any point of contact by a member of the public with Council services they could be redirected and signposted to the appropriate services and support.
- 9.22 Children's Centres
- 9.23 Cheshire East has 19 Children's Centres (twelve phase 2 and seven phase 3) all delivering services to their local communities in partnership with other agencies. A footprint can be found at Appendix A.
- 9.24 Children's Centres are a valuable community resource providing a wide range of service for children and their families. They aim to improve the lives of children and their parents by bringing together early education, childcare, health and family support services in the heart of the community. Each centre has the support of a range of professionals including health visitors, midwives, family support workers and early year's practitioners to provide quality service and support.
- 9.25 Every Children's Centre has access to:
- Integrated nursery education and day care.
 - Family support and home visits.
 - Child and family health services.
 - Specialist support for children with additional needs.
 - Family learning and support.
 - Training and back to work support.
 - Children's Information Service.
- 9.26 Each centre provides a range of services including:
- Early education and care for children aged 3 months to school age.
 - Drop in sessions for information, advice and support.
 - Healthy lifestyle activities.
 - Antenatal and post natal support.
 - Young parents' groups.
 - Stay and play sessions.
 - Training and back to work activities.
 - Specific drop sessions for child minders.
 - Parenting support and advice.
- 9.27 Families requiring additional support will be identified from these universal activities and supported to access more targeted or specialist services.
- 9.28 The phase 2 centres deliver the full core offer of services are all located on a primary school site with the exception of Oakenclough which is housed in a former school alongside a wider range of services.
- 9.29 The phase 3 centres, designated by the 31st March 2010, are now in the third ('operate') stage of development. They have two years from the date of designation to reach the full core offer of services. Phase 3 centres, serving the more advantaged communities, have more flexibility about their opening hours and the service offer, in line with local needs. There is, however, a universal level of service that must be provided by all centres so that families, whatever

their situation, feel the benefit of better integrated, more accessible, responsive services.

- 9.30 Phase 3 centres are being developed in partnership with a range of agencies including schools, health and the library service. This more flexible model is in the early stages of development and has proved to be challenging. Although children's centres are fundamentally about service co-ordination and delivery, establishing identity and engagement is more challenging where the 'centre' is a small part of a larger service. This model requires centres to identify a number of delivery points across their footprints which are often large rural areas, and work on an outreach basis with other agencies delivering services to children under 5.

9.31 *Site Visit - Children's Centres*

- 9.32 In the process of this review, Members of the Task and Finish group visited four children's centres in Cheshire East in order to gain an understanding of what services are provided and where possible improvements could be made. The Children's Centres visited are as follows:

- Monks Coppenhall, Crewe
- Underwood West, Crewe
- Congleton
- Broken Cross, Macclesfield

- 9.33 A number of themes emerged from the visits. Firstly, it was immediately apparent that the centres' offer excellent facilities with a range of innovative initiatives ran by skilled and enthusiastic staff. For example, the Broken Cross Centre in Macclesfield has an allotment which encourages healthy eating and for children and their family's to try new things.

- 9.34 It was also apparent that the service has a number of gaps which need to be rectified in order to make further improvements. Firstly, it is clear that nearly all of the centres have capacity issues with either regards to the physical space of the centre or the number of staff available. As a result of this, it has proved very difficult for staff to perform extensive outreach work outside of the centres.

- 9.35 A point linked to this issue, is the lack of joined-up working and information sharing that currently occurs between Children Centre's and partners in the third sector and other public services. For instance, it was outlined that closer work with midwives and GPs would be beneficial. Greater coordination of Children Centre's work with partners in the locality could be strengthened and there is a keenness by the managers to progress this important agenda. This would seek to reduce any duplication and would hopefully help address capacity issues. In line with the theme of joined-up working, it was also found that whilst one Children Centre visited was working well with the local EIP this was not consistent across the board and needs to be improved. Furthermore, it was made apparent to the Task and Finish group members that some children entering the centres had not been had completed CAFs when appropriate. This was cited as a key issue in inter-agency working and role and implementation of CAF needs to be improved.

- 9.36 An interesting issue which emerged from this review was that Children's Centres often struggle with publicising themselves. Indeed, a number of

comments were made which suggested that the respective communities do not really have a full understanding of what children's centres are for and that anyone, regardless of links to attached schools, can attend if they wish. It was suggested therefore, that in order to make the most of the facilities, the centres need to be publicised better to the communities and partners that can use them. Also there was inconsistent take up and in certain areas a lower number of referrals to Children's Centres by Health colleagues and social workers. This is surprising considering the increase in referrals and numbers of children becoming cared for

- 9.37 In relation to access to the Children's Centres, it was found that not only is there a lack of understanding about what the centres provide, it was also often difficult to find them due to poor signposting to the buildings themselves. Additionally, it was also noted that in areas with a large proportion of ethnic minorities, the provision of an interpreter service is often limited. This situation may be helped if the interpreter posts could be match funded by the health authority.
- 9.38 Currently the age range for children using the Centres has been 0-5 years although we understand this has recently been agreed to be increased to 11 years which we support.
- 9.39 It was clear that Children's Centres are an excellent and worthwhile facility and have a big role to play in Cheshire East's family support/early intervention agenda. However, it was also apparent that services are struggling to be consistent in their delivery of Family support and early intervention. This could be due to a lack of capacity – something that could be significantly improved by a rationalisation of resources and better inter-agency co-operation.
- 9.40 Key areas identified to progress are signposting, referral rates from Health and other services, information sharing and improved integrated working with partners in the locality or footprint.
- 9.41 Members would like to see all Children's Centres set targets for an increase in referrals and usage for all identified vulnerable children under 5 in their area e.g. all children subject to child protection plans to be referred to the Children's Centre in their area. This should then be monitored
- 9.42 *Family Centres*
- 9.43 There are 4 family centres in Cheshire East. Family Centres evolved out of the old Local Authority Day Nurseries. It was found that just supporting the child through nursery provision was ineffective as the problems in the family were not dealt with and the situation often deteriorated once the child started school. The concept of Family Centres was that the whole family would be worked with. Children still attended the centre for structured groups and home visits were conducted to support the parents as well as some group sessions for parents at the centre. Over recent years this model has been eroded by demands for parenting assessments and contact sessions for the hugely increased numbers of children going through the court process and entering the cared for system (children in care). Demands for long term contact has grown, as research is clear contact helps to make placements more secure, then more long term contact orders are made. The preventive work has consequently decreased. No children's groups are held, little parenting group work is possible and early

intervention has reduced. These functions are now provided by the emergent children's centres and third sector providers.

9.44 The current services offered at Family Centres are:

- Parenting assessments, (some directed by court mostly but some for the child protection system).
- Supervision of contact; to facilitate assessment, support rehabilitation, maintain relationships, or with new babies promote attachment and bonding.
- Family support to families where there is high risk of break down or abuse.
- Some direct work with children and young people
- Life Story work capturing the history/story of a child who is separated from parents and family
- Some parenting programmes, however further programmes need to be developed

9.45 There are currently 4 Family centres:

- Bradshaw house in Congleton, covering Congleton, Holmes Chapel and rural area.
- Hurdsfield Centre in Macclesfield, covering Macclesfield, Wilmslow and Knutsford.
- Sandbach House Centre in Sandbach covering Sandbach, Middlewich and Alsager
- Ethel Elks in Crewe covering Crewe and Nantwich.

9.46 *Site Visit - Family Centres*

9.47 Interestingly a number of similar themes emerged from the site visits to the family centres to those discussed above regarding children's centres. After speaking to staff at Ethel Elks Family Centre, Crewe and Hurdsfield Family Centre, Macclesfield respectively, it became clear that services once again are not always coordinated and integrated to best effect. It was suggested to the group that whilst examples of good partnership work exists, it would be beneficial to enhance coordination and integration in each locality between the relevant Children's Centre, family centres, school and EIP's, Adult services , partners in the health services, and third sector organisations.

9.48 Members were informed that family centres had previously done a lot more preventative work but over the last 5 years there has been an increase in court referrals and supervision of contact, which now take up the majority of staff time. Whilst most staff are skilled and very experienced, they are keen to do more targeted early intervention and family support. A significant number have been trained in delivering parenting programmes and are skilled in parenting work which again is not being used to best effect. It became apparent when talking with staff that well over 50 % of the cases they are working with involves supervision of contact, sometimes over many years. Therefore the majority of the work involves supervision of contact and not family support or targeted early intervention. This has been confirmed in a recent audit of cases being worked within the Family Centres. This has often resulted in families being worked with by the family centres with a focus on supervision of contact often resulting from court hearings and very little early intervention or targeted family support being offered prior to families children coming into care. This is

certainly not the best use of the resources and skills of these staff especially in the light of the increasing numbers of children coming into care.

- 9.49 The group recognises that due to the type of work undertaken by family centres, it would not always be suitable for them to be fully integrated with the children's centres. Having said this, there is obvious scope for both services to work more closely together as part of an integrated early intervention service that can target resources and interventions more effectively.
- 9.50 Staff also spoke about the significant amount of time they were being used to transport children for contact as well as the high volume of taxi's being used. The issue of transport was identified as an area to achieve greater efficiency.
- 9.51 Staff also suggested to the group that it would be more useful if they were used to undertake family support, early intervention and parenting programmes (as part of a menu of interventions) rather than supervision of contact. It was also proposed that the possibility of commissioning supervision of contact should be explored.
- 9.51 Members have been assured that the issue of contact is actively being reviewed in the service and will include:
 - Current cost of providing supervision of contact within the service
 - How much would it cost to commission supervision of contact and would there be a saving
 - Whether or not all the buildings being used would still be required
 - Whether or not contact work could be undertaken in schools and / or other settings
 - How much money is spent on transport to the family centres
- 9.52 *Role of Children's and Family Centres in Early Intervention*
- 9.53 Effective targeted outreach of integrated family support services make an important contribution to safeguarding and child protection work, by preventing families from moving up the continuum of need and supporting others to move down.
- 9.54 Outreach family support is part of the core offer of services provided by Cheshire East children's centres to families with young children. This work is delivered by Early Intervention Family Support Workers (EIFSWs). Support is offered to parents where professional staff judge that they or their children face significant, additional risk of poor outcomes, or parents themselves ask for further help. This can take the form of one to one support through home visiting or more intensive structured group parenting programmes. In addition the EIFSWs also support Early Years Workers in universal 'stay and play' sessions to identify parents who may require additional support. EIFSWs generally work 80% of their time within the family home and 20% delivering targeted group work e.g. parenting.
- 9.55 The support delivered has a clear structure and defined objectives, and uses the CAF (Common Assessment Framework) as a tool to work in a holistic way with the whole family. Predominately this targeted work is with families who are identified as requiring additional support at Level 2/3 on Cheshire East's Continuum of Need (known as targeted support). They also offer 'brief

interventions' which may involve sign posting parents and families to other services or dealing with one off crisis issues. Families requiring support at Level 4 (known as specialist support) from a children's centre would involve a partnership approach with Social Care. The aim is to work with families at an early stage and prevent escalation of need to the point when statutory services are then required.

9.56 Children's Centres Support:

- Teenage Parents
- Lone Parents
- Families living in temporary accommodation
- Families living in poverty
- Workless households
- Parents with mental health, drug or alcohol problems
- Families with a parent in prison or known to be engaged in criminal activities
- Families from minority ethnic communities
- Families of asylum seekers
- Parents with disabled children
- Disabled parents with children

9.57 The family support services identify the following key principles for supporting parents and families:

- The needs of children and young people should always come first.
- The views of children, young people, parents and families should be taken into account when services are being designed and delivered.
- Support should build on families' strengths and support their needs ensuring equality of opportunity for all.
- All parents and families should know how and where to get help when they need it.
- Support should be available through universal services; wherever possible these should be accessible, flexible and delivered within non-stigmatising settings.

9.58 EIFSWs are line managed by a Lead Family Support Worker who is Social Work qualified, with the exception of the service in Macclesfield which is commissioned from Action for Children. All workers receive monthly supervision which includes case supervision. The number of cases per worker can vary depending on need and number of children being supported within each family.

9.59 Estart is the information management system used in children's centres. It is provided by Capita and when commissioned, it was the market leader. However, the system has some limitations and its potential is still being explored. It is effective at capturing the number of children in the footprint with whom the centre has made contact and the number of times a child visits the centre but is more limited in capturing impact and outcomes.

9.60 Each children's centre is expected to 'reach' all children under 5 in its footprint. This reach includes contact with universal services, particularly health. Capturing this 'reach' is challenging, particularly in the absence of effective information sharing arrangements with health. However, a significant number of

families access universal health services from children's centres, particularly ante and post natal support via midwifery and health visiting.

9.61 *Role of Children's and Family Centres in providing universal and targeted services*

9.62 Children's Centres should operate as the universal setting from which the need for targeted family support services is identified and addressed.

9.63 Members were made aware of research undertaken by Action for Children looking at the delivery of intensive family support services delivered through early years services which found:

- Intensive support can make a positive difference to the lives of children and their families in even the most challenging circumstances.
- Targeted support is not seen as stigmatising by parents and young people, who welcome a personalised approach to their problems in order to produce personalised outcomes.
- There is a vital need to ensure that bridges to service access are constructed between different levels of need.
- Robust outreach is essential to make a reality of access for those families who are seen as being the most 'hard to reach'.
- Workers with a wide range of skills and professional backgrounds can work together to deliver a high quality family support service.
- Intensive family support based on sustained professional relationships is particularly effective in cases of neglect.
- Effective family support encompasses services which deliver both practical help and emotional support.
- The measurement of an individual child level outcome needs to allow for the concept of added value, given the complex needs of many families in receipt of targeted services.
- A genuinely preventive approach seeks - at every point - to prevent 'something worse' happening, whatever that may be.

9.64 As well as the need for greater coordination of universal and targeted services across Cheshire East, Members were also made aware of the benefits of targeted intervention and a more rapid response for a small number of families in an area of known deprivation for a small number of families who had been known to many different agencies over many years (sometimes over generations). This is being explored as part of the Crewe Total Place pilot..

9.65 **Summary**

9.66 The greatest challenges to the service:

- Increasing the number of referrals from other agencies which are lower than one would expect
- the apprehension, particularly from health workers, with the CAF process and their reluctance to use the pre CAF assessment tool to identify needs
- increasing the number of children with child protection plans being worked with
- getting families to register with a centre

- 9.67 The Task and Finish Group also discovered that over 50% of staff time in the Family Centres is spent on supervision of contact which does not use the skill and expertise of the staff and time. Members agreed that staff time could be more effectively and efficiently used on providing early intervention work and that the actions identified by within Children's services regarding contact need to be urgently progressed. Also the service needs to consider whether contact could not be delivered at an alternative venue, such as at the Children's Centres or Schools.

10.0 Other services within the Council

10.1 Adult services

- 10.2 In working with children and their families and providing appropriate support one needs to think more holistically of identify services and support for the whole family (as appropriate) . Children and young people live with adults and some of these adults have needs that can mean adult Social Care is involved with them directly. These include services (often of a targeted and specialist nature) for adults with mental health difficulties, LDD (learning difficulties and disabilities); domestic violence and drug and alcohol. Some key services are also provided and commissioned through supporting people grant (especially domestic violence, drug and alcohol and housing). Some of these services are well connected to children's services and Children's Centres. However a common theme emerging from the questionnaires was that the sign posting of such services could be improved and multi agency working could be strengthened. It is important to also consider how services for families are delivered out of hours and this is an important feature of a recent review of the4 Emergency Duty Team and has involved a collaborative approach across Children's and Adults services.
- 10.3 Adult services are also leading on a piece of work called Crewe Total Place Initiative which is a mix of all the statutory partners working in a case committee way with young people, adults and the whole family to address issues being presented to a multiple of agencies as well as agreeing with the person or family their priorities for addressing the need for statutory contact. This is likely to focus on families where there has been a large number of agencies involved for many years and sometimes over generations but with no positive impact and often at great cost.

10.4 Health and Well Being

- 10.5 A wealth of services providing support is available from partners and colleagues delivering leisure, sport, play, development including summer activities. Other services and important support come from libraries and the Green Spaces team. Some children's services and support are delivered direct form libraries and have included Children's Centre provision from Holmes Chapel library. Some of these services are universal and others are more targeted and need to be further promoted and used in line with identified needs for individual children and families.
- 10.6 Leisure passes are also available for our cared for children. This is a fantastic resource but there is currently a low take up. This is surprising considering the increasing and rising number of children being cared for. It could be evidence

once again of a lack of coordination and awareness of some of these services. This needs to be improved through more effective communication, publicity and signposting.

These services are outlined in more detail in Appendix B

11.0 Working with Partners

11.1 Third Sector

11.2 As alluded to in the definition of Family Support services given above, it is not only statutory bodies that provide services, support and advice to families. The third sector and other voluntary bodies have an important part to play too and it is imperative that these are included in any conversations about the future shape of Family Support services in Cheshire East.

11.3 In light of this, the Task and Finish Group heard evidence from the Voluntary and Community and Faith Sector HUB regarding Cheshire Children, Young People and Families. It was explained that the HUB serve to pull together the voluntary service sectors and that a core group of 20 national and local organisations exists. These organisations meet monthly to hold business meetings to spread information to partner HUB organisations.

11.4 The HUB holds an annual event which celebrates what has been achieved and to share information. It also hosts training events as a result of the partner needs. The HUB has made some significant developments with regard to the Think Family Agenda and a lot of work has been done to measure the impact of its work and providing supporting evidence.

11.5 Despite the positive work of the HUB, it is facing a number of challenges. These are as follows:

- Funding - in previous years this has been received from the Local Authorities and Learning Resource Network. However this year Cheshire West and Cheshire Council have only provided funding until August 2010. This would have a significant impact on the work provided within that Borough and is a serious concern for the HUB.
- Engaging faith communities - this is improving, however further engagement is required
- Encouraging the third sector organisations to work together particularly with regard to receiving funding.
- Capacity of small organisations - they are keen to be involved but need to have the same policies and procedures as the larger organisations in place. Therefore training and support for these organisations is required.

11.6 Following from hearing evidence regarding the HUB, the panel met with representatives of the third sector to discuss their organisations roles and remits:

11.7 Catch 22

11.8 Its objectives are to promote opportunities for the development, education and support of young people in need to lead purposeful, stable and fulfilled lives and to promote safer and crime free communities for the benefit of the public.

- 11.9 Its work includes tailored packages of integrated support, direct work with young people, community based environment work, school based support, working with families, safeguarding children and young people, multi agency working, community based projects and workforce developments.
- 11.10 Catch 22 is commissioned by Cheshire East Council to support and manage a small team of early intervention workers to enable children/young people and their families to achieve their full potential in accordance with the 5 Every Child Matters outcomes. This includes an element of offending prevention through positive contribution and a range of other early intervention methods which are addressed at the whole family. Catch 22 also receives lottery funding and were currently seeking additional funding.
- 11.12 It was reported that Catch 22 operates through CAF (Common Assessment Framework) and has good working relationships with other third sector organisations as a lot of the work done was multi agency work. Catch 22 also works closely with the Children's and Families Centres. They were most proud of the early intervention and family support work.
- 11.13 **NSPCC**
- 11.14 NSPCC is a national charity which receives financial support through funding and fund raising activities. It chooses what services it delivers and is based in Crewe due to a high level of need in that area. The NSPCC are concentrating on neglect, running national services such as child line and other help lines and providing young witness support. With regard to domestic violence it was felt that the former County Council had strong partnerships with the third sector which would be a hard act to follow and that Cheshire East needs to collaborate more with the different agencies.
- 11.15 Finally it was highlighted that while multi agency working in Crewe was not strong the practitioners worked well together.
- 11.16 **Action for Children**
- 11.17 Action for Children is commissioned by Cheshire East Council and through area based grants to provide early intervention in Macclesfield. It provides children and their family's access to universal services through the Children's Centres that traditionally they would not have access to. It was noted that improvements needed be made in order to reach a wider audience and that information and statistics need to be more readily available from the health service.
- 11.18 **Home - Start**
- 11.19 Home - Start provides one to one, personalised support to parents and families who have at least one child under 5 in the Crewe and Nantwich area. Volunteers visit families at home once a week, supporting parents in situations as diverse as isolation, illness, depression and mental health illness, disability or who find parenting a struggle. Volunteers provide non-judgemental practical and emotional support and each volunteer is carefully matched to a referred family. Referral is made by a form and taken from health visitors, mental health teams, Children's Centres, social care and self referral. Each volunteer is carefully matched to a referred family and offers 3 to 4 hours a week of home-

visiting support. The volunteers are from the local community and undertake a 10 week/40 hour course, are CRB checked and put through the Paris System.

11.20 Home-start is well used and has a waiting list. It also receives financial support through fund raising activities.

11.21 **Visyon**

11.22 Visyon promotes and improves the mental and emotional wellbeing of children and young people aged up to 25 through the provision of counselling and complementary activities. Visyon is based in Congleton and delivers services throughout Cheshire East, Cheshire West and Chester and North Staffordshire. It was established in 1994 by a group of volunteers as a response to three teenage suicides in Congleton.

11.23 It is partly funded through contracts with schools and other organisations, they also receive funding through the National Lottery with match funding from CRH Charitable Trust. Having said this, funding is an area of concern for Visyon.

11.24 One of the big challenges for Visyon is providing data. They are currently exploring the possibility of purchasing a IT package to monitor and measure a persons well being.

11.25 **Connexions**

11.26 Connexions have also made the following contributions to family support:

- All age careers guidance. Advisors are based in all schools and colleges and have links to training organisations.
- Undertake career guidance interviews in schools.
- Attend parents' evenings.
- Work with teenage parents, supporting them into education, employment and training.
- Provide sexual health service for young people via clinics in the Crewe HUB and condom distribution across Cheshire East together with information/advice and signposting to other services.
- Provide information and advice on benefits.
- Advise foster parents
- Provide mediation work with young people who leave home
- Work closely with Police and other services to support young people who run away or are at risk of running away from home.

11.27 The above services may be impacted by the recent changes to their funding.

11.28 **Budget**

11.29 Third sector commissioned to deliver family support 2009/10

Action for Children 5-13 Family Support	60,000
NSPCC Family Support	60,000
Catch 22	81,677
Action for Children 0-5 Family Support	338,771
	<u>539,771</u>

Third sector commissioned to deliver elements of family support 2009/2010

Crewe Women's Aid	18,000
Macclesfield Women's Aid	18,000
Homestart Crewe	23,000
	<u>59,000</u>

11.30 **Summary**

11.31 Members note the key role that the third sector play in the important area of providing family support and early intervention within the local community. The increasing valuable role of volunteers is also noted.

11.32 The representatives of the third sector agreed that in order for their organisations to be effective they needed to work in partnership. They have regular contact through the HUB and felt that whilst the practitioners worked well together, the strategic approach and coordination could be improved.

11.33 The third sector also agreed that relationships with the Health Sector needed to be improved as adequate data was not being received. They also highlighted that they provide a professional service, are value for money and should be considered as an option to provide services, additional and complimentary to council provision.

11.34 Again services need to be more widely publicised and signposted on a locality basis.

11.35 **Family Support Services provided by the Health Authority**

11.36 The Health Authority also provides the following family support services:

- Midwifery – support to more vulnerable families through identification of need at initial health and social care needs assessment at 12 weeks of gestation.
- Health Visiting – through the universal offer and targeted work with vulnerable families.
- School nursing – elements of engaging with whole families
- CAMHS – Through individual therapy and programmes like Webster Stratton parenting programmes.
- Vol Sec – Homestart jointly commissioned provision by CECPCCT and Cheshire East Council.
- Complex care teams and Hospital at Home teams – providing support to children with long term needs.
- Drug and Alcohol Services (joint funded) – working within a family context where there is consent for 16+.
- Adult Mental Health Services – working with adults who have dependants
- Domestic Abuse Family Support Unit (joint funded) – works with families where there are domestic abuse issues. In 2009/10 worked with 304 adults in households where there were 403 children and young people present.
- YOS – mental health nurses in YOS also engage with parents funded via the PCT.

11.37 **Schools and Education Improvement Partnerships (EIPs)**

- 11.38 EIPs were established as a way of bringing schools together to create improved working and value for money. They provide a variety of different approaches and provision of family support and they can offer extended universal services that could not be offered by the authority such as out of hours and holiday clubs.
- 11.39 With regard to funding, the local authority distributes funding to the EIPs for them to decide how it is spent. The EIPs are then expected to submit a business plan to outline how the money had been spent, however this has been more effective in some areas than others, as not all the EIPs had focused on outcomes. Because of this, each area received a different service resulting in a lack of consistency across the Borough.
- 11.40 Due to budget pressures and changes proposed by the Coalition government it is unclear how the funding would be delivered in the future. Having said this, the EIPs have other funding stream available to them and some areas were looking at the possibility of collaborating or restructuring. Additionally some schools found family liaison worked.

11.41 **Commissioning**

- 11.42 The authority only has a relatively small budget for commissioning Family Support Services. This budget has primarily commissioned specialist and skilled practitioners to deliver targeted support.
- 11.43 The Task and Finish Group were informed that third sector organisations will have to meet a specification to enable them to receive funding. Officers have undertaken an appraisal of who provides specialist services and where they are provided and subsequently defined what a service should look like and created the specification around what is needed. Only a small part of the third sector could deliver this specification and they would have to work to a specific job description and receive the appropriate training and checks.
- 11.44 Family support and early intervention can be complex and families could need support with a range of issues that are below the threshold for referral to statutory agencies.
- 11.45 Commissioning is key in deciding how best to use resources in the public interest. Effective commissioning applies evidence of “what works” to improve outcomes for local people and is becoming increasingly important as budgets are reduced.
- 11.46 It should provide a robust and objective way of making decisions about the use of scarce public resources so that they have maximum positive impact on the lives of children and their families. Effective commissioning starts with a strategic understanding of how the whole system works and how the total resource is used.
- 11.47 It is important to ensure that reliable and relevant evidence is used systematically to design, develop, implement, evaluate, cost, commission and decommission early interventions.
- 11.48 It is important to progress a more integrated approach with adults commissioning. We understand that this is currently being actively progressed across Adults, Children’s and Health and Well Being. This should improve a

more integrated and consistent approach regarding of commissioning of services and support for the “whole family” and may well identify efficiencies..

11.49 Information Sharing

11.50 This was a significant and worrying theme that emerged during this review. It was very apparent on visits to the Children’s Centres where managers and staff spoke about poor information and data sharing especially from Health colleagues. This is especially concerning about lack of sharing of information regarding live birth data. This has had a significant impact on Children’s Centres being able to engage or reach families at the earliest opportunity. Members were so concerned by this they asked for this to be addressed and are now happy to report that an information sharing protocol between Health and Cheshire East Children’s services has been agreed through the Children’s Trust. However Members would want this to be monitored closely to ensure information sharing improves on the ground.

12.0 Questionnaires

12.1 As part of this review questionnaires were widely circulated to Children’s Centres, Family Centres and other settings for staff and families using the service to complete.

12.2 27 were completed by families using the services and 24 were completed by professionals working in the settings, while a number were also completed by Health colleagues referring or using the Children’s Centres.

12.3 The feedback received has been invaluable. A lot of positive feedback has been received regarding the services as well as some common themes emerged including:

- A theme was around lack of knowledge and how to access from some key services for adults e.g. adult mental health,
- 3 service users saying they could not access housing support
- 4 service users saying they could not access support for mental health issues
- 2 service users said they would like access to parenting classes
- 4 examples of telling friends
- A significant number had issues regarding domestic violence, housing and rent and financial matters
- 5 service users said they did not get copies of their care plans or assessments
- Many commented users said they did not have access to internet so could not access information that way

12.4 Some staff commented on reluctance by other professionals to complete or take a lead in doing CAF’s

12.5 Some quotes from service users:

- “Not sure what is available or what it may cost”
- “Information about family support did not specify in what locality it was available”

- “Internet information was discouraging and scared me”
- “I cannot read so could not see any written information”
- “I had help sorting out my rent and housing and money”
- “The CAF process has helped me and my family. It has set us goals and targets that can be achieved”
- “I had no confidence before, now I feel more confident and well supported and I can ask if I need help” (CC Children’s Centre)
- “I was worried that I would be viewed as a bad parent. Before I met my FSW I had asked lots of people for help and nothing happened...now my FSW does what she said she was going to do”
- “I was pregnant and spoke with my midwife and asked for help as I had had issues in the past and had a child adopted when younger. A referral was made for a FSW at the Children’s Centre... all health appointments are here. My midwife and FSW are brilliant and even came to my house. I have kept my child which is all I ever wanted”
- “I feel listened to” (CC)
- “I have been encouraged to be more confident and have had help with my parenting skills”
- “I had help with my 18 month twins...I felt isolated and was new to the area. The Children’s Centre was very welcoming”

13.0 **Continuum of need**

- 13.1 The term “continuum of need” is a phrase used across Children’s services. It is sometimes described as the “windscreen” and describes the wide range of need and interventions from universal through to targeted and universal. A key message from recent research is that it is inappropriate to view earlier intervention as an alternative to later intervention, when difficulties have become embedded. Many children and families may need continuing support and interventions at different times. A better model is a continuum of services that are appropriate at different stages in the life course of problems. Some children and families may need ongoing support, while others may have their needs addressed by an earlier intervention but do not require later interventions.
- 13.2 The diagram often referred to as “the windscreen” illustrates the continuum of needs and services and where the CAF and lead professional fit. The continuum of need/windscreen has only recently been adopted in Cheshire East but is now agreed by the LSCB and the Children’s Trust. Members fully support this being further embedded and underpinning the future provision of interventions (Appendix C).

14.0 **CAF (Common Assessment Framework)**

- 14.1 The CAF is a standardised approach to conducting assessments of children's and families' additional needs and for developing and agreeing on a process through which agencies work to meet those needs. It aims to enable early identification of needs leading to planned and coordinated provision of services for children, young people and their families. However there remain inconsistencies and variabilities about the implementation of CAF locally. There is a need to implement and embed the CAF process uniformly whilst looking at the impact of the process on improved outcomes for children and their families. Some practitioners were concerned with the amount of work involved in filling out the family details where a number of children within the same family were involved. The Task and Finish Group understand that if CAF forms are filled in using the correct data processing system, the common family details can be automatically entered.

15.0 **Budget**

- 15.1 Children and Families Service has a net budget of £37m for 2010-11, compared with a gross budget of £298m, demonstrating the reliance of the service on funding which comes from government grants, the biggest of these being the Dedicated Schools Grant, which for 2010-11 is £200.6m and of which over £182m is passported directly to schools. The underlying position facing the service continues to be one of budgetary pressures, the final outturn for Children and Families non school budgets for 2009-10 was an overspend of almost £4m, but by the careful application of grants during the year, fully utilising all the SureStart grant and Standard Funds wherever possible the reported outturn for the service was managed down to £1.1m. This was the result of a planned approach to hold grant money back from commitment during the early part of the year, combined with the impact of a new service structure being implemented in the later half of the year.
- 15.2 However, the budgetary pressures facing the service in 2009-10 are continuing into 2010-11. In 2009-10 £12.3m was spent on child placements, against a budget of only £10.4m. The demand for Children Social Care Services has increased by 25% since April 2009 and the underlying overspend has increased further due to the continuing increase in numbers of Children coming into the service. In house care facilities are at full capacity meaning that children are being placed in high cost external placements. It is envisaged that this overspend will continue in future years due to the increase in the number of referrals being made to the department and the ongoing increase in the number of referrals being made to the department and the ongoing increase in the number of Looked After Children (LAC). The number of children has increased from 370 in November 2009 to 477 currently and this is continuing to rise. In 2009-10, £1.8m was spent on family Support in Family Centres and £3.8m was spent on Children's Centres. In 2010-11 Phase 3 of the Children's Centre Programme came into operation, increasing the Children's Centre budgets to £5.5m
- 15.3 **Headline figures:**
- 15.4 A child with severe conduct disorder costs £70,000 (1995 estimate) with indirect costs 7 times that. Parent training would be approximately £600 per child

The cumulative cost to public services of children with troubled behaviour is ten times that for other children

The current budget for 2010-11 includes a savings proposal as follows: -

	2010-11 £	2011-12 £	2012-13 £	Total £
Review of Family Centres/Children Centres	-150	-50		-200

15.5 These savings were intended to be achieved through a refocus of delivery options rather than a wide scale review of the service and possible closures of centres.

15.6 Family Support, including Family Centres and Children Centres, is now being reviewed in its entirety. It is likely that some transformation of the service will be required pending the recommendations of the review, and potentially some centres will need to be closed. Anticipating this, revised savings proposals have now been put forward as part of the 2011-12 budget setting process.

The savings proposal being put forward for next year now assumes the following: -

	2011-12 £	2012-13 £	2013-14 £	Total £
Review of Family Centres/Children Centres	-430			-430

15.7 It was extremely difficult for the group to receive the relevant budget information as financial information was held across different budget headings and service areas and initially was difficult to collate. Members agreed that the financial systems used needed to be improved so that there could be more effective oversight, monitoring and scrutiny of financial spend on family support (including staffing).

16.0 **Additional Information**

16.1 Alongside this review were two important pieces of work underway relating to Family Support and early intervention. These were the Redesign of Children's Services (focussing on early intervention and integrated working) and a review of family support being delivered within Children's services. The group considers these two pieces of work to be very timely and supports the recommendations and actions contained within them.

16.2 Members are reassured to see that some of the issues which arose out of this review are already been actioned. Members would want to ensure that the recommendations are progressed as a matter of urgency.

16.3 An organisation called C4EO (Centre for Excellence and Outcomes) is also offering some additional sector support to Children's services, regarding progressing early intervention by facilitation of a conference titled Early

Intervention: Moving Forward with Action later in November; development of an Outcomes Based Methodology (OBA) and collection of data on a locality basis. C4EO is a leading national organisation that is pulling together evidence of effective local practice in early intervention.

17.0 **Conclusions**

- 17.1 Throughout this review, Members have become increasingly aware of the importance of family support and of the evidence that early intervention is a force for transforming and improving the lives of children, families and communities, especially the most disadvantaged, this is becoming more clearly evidenced for social and personal outcomes along with the economic advantages it brings. It is important that as part of this review there is a need for our services to change too. Within any prospective change, it is also apparent that the service must be equipped to be able to cope with and respond to, the difficult challenges that we face in the coming years.
- 17.2 Increasingly more and more research and evidence is available to show that early intervention works both with regards to improved outcomes and greater efficiency of resources and services being delivered. It is better to identify problems early and intervene effectively to prevent their escalation rather than respond when the difficulty is acute, or results in family breakdown and / or possibly a child coming into care.
- 17.3 Services are required that are part of a continuum of services available and appropriate at different stages in the life course of problems, with the overriding need to identify the most appropriate intervention to match specific needs at a particular point. Consequently, a service is required that is flexible, appropriate and timely whilst being able to apply the philosophy of early intervention. Indeed, as this review progressed it emerged that it is better to identify problems early and intervene effectively to prevent their escalation. Also with increasing knowledge and understanding of human development, especially in childhood, it is possible to identify many more problems earlier. Therefore, in a time of increased budgetary pressures, it is important to note that any temptation to cut back on investment in early intervention needs to be resisted, for short term financial gains can often lead to long term costs. The challenge for Cheshire East is how to get better value out of the money already being invested.
- 17.4 A key theme throughout the review has been the lack of a co-ordinated and effective joined up approach to family support and early intervention, staff are working hard, but this lack of coordination means they are not always as effective as they could be. There is a clear need for a strategic framework and structure. It is positive that the current services being delivered will now come under one Principal Manager within Early Intervention and Prevention. This should ensure integrated service delivery, menu of interventions and a strengthened parenting strategy.
- 17.5 Another theme emerged is an inconsistency amongst front line practitioners about their knowledge of what local services are available. This was also reflected in feedback from the questionnaires from families and front line practitioners of a lack of knowledge of what services are available. Even when some information was available it did not identify it by specific localities. There did not appear to be an up to date detailed parenting strategy or a directory of

services, although we understand this is now being progressed. As the service delivered have not been coordinated through one structure there has been the potential for children and families being ‘misdirected’ as they pass through various services. Not only is this inefficient and costly, it also affects the child/family and erodes trust. Often good signposting is based on local knowledge which comes from positive multi agency working relationships. Once services become more consolidated, there is a need to publicise and promote the services that are available by locality for families, carers and practitioners.

- 17.6 It was apparent that there is no process for systematic referrals to children centres for all children within the identified age criteria within the locality.
- 17.7 Effective commissioning starts with a strategic understanding of how the whole system works and how the total resource is being used – not only within the Council itself but with third sector and public sector partners also. Further to this, this review stresses the need to make better use of data already gathered on children and families from all relevant organisations in order to improve identification of need on a locality basis and also to show value for money. There needs to be a culture developed that promotes sharing and co-operation. There is a clear need to develop and progress a more integrated approach to commissioning across Children’s, Adults and Health and Well Being.
- 17.8 This review has identified the need to open up the debate over the mix of universal and targeted services. Often, targeted approaches tend to be judged to be more cost effective than universal services. However, evidence suggests that both types of support are needed. Clearly, in a time when capacity is reduced it is difficult to argue against positioning a ratio more favourably towards targeting services to those most in need. The difficult question is in how you achieve this without completely neglecting a vital universal service. One possible answer is to adopt the principle of ‘proportionate universalism’ which was coined in the recent Marmot Review. This concept suggests that to reduce inequalities, action should be universal but proportionate to the level of disadvantage. This review suggests the need for a variety (or ‘menu’) of family support and early intervention to reflect the different needs families face at different times (linked to the continuum of need) which would help the service to target interventions effectively and efficiently at the most appropriate time. This approach also recognises that children and their family’s needs demand a variety of interventions at particular junctures. The challenge for the service is to make sure that interventions delivered are appropriate, timely and responsive to the needs identified.
- 17.9 It is also important that the delivery of early intervention has to take place on a locality basis and be sensitive to local circumstances. The group support the drive for early intervention and integrated working on a locality basis as agreed by the Children’s Trust through the Redesign of Children’s services.
- 17.10 As well an integrated model of early intervention Members would also be keen to develop an Intensive Intervention pilot – this could involve some targeted crisis intervention for a small number of our most vulnerable and chaotic families where a significant number of agencies are already involved, at great expense and with relatively poor outcomes. This may be a key feature of the Crewe Total Place Initiative.
- 17.11 Members are pleased to note that that all family support and early intervention services will come under one Principal Manager in Early Intervention and

Prevention and that work is underway to develop an integrated model of family support/early intervention delivered across the continuum of need and according to locality needs. The option of an annual conference on Early Intervention could be of value.

- 17.12 Members would want the positive work progressed during this review to be embedded especially the detailed financial data, information sharing processes, feedback from staff and users of the service as well as the implementation of key actions, proposed targets and recommendations to be monitored. This could all be reviewed as part of an Annual Report on Family Support and Early Intervention submitted to Cabinet and Scrutiny.

18.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 18.1 To ensure a more consistent and coordinated approach to the family support provision and in line with the proposals set out in the recently completed 'Family Support Review' an integrated Family Support/Early Intervention Service should be developed under a single principal manager.
- 18.2 To ensure easier recognition of a quality service and access to the service, Family Support/Early Intervention be developed as a brand with an appropriate logo.
- 18.3 That Early Intervention be adopted as the prevailing philosophy within the service.
- 18.4 That under the brand heading a full directory of services be devised and widely distributed on the internet, in customer centres, GP surgeries, libraries, schools and other public places, it should also be made available to staff from other agencies that are likely to make referrals.
- 18.5 That street signage to Children's Centres should be critically examined for effectiveness and improved as appropriate. Over time the brand should feature on all signs.
- 18.6 That a monitoring framework should be established across the service (including commissioned services) to monitor performance against demand across Cheshire East (on a LAP area basis) and to identify service gaps or over provision in a timely fashion. The framework should inform decisions relative to in-house provision and commissioned services.
- 18.7 That the role of Children's Centres becomes more targeted. Universal services still need to be provided but the balance needs to shift in order to better support families in the greatest need. The collection of 'reach' statistics needs to be revised to reflect this, moving from 'universal reach' statistics to 'targeted reach' statistics.
- 18.8 Improve health workers and social workers knowledge of the role and importance of Children's Centres in order to improve the current referral rates.
- 18.9 Make Children's Centres more user friendly for disabled children (with a particular focus on the Early Support Model) to enhance equality and opportunity for disabled children and their families.
- 18.10 Ensure Children's Centres are adequately serviced by interpreters and to mitigate possible funding problems engage with the health authority on a shared funding responsibility basis.
- 18.11 Recognising that early intervention does not automatically mean early years intervention, ensure that adequate targeted support for families with older children is provided.
- 18.12 Ensure that all staff involved in Family Support Services are fully trained in the updated 'Common Core Skills and Knowledge' framework to enable them to work effectively with families.

- 18.13 That a detailed 'Parenting Strategy' be developed. This should include preferred parenting programmes to enable a range of options depending on a family's needs and capabilities.
- 18.14 That the current usage of buildings be explored with a focus on the range of services to be delivered and the suitability of some of the current buildings. For instance the group are fully supportive of an initial conclusion that two of the four family centres are not fit for purpose and that services currently provided in these centres should be located in other existing buildings (possibly including schools).
- 18.15 Recognise that many experienced family Support Workers in Family Centres are inappropriately being used in undertaking long term supervised contact and redeploy them to early intervention/family support and consider commissioning delivery of supervised contact services by the third sector. The choice of third sector provider will be critical.
- 18.16 That Cheshire East Council works closely with individual schools and EIPs to work more closely to integrate the Family Support and other services they provide with the mainstream provision provided by the Council.
- 18.17 Closely monitor the effect of budget pressures/cuts on school provided family support and the possible counter effect of the Pupil Premium.
- 18.18 Seek to find efficiency savings in the area of transport costs for both children and family members associated with supervised contact services.
- 18.19 Implement the windscreen method of illustrating the continuum of needs and services and the role of the CAF into the family support assessment process. This method is used extensively within the children's social care process and would likewise benefit the family support/early intervention process.
- 18.20 Those children with Child Protection Plans and those deemed vulnerable be systematically identified by the relevant agencies and the appropriate referrals be made to the Family Support Service. In the spirit of early intervention this needs to be done as early as possible to minimise subsequent costs but it also needs to be done systematically by setting child development benchmarks at appropriate ages.
- 18.21 That a pilot programme of intensive family support/early intervention be devised and implemented in an area of known deprivation and where a significant number of families needing support are resident. The programme should be devised in conjunction with other council departments and others service providers to have the maximum benefit. For example in conjunction with community development and council play schemes the fire services princes trust scheme and job centre plus, social housing providers etc.
- 18.22 That an annual conference for all sections of the Children and Families Service be introduced to ensure that all sections of the service are coordinated and working towards the same vision.
- 18.23 That an annual report of what has been achieved for Family Support and Early Intervention be produced and submitted to the Children and Families Scrutiny Committee and to the Cabinet. The report should cover all actions by all agencies in the family Support field (including assessment of current state of data sharing amongst all agencies. A specific example would be Health sharing live birth data including the availability of management information relating to financial data).

19.0 **Future Implications**

- 19.1 There are clear indications that early intervention is a key priority for the Coalition Government. The Spending Review 2010 refers to the need for early intervention and it promises an early intervention grant and a national campaign

to support and turn around the lives of families with multiple problems. This will be underpinned by local Community Budgets focussed on family intervention. Sure Start services are also to be maintained in cash terms, although refocused on families with the most need of support.

- 19.2 Graham Allen MP was also commissioned by the Government in July 2010 to undertake an independent review looking at how children at greatest risk of disadvantage get the best start in life and the best models for early intervention (this will report in 2 stages in 2011). Two key aspects will be the focus on best practice and financial instruments.
- 19.3 The conference referred to on Page 33 was held on the 22/11/2010. It was clear from the presentation given by Officers from Blackpool Council that the systems and levels of cooperation recommended in this report are only a starting point.
- 19.4 Blackpool has demonstrated that a degree of cooperation and joint working way beyond our current ambition is possible. If the recommendations in this report are implemented in full there is every hope that Cheshire East will, over the next few years be well equipped to make the same journey.

20.0 Background Information

- Information relating to third sector organisations.
- An overview of Family Support roles in Cheshire East
- Information on Sure Start
- Children and Families Service Redesign Bulletin
- Information on Children and Family Centres
- Information on Third Sector Organisations and contract for service.
- Budget information

Publications

- Grasping the Nettle; Early Intervention for Children, Families and Communities (2010)
- Marmot Review (2010)
- Maternity in Early Years (2010)
- Backing the Future; why investing in Children is Good for us all – Action for Children (2009)
- Early Intervention: Securing Good Outcomes for all Children and Young People – Department for Children Schools and Families (2010)

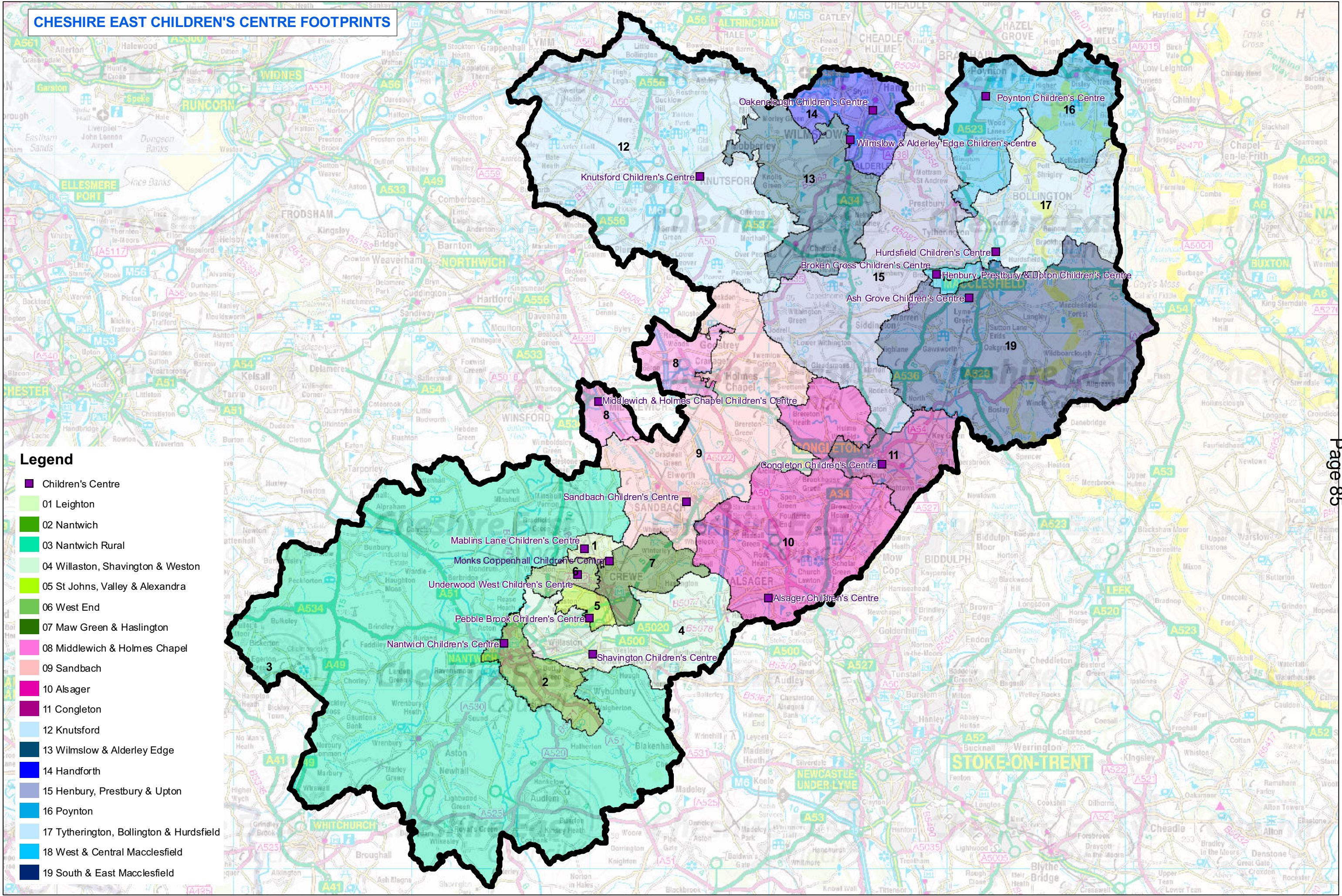
Appendices

Appendix A - Footprint of Children's Centres

Appendix B - Health and Well Being Services for Young People

Appendix C – Diagram, windscreen of the continuum of need

CHESHIRE EAST CHILDREN'S CENTRE FOOTPRINTS



- Legend**
- Children's Centre
 - 01 Leighton
 - 02 Nantwich
 - 03 Nantwich Rural
 - 04 Willaston, Shavington & Weston
 - 05 St Johns, Valley & Alexandra
 - 06 West End
 - 07 Maw Green & Haslington
 - 08 Middlewich & Holmes Chapel
 - 09 Sandbach
 - 10 Alsager
 - 11 Congleton
 - 12 Knutsford
 - 13 Wilmslow & Alderley Edge
 - 14 Handforth
 - 15 Henbury, Prestbury & Upton
 - 16 Poynton
 - 17 Tytherington, Bollington & Hursfield
 - 18 West & Central Macclesfield
 - 19 South & East Macclesfield

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Cheshire East Council. 100049045 2009.

This map shows all current children's centres in Cheshire east, Nantwich Rural location is still to be confirmed.



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Health and Wellbeing Service for young People

Workforce Development

Coaches

The Coach Development Programme has been established based on specific needs of coaches within the local community, this programme supports coaches.

Volunteers

An accredited Volunteer program, which tracks progress and delivers the aims of the individuals. Increasing activity not just physically but mentally giving opportunities for sustainability within the voluntary sector, and encouraging community engagement and enhancing local pride.

Club Development –

This programme links into the Coach Education Programme and then offers support for clubs to enhance school club links. Making sure that parents have a choice of a club that works to a minimum of standards including safeguarding procedures. National guidelines,

Developing Communities Using Sport and Play

The social inclusion agenda's from the government illustrate and use sport as a tool to assist with issues such as improving health, employment, create diversionary activities, interventions, community cohesion and education. Statistics show that a young person who lives in a deprived area has the greater chance of attending an under achieving school, higher chances of getting involved with crime and drugs. Current figures show that for every offence a young person commits it costs the "Authorities" £2,300, with a further reference to that of a child with a conduct disorder at the age of 10 will cost the public purse around £70,000 by the age of 28 up to 10 times more than a child with no behavioural problems.

Programmes that are targeted to specific groups –

School Holiday Activity Programmes –

Around social and crime cohesion agenda's

Summer Activity Programme –

Taking place in August this scheme targets young people age range 5 – 19 years of age from all areas of the authority. The philosophy for this scheme was that in order to ensure that young people received 2 healthy meals per day, were actively involved in sport and physical activity, encouraged to work together in teams and finally to provide training opportunities for young people to get involved obtain basic life skills generic qualifications along with coaching qualifications. More importantly for the young people they were to act as sports leaders for the younger people engaged in the scheme, helping to raise aspirations, self esteem, confidence and create role models for the younger participants

Reprobation work with Young Offenders –

Looking at engaging with young people who have a reprobation order supervised through the Youth offending team-

ASPIRE project –

Project working with young people with Mental Health issues and / or behavioural problems aged 11-19 years of age- Variety of physical activity programmes. Young people participate on one to one basis or as small groups enabling the development of self-esteem, increased confidence and the opportunity to interact with others. One of the biggest challenges is to help the young people identify and create alternatives for lifestyle changes.

Disability work –

Appointment of co-ordinator to link up existing programmes, support voluntary sector groups.

Community Development – Local Neighbourhoods

We work in the neighbourhood renewal areas providing support for our Neighbourhood teams and delivering affordable activities for those facing disadvantage.

Cared for Children

Access to Leisure facilities for young people and carer's

Partnerships

We currently link with several organisations' including the education sector.

Sports and Play Development and Participation

In order to increase participation levels for sport and physical activity the sports and Play development team have a range of activities that act as either taster sessions or events in order to engage young people.

- Play Day Festivals
- Everyday Sports Festivals
- Active8
- Play for Life
- Play in Libraries
- Town Sports
- Active Bodies
- Festival of Youth Sport

Sports Development for Competition/Performance

In order to cater for all abilities of athletes and to help raise the profile of talented Athletes within Cheshire East we have the following programmes.

- South Cheshire Swimming Development Forum
- Sports Specific – Athlete Development Camps
- Youth Sports Council- (in Development stage)
- Talented Athlete Program

Health Programmes

- Healthy Eating and Cooking on a Budget Classes – A 6-10 week course
- Stay & Play – Parent And Toddler Planting & Allotment sessions at Knutsfords children and family centre
- Children's Planting Activities in School Holidays
- Children's Cookery Activities in School Holiday
- QCF Qualification in Horticulture – Delivered by Reaseheath College for volunteers
- Community/Youth/Mental Health/School Fruit Tree Planting Sessions
- 5 A Day, Healthy Eating, Hand Washing and Fruit Smoothie Making Sessions for Schools
- One off Baby Food Sessions at the Children and Family Centre
- Creating School Allotments
- MEND Project Crewe healthy eating and exercise for 7-13 year old and their families
- Healthy lifestyle talks (smoking, alcohol, sunsafe, food hygiene)
- Healthy Lunchbox workshops
- Breastfeeding promotion and increasing uptake
- Let's get Crewe Cooking project (Healthy cooking, cooking on a budget for children and families)
- Workplace health programmes, healthy lifestyle messages and advice to workplaces

Leisure Facilities

- Parent and toddler sessions at pools
- Designated family sessions at pools with additional lifeguarding
- Children's holiday care and playscheme activities at all facilities (many of which are OFSTED registered to cater for U8s)
- Work closely with the Family Information service to promote family based activities and programmes.
- Support FIS Dads campaign through leisure facilities

Year-round Family rates for casual activities:

- Swimming
- Tennis
- Table Tennis
- Squash
- Badminton
- Seasonal promotions/activities e.g. school holidays

Library Services

In partnership with CE Children and Families and the PCT, the Library Service supports families with the universal gifting of books to pre-school, year 7, year 11 and looked after children. The value of the books received from the Book Trust charity each year is more than £1m. The Bookstart scheme (pre-school) relies upon health visitors delivering the books at early years health checks. The Booktime (year 7) scheme is specifically devised to encourage parents/guardians to read with their children.

Local Library programmes

- Offer weekly Rhyme time sessions to pre-school children and their parents/carers to develop language and social skills
- Story times
- Level 3 Children's centre provision through Wilmslow and Holmes Chapel libraries
- Access to free books for all ages
- Access to talking books, cds, dvds, computer games
- Tactile books/ pop up books/scratch n sniff etc for children with Special needs
- Dual language books
- Large print books
- Craft activities & events during holidays
- Informal Homework support & information provision
- Class visits
- Visits to post natal groups to talk to new mums about importance of reading & offer to join library
- Safe space
- Looking to offer 6 book challenge to parenting groups for those with low literacy levels
- Access to Family Information Service website for details of childminders etc

Green spaces Team

Rangers do classroom talks and presentations.
Countryside walk leader's sessions

Cultural Team

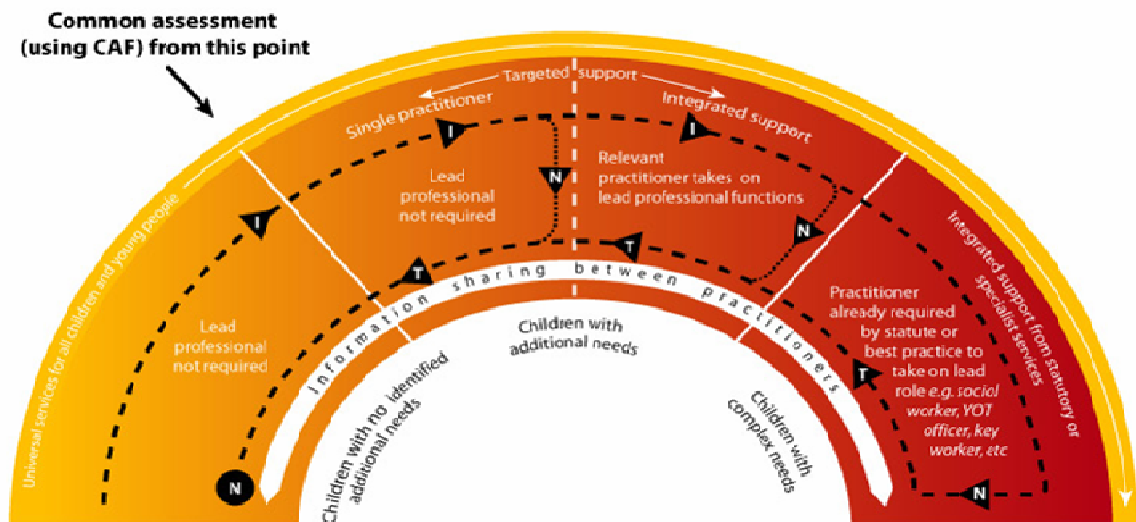
Arts and dance opportunities through school classes.



Safeguarding Children in Cheshire East: Continuum of Need *How we work together*

The 'windscreen' model is used nationally to illustrate how children may move either way between different levels of need and the responses from support services they will require.

The four segments, from left to right, indicate **Universal**, **Targeted**, **Complex**, and **Specialist** levels of service provision in response to need.



Key: I = identification and action, T = Transition, N = Needs met



Continuum of Need	Response
Specialist needs	
<p>Children and young people who require specialist/acute services to meet their needs.</p> <p>This includes children who have suffered or are likely to suffer significant harm (Children Act 1989, s.47)</p> <p>Significant harm may be the result of physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse or neglect.</p>	<p>Refer to appropriate specialist agency.</p> <p>Refer concern to Children's Social Care. Children's Social Care shall make such enquiries as they consider necessary to enable them to decide whether they should take any action to safeguard or promote the child's welfare (Children Act 1989, s.47)</p> <p>The local authority and health bodies have a duty to help with enquiries about significant harm. (Children Act 1989, s.47)</p>
Complex needs	
<p>Children and young people whose needs are not fully met due to the range, depth or significance of these needs.</p> <p>This includes children whose vulnerability is such that they are unlikely to reach or maintain a satisfactory level of health or development, or their health and development will be significantly impaired, without the provision of services (CA 1989, s.17)</p> <p>Child whose health or development is being impaired, or there is a high risk of impairment</p>	<p>If a multi-agency response is required, the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) process should be used. This should involve the parent/carer and child/ young person.</p> <p>Children's Social Care carry lead responsibility for establishing whether a child is in need and for ensuring services are provided to that child as appropriate. This does not require Children's Social Care itself necessarily to be the provider or co-ordinator of such services.</p> <p>The local authority and health bodies have a duty to help with enquiries about children in need (Children Act 1989, 17).</p>
Targeted - additional needs	
<p>Children and young people who would benefit from additional help from public agencies in order to make the best of their life chances.</p>	<p>If a practitioner identifies a concern about a child they should assess the needs and agree a plan of support with the parent/carer and the child using the Common Assessment Framework.</p>
Universal - no identified additional needs	
<p>Children and young people whose needs are being adequately met by their parents/carers, and who are accessing universal services.</p>	<p>For the local authority and health bodies and youth justice organisations, there is a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of child, and a duty to cooperate (Children Act 2004).</p>

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

REPORT TO: CABINET

Date of Meeting: 20th December 2010
Report of: Mike Crawshaw, Projects & Performance Manager
Subject/Title: Cheshire East Day Care Options Appraisal
Portfolio Holder: Cllr. Roland Domleo

1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 The report examines the options available for the seven day care centres in Cheshire East, six currently run by Age Concern, Cheshire and one currently run by the British Red Cross.

2.0 Decision Requested

- 2.1 Members are asked to consider the issues outlined in the report and approve the recommendation to adopt Option 5 at pages 5 to 16 of the Options Appraisal at Appendix A, and commission Wishing Well and Audlem Parish Council to undertake the provision of day care as indicated in Option 5.

3.0 Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 The recommendations arise from a series of officer meetings with service users and their advocates. Having discussed a range of options it has generally been agreed that service users should be offered a 'seamless' continuity of service provision from 31st March, 2011.

4.0 Wards Affected

- 4.1 All wards.

5.0 Local Ward Members

- 5.1 All.

6.0 Policy Implications including - Climate change - Health

- 6.1 The recommendations have implications for CEC's Corporate Objectives and their link to policies, specifically:

Corporate Objective One – To give the people of Cheshire East more choice and control about services and resources. **"Where local people want to take**

on the running of services and facilities, those services and facilities will have been passed into their hands.”

Corporate Objective Three – To improve life opportunities and health for everybody in Cheshire East. **“A significant reduction has been made in the most extreme of the health equalities, and, in particular, for older people more of their remaining years are healthy years. “**

Corporate Objective Five – Being an excellent Council and working with others to deliver for Cheshire East.

“Improve access to services for all Cheshire East areas, in particular rural communities.”

“Focus on our core services and priorities and optimise working in partnership where this improves services or makes better use of public resources.”

“We will have increased the number and scope of council services delivered with or by our partners/local communities each year.”

7.0 Financial Implications (Authorised by the Borough Treasurer)

- 7.1 The projected figures show a potential cost saving in excess of £34,000 over the current (2010/11) cost of the Day Care contracts.

8.0 Legal Implications (Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)

- 8.1 Cheshire East Council has a legal duty to consult with service users, having done so the officers involved are making the appropriate recommendations.

The Council's statutory obligation:

Under Health Services and Public Health Act 1968, S45 a local authority may make arrangements for promoting the welfare of old people. Guidance in respect of this section states specifically the need to provide recreational facilities and again day centres are mentioned.

- 8.2 In commissioning the services the Council must adhere to public procurement law. The annual cost of the seven centres is below EU thresholds however if the Council enters into contracts for longer than one year it would be bound by the Public Contracts Act 2006 to undertake a competitive procurement exercise. Although social services of this nature are not subject to all the provisions of the act there is still a requirement to treat all suppliers equally. The options paper notes that there is increasing competition in this market and therefore there is an increased risk that the Council could be challenged by a supplier that was not given the opportunity to bid for the work.

- 8.3 As budgets and policy is subject to change it will be important that any contracts entered into contain adequate provision for variances/termination in the event of changes in funding

9.0 Risk Management

- 9.1 The risk of financial mismanagement: Both of the recommended organisations have submitted costed-up business plans, one is an existing, well established social enterprise charity based in Crewe, Wishing Well. The other is a newly formed social enterprise supported by Audlem Parish Council which will be receiving social enterprise business support from the Cheshire and Warrington Social Enterprise Partnership.

10.0 Background and Options

- 10.1 Managers have consulted fully with the current service users regarding options for the future. An options appraisal document is attached as Appendix A.
- 10.2 A new provider (Wishing Well) has expressed an interest in operating run 6 of the Day Centres - 5 of the existing ones operated by Age Concern Cheshire and Manor Court in Nantwich, currently under British Red Cross contract. Additionally Audlem Parish Council has indicated their wish to operate a single centre. The business plan from Audlem Parish Council is contained within the Options Appraisal document attached (Appendix A) and the web link for Wishing Well is given below. These two providers taken together have been considered as the most viable option in the Option Appraisal.
- <http://www.wishingwell.nhs.uk/Default.aspx>
- 10.3 Age Concern Cheshire, as the current provider, have also submitted a business plan (pages 18 – 27 of Appendix A) in which the organisation proposes that the Day Centres should operate as stand alone social enterprises without financial support from Cheshire East Council

11.0 Financial and operational evaluation

- 11.1 The cost to Cheshire East Council of option 1 which includes the operation of six existing centres by Wishing Well and 1 centre operated by Audlem Parish Council would be £99,525. This represents a saving of £ 34,946. The current cost of the contract with Age Concern for these services is £134,471.
- 11.2 Managers consider that the proposal from Age Concern has merit however it does not include the price of luncheon, and other extras available to users and it requires a contribution of £12.50 per session from users.

- 11.3 The proposal from Wishing Well is based on the present individual contribution of £7.50. Audlem Parish Council's proposal assumes a contribution of £10, which has been agreed with service users when officers consulted them about the future provision.
- 11.4 It is the view of managers that the value of the Age Concern brand which is advocated in their proposal may be affected negatively as a result of recent media coverage and strength of community feeling about changes to their provision.
- 11.5 Managers consider that the proposal from Audlem Parish Council has particular value in that it represents wider community action and has the potential to act as a springboard for the establishment of a Community Trust. Such a development would then act as the umbrella for further community activities in the area and would link to other initiatives such as a bid for European funding to support the establishment of a Credit Union in the area.
- 11.6 Managers are assured of the status of the Wishing Well organisation. It is well established and enjoys high levels of community credibility in the Crewe area and strong links to the PCT and other support organisations.
- 11.7 It is the recommendation of officers to adopt the proposal submitted by Wishing Well and Audlem Parish Council. This offers significant savings on current costs and has the potential to secure wider community benefit. These proposals also most closely align with the express wishes of current users that services continue with the minimum of disruption.

11.0 Access to Information

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

Name: **Mike Crawshaw**

Designation: **Projects & Performance Manager, Strategic Commissioning**

Tel No: **01270 371373 (07500 102328)**

Email: **mike.crawshaw@cheshireeast.gov.uk**

Options Appraisal
Age Concern Day services

Following a full consultation with Age Concern Cheshire service users about the current day service provision managers have considered 4 options for the future.

Option	Comment	Risks
1. Do Nothing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Age Concern continue to provide the current day service activity Centres remain the same Levels of referrals dependant on needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Should Age Concern not agree to take on day service then current users at risk Loss of additional day centres Service at risk

Option	Comment	Risks
<p>2. Centre (s) become a stand alone service</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual centres may have a desire to establish an independent day service within their local community. • A potential provider has indicated that they wish to provide the same service to their local community as currently provided by Age Concern. • Managers considered that the potential provider could provide the service as a community management board applying for funding through for example the National Lottery, grant funding (Funds from Parish councils) or operating on a social enterprise model • Consider how / if grant funding could be paid and also at what percentage of the current cost to Age Concern this may be. Cheshire East Council could pay a start up grant based on a years running and staffing costs • The Centre's management board may wish to ask the current centre leader to work for them as a paid staff member delivering a local service within their local community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess risks with advice from legal, corporate procurement, and contracts staff. • The new organisation cannot sustain the financial commitments for the ongoing operation of the service • Current agreements with accommodation providers may not be possible to continue under new arrangements, as they may have been provided through contract negotiation with Age Concern and the provider • TUPE implications • Access to transport limited for the transportation of day centre users • Non Sustainable • Does not have a sound and robust business case • No statutory models for monitoring quality and safeguarding • Organisation does not have experience of running socially based day services

Option	Comment	Risks
3. Invitation to Tender	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the event that Age Concern withdraw from the current service in April 2011 consideration could be given to publish Pre Qualifying Questionnaires (PQQ) for the provision of day services currently operated by Age Concern. • PQQ and tender would be costed at a set delivery price • Tender would also include expected outcomes evidence, links to personalisation and wider community involvement for service users referred to the service • Successful expressions of interest • Alternatively, another provider (e.g. Wishing Well) may come forward through the tendering stage and provide the service to some or all of the Day Centres. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No organisation express an interest • Organisation does not have experience of running socially based day services • Access to transport limited • Non Sustainable • Does not have a sound and robust business case • No statutory models for monitoring quality and safeguarding • Loss of volunteer support • The Organisation does not know the geographic area • Unknown 'quantity' in respect of national expressions of interest in the tender.

Option	Comment	Risks
4. Individual Day Centre leader Franchising under Age Concern brand. See Appendix 1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The current Centre Leader may wish to set up in their own business delivering the day care and could access support with Business Link to aid the growth of a local small business • There could be an opportunity to access the support of Age Concern for training, health and safety etc • The person may wish to take on a number of existing services from the current provision and increase the size of their business • The project may have to go out to tender for 2011 and onwards. • Cost projections are currently a 'best guess' based on existing usage which may not continue if there are no waiting lists for the service. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding streams not available to manage the initial set up costs • Isolated due to being sole trader • Service users not supported within the personalisation agenda • Access to transport limited • Non Sustainable • Does not have a sound and robust business case • No statutory models for monitoring quality and safeguarding • TUPE

Option	Comment	Risks
<p>5. To ask an outside organisation to 'bid' to provide the service.</p>	<p><u>This is the proposal from Wishing Well – To run 6 of the Day Centres.</u></p> <p>Introduction</p> <p>The stated central aim of the Wishing Well Project is: 'To improve the health, well-being and quality of life of the people living in Crewe through a holistic approach.'</p> <p>The five objectives that were identified to contribute to that aim in 1998 at the inception of the project were:</p> <p>To deliver a weekly programme of multi-activity sessions at different venues in Crewe (extended from the West End of Crewe only)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To improve the general health and wellbeing of Crewe residents ○ To improve and develop the personal skills of Crewe residents ○ To reduce the levels of family stress ○ To improve community relationships and community spirit of Crewe <p>Wishing Well changed its status 2 years ago and began trading as a social enterprise aiming to improve the health and wellbeing of the local people of Crewe and District through the provision of a range of participative activities and learning opportunities. Most of these activities have been identified and requested by the community themselves. It has grown into a thriving community support system providing a wide range of health related services and activities to local people and is highly valued by health and social care professionals working with patients and clients living in the area.</p> <p>In the past two years Wishing Well has successfully developed a 'healthy eating' catering service, set up and managed a community café in the local Health and Well</p>	

	<p>Being Centre and provided luncheon to older people attending weekly social events. We actively promote healthy eating offering workshops on nutrition, cookery and weight management and alongside this we offer opportunities for exercise ranging from seated exercise, dance, walking and bowls.</p> <p>Through our consultation and experience of working with the elders it has become clear that they are driven to learn with many of them taking part in our established, thriving programme of learning which covers the following topics: computer classes, genealogy, gardening, line dancing, English, maths, art, scrap booking, assertiveness and photography. This programme is free of charge and is changed each term to include suggestions from existing or new learners. These classes consist of mixed age groups and reflect our community and cultures.</p> <p>Wishing Well is interested in applying to take on the delivery of extra services for the elderly including what was known as day care services. Although the basic aim to provide a healthy meal and activities for participants will remain the same this project will be about change. We will start the whole process by consulting with current attendees to ask how they would like the service to be run. We will recruit volunteers from the local community to help support the running of the groups and also recruit volunteers from within the groups. We will consider the skills and aspirations of individuals rather than focusing on what they can't do or have difficulty with. We will encourage them to take part in training events and to join our Lifelong Learning scheme.</p> <p>The whole aim of Wishing Well is to improve health and well being and we find that being of use to others and to have opportunities to learn are two of the main components to a healthy attitude to life.</p> <p>Wishing Well will provide an advice and sign posting service so that the elders can decide which speakers/advisors they want in from other organizations to perhaps cover such topics as benefits, housing, carers etc and offer services to improve self esteem such as exercise, self care, art, computer classes, gardening, photography, knitting, sewing, singing and dancing.</p>	
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We will encourage members and assist them to control fund raising for trips out to the theatre/seaside/historical buildings etc this will help with organizational skills and motivation.

When members are too sick or are unable to attend sessions we will, on request, deliver meals to their homes thus providing contact for our members and reassurance for families.

Working in this way will ensure that rather than costs of running the project rising each year they will steadily reduce as the service becomes owned more by the community and group members.

More importantly it will give our elders a new lease of life in which they have more independence, control and lots of opportunities. They can offer help and support to others in their community as they share skills and expertise which in turn will enhance their well being and the well being of others.

Costings

income			Per week	
6 venues	20 people	£7.50 pp	£900	
outgoings			Per week	
Staff costs				
Manager/development officer	15 hours	X £ 12	180	
1 cook	24 hours	X £ 9	216	
1 cooks assistant	16 hours	X £ 7	112	

	1 activity organizer/session supervisor	30 hours	X £7.50	225	
	1 administrator	15 hours	X £8	120	
	supervision	5 hours	X £15	75	
			Sub total	928	
	Staff oncosts @ 25%			232	
			Total staff costs per week	1,160	
	Materials for act.			100	
	Office supplies			40	
	Other office costs, telephone, printer, computer			50	
	Vehicle hire			140	
	Venue costs			240	
	Kitchen hire			180	
	Costs of foods and refreshments			550	
	Promotional materials			65	

			Other weekly costs	1,365	
			Total costs per year of running service	128,775	Income per week x 51 weeks = 45,900
	Costs of training for staff and volunteers, certification costs, crb costs for vols and staff			1750	
	Setting up/operating costs				
	Insulated carriers, cooking vessels, utensils, storage containers, cleaning materials. Crockery, cutlery and other tableware			1600	
				1200	
				133,325	Income per week x 51 weeks = £45,900

Shortfall and amount asked for to continue to run and develop service				£87,425

This is the proposal from Audlem Parish Council to run the Audlem Day Centre as a 'stand alone' service.

AUDLEM DAY SERVICES DRAFT BUSINESS PLAN

DRAFT 3 - 19TH October 2010

Introduction

- 1 Voluntary service to older people in Audlem has a proud history of over 30 years, starting with a lunch club at Thornton House, expanding to meals of wheels under the WRVS, via a Tea Club into the current day service provision under the auspices of Age Concern Cheshire. Currently 13 volunteers support the services, many with long years of service.

- 2 Following Age Concern decision to close the service as being old fashioned and costly, the Parish Council, with the support of the Patient Participation Group of the GP practice and local campaigners established a sub committee with the purpose of ensuring the day services continuation, possibly under a locally run committee.

	<p>3 It has been agreed to develop a draft business plan and to hold a public meeting with all interested parties to look to establish a local Community Trust to continue to run the service, under contract with Cheshire East Council, into the future.</p> <p>4 At a meeting of the Parish Council Sub-Committee in September 2010, the following approach to the development of a business plan was endorsed. Further discussions with Cheshire East lead managers was agreed as was the need to seek a three year contract, in the first instance.</p> <p>Aims of the Service</p> <p>5 These are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To achieve sustainability of the service into the future ▪ To add value by maximising local community effort, skills and experience ▪ To enable participation in running the service by service users, carers and staff ▪ To promote independence, dignity and respect ▪ To provide more choice, control and individual approaches for older people ▪ To ensure that local needs and wishes drive the development of the service ▪ To be a responsive provider with Cheshire East Council ▪ To work closely with local GP Practice, Social Workers and Churches who refer people ▪ To promote the social inclusion, access and participation of older people in the community groups and clubs in the village via partnership working <p>Opportunities</p> <p>6 Running the service locally under a Community Trust with charitable status will also enable the following ambitions to be looked at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ To improved health and well being outcomes for older people and to further reduce social isolation 	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ To promote partnerships with older people, carers, staff, social care and health providers, Audlem Medical Practice, local churches ❑ To expand provision to another half day per week for 'tea club' ❑ To expand to provide personal care in partnership with an existing not-for-profit or private provider ❑ To utilise alternative venues in village to expand the number of places ❑ To provide similar support to other isolated and vulnerable groups in the village <p>Option Appraisal for Community Trust</p> <p>7 There are various options to consider for the formation of a local community group to run the service. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ a social enterprise which include staff, users and carers and local people ▪ a voluntary committee which could become a registered charity with nominated members from key partners including the Parish Council ▪ a service provided by the Parish Council via a co-opted committee ▪ a Community Trust with charitable status which includes staff, users and carers with representation from the Parish Council, local Churches etc <p>8 The Parish Council Sub-Committee meeting on 15th September 2010 favoured the Community Trust approach as with the successful model of Audlem Public Hall. It was agreed that these options would be put to a public meeting, to coincide with the publication of the Consultation Document from Cheshire East.</p> <p>Finances</p> <p>9 Information provided by Age Concern indicates a unit cost of £38.50 per day. It is clear that running the service locally could be done for significantly less than the current costs of £23,250 pa. [Made up of £18,000 contribution from Cheshire East and £5,250 client contributions at £7.50 per day].</p>	
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- 10 Discussions with Cheshire East indicate that the Council is looking to increase client charges across the board and to a suggested £10 per day specifically for Community Day Services. Also that all voluntary organisations have been written to indicating at least a 25% reduction in their grant income from April 2011.
- 11 The following draft costs show how a local Community Trust could continue to run the service with a contract contribution of 33% less than the current payment to Age Concern Cheshire.

DRAFT Costs

Item	Costs pa	Income
Leader @ 20 hrs per week @ £7.50 per hour + oncosts	8000	
Admin/Finance support	2000	
Relief cover for holiday and sickness	2500	
Cook hours	2000	
Rent	1500	
Transport contribution	1000	
Food costs	1000	
Sundries	200	
Staff/Volunteer Training	1000	
Insurance	200	
Service user contribution @ £10.00 per day @ 15 people @ 48 weeks		7,400
Cheshire East Contract		12,100

(current Age Concern Contract @ £18,,000)		
Totals:	19,400	19,400

Cost/Benefit Analysis of a local Community Trust

- 12 Overall costs to Cheshire East Council will be 33% less than current payment to Age Concern Cheshire
- 13 Added value will accrue via maximising community effort and involvement
- 14 Local flexibility and responsiveness to changing needs will be guaranteed as opposed to distant and autocratic decision making
- 15 Local volunteering will be enhanced with additional skills and experience including additional social care, finance and organisational expertise available for co-option onto the proposed Community Trust
- 16 The service will become sustainable into the future in partnership with Cheshire East Council and will fit with the Council preventive and localisation strategy

Next Steps

October 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To develop this business case in discussion with Cheshire East
November 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To attend Cheshire East's Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 12th November 2010 to support the proposal to continue to fund community day services for older people via locally run voluntary bodies To respond to the proposed Consultation Document on

		<p>options for the future delivery of day care and the Council's Preventive Strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To hold a public meeting with all interested parties to discuss the way forward including options to constitute a new local community body to run the service • To confirm with Cheshire East, at Director and Elected Member level, and with our MP, the willingness and commitment by Audlem to continue to run the service locally in a cost effective way • To continue to publicise and lobby with regard to our proposals 		
	December 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To report back to Parish Council and Audlem Medical Practice Patient Participation Group • To establish the constitution of the new community body with appropriate articles of association, charitable status and possibly limited company status. • To achieve approved provider status with Cheshire East Council by completion of Pre Qualification Questionnaire (PQQ) to enable a bid for running the service to be made. 		
	January 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To submit tender for running the service • To ensure a smooth transition to the proposed local management arrangements with full participation with services users, carers, staff and volunteers 		
	April 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Day Service continues into the future run by a local community body 		

Business Plan



Age Well Cheshire Centres

Day Care As a Social Enterprise Within Age Concern Cheshire

Age Concern Cheshire
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Registered Charity No: 1091608

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1. Summary

Age Concern Cheshire (ACC) is an independent charity serving Older People in the county of Cheshire. With over 20 years experience, ACC seeks to promote the well being of all Older People in Cheshire and to make later life a fulfilling experience. In conjunction with Cheshire West & Chester and Cheshire East Local Authorities, ACC has provided Day Care to clients with Low to Moderate needs under contract.

In line with Personalisation, ACC is currently undertaking a review of its Day Care Services. The process is intended to find a way to secure and preserve the organisation during a period of massive cuts whilst protecting jobs and making Age Concern Cheshire competitively strong in the new and ever changing environment. Any solutions presented to both Cheshire West & Chester and Cheshire East Local Authorities would have to demonstrate strategic fit and value.

Age Concern Cheshire's Day Care Service, in its current format, would need to be redesigned to survive in a Personalisation future that gives spending power to the client. This requires any services provided by our organisation to compete with existing and new organisations in the providers market, show best value for money whilst maintaining quality and ensure full cost recovery with long standing sustainability.

2. Background

In November 2009 Age Concern Cheshire undertook a comprehensive organisation review. This included all services currently provided; particularly those funded by the local authorities and primary care trusts to assess their long term viability, in a predicted era of severe cuts in local authority funding

It was viewed that there is a need for ACC to be pro-active and try to preserve the current core funding in a difficult financial environment, whilst meeting commissioner's criteria that any services funded by them would have to meet their strategic objectives and offer value.

ACC's focus going forward needed to be inline with its own aims and objectives. This was determined best achieved by aiming to meet the rising demand from individuals in need of support to maintain their independent life style thereby achieving more outcomes with the funding.

Through the process of reviewing the organisation, it became clear there was a requirement to concentrate on two main categories of ACC's SLAs

- Day Care and Supporting You focusing on Health & Wellbeing including an expanded Supporting You Service
- Advocacy, Information & Advice, Direct Payments, Support Brokerage, Voice of Older People.

The overall effect of the changes that are proposed would mean that ACC will be able to take more clients through the Supporting You service, which has potential to expand beyond into an all adult service and a wider range of clients. This model means that we will then be in a

position to use the funding provided more flexibly thereby offering a more client focused service, based on their individual needs and preferences.

Given the anticipation that both Local Authorities would cut funding for Day Care provision, the proposal to move away from traditional buildings based day care will achieve the service changes whilst reducing the cost base to the organisation.

A review of ACC's Day Care, providing numbers attending, vacancies, costings, etc has been conducted.

Client Assessment Reviews are in progress and will be concluded in October 2010.

3. Competitors

With the implementation of Personalisation and Self Directed Support, there is now an ever increasing developing market and willing individuals, organisations, groups and consortiums looking to provide an alternative to traditional day care services. As both Local Authorities continue their changes to care provision this market will continue to grow and expand not just locally but nationally as well. A small sample selection of local competitors has been selected for comparison.

- **Crossroads**

Crossroads Care Cheshire East offers a wide range of high quality support services for carers and the people they look after. Their service aims to allow carers some normality and the chance to have a meaningful break away from their caring responsibilities in the knowledge that their loved one will be well looked after. " *To give carers time to be themselves*"

A representative of Crossroads has made initial contact with ACC with a view to looking to explore the possibility and opportunity of running the day service when we cease to do so.

- **Local Community Groups**

In some rural villages, parish councils have expressed interest in maintaining the traditional day services. ACC is supporting this in Malpas, Tarporley, Helsby, Kelsall, Audlem, Tattenhall, Audlem and the Blacon area of Chester.

- **Residential Care Homes**

A number of residential establishments within the Cheshire area already provide a day care service and are, therefore, an existing competitor. However, in the current changing climate it is highly likely that other residential establishments will seek to supplement their income by offering a day care service in the hope of surviving commercially as a whole.

- **Housing Associations**

As with residential care homes, local housing associations are also exploring the possibilities of additional income through offering day care services. Some have made

contact with ACC but in the hope of providing day care services as a joint venture going forward.

4. SWOT Analysis

From the days of early discussions about the impact of personalisation it was recognised that day services were an ideal opportunity. If ACC is to pursue this model :

Strengths

- Resources in place
- Already have proven success in providing this service
- Have evidence of demand
- Have evidence of clients willingness to pay
- Age Concern name
- Move away from local authority funding
- Have great experience in providing the service

Weaknesses

- Changes already in progress within ACC
- Need to still start from 'scratch' in terms of structure, etc
- May be seen as opportunistic

Opportunities

- Getting in ahead of others
- Partners have already made approaches to link together

Threats

- Funding being cut
- ACC's reputation is being damaged through negative press coverage
- Need to be popular of Councillor's

ACC are believed to be one of the few Age Concerns still offering Day Care in this traditional way and there is evidence to show that Local Authorities in other areas are moving away from the provision of this type of Day Care and commissioning of services in expensive buildings and are closing facilities. For Cheshire this is clearly substantiated in the communications with both Local Authorities in Cheshire.

5. Objectives

-
- Seek to provide Day Care or something similar through a different structure that is cost effective and sustainable
- Provide day activities in line with the results from ACC's Client Assessment Reviews

6. Proposal

A way forward would be for ACC to seek to provide a day care service as a social enterprise. This would allow us to continue to provide a service that it is becoming clear is wanted, at a

competitive price, with future independent financial sustainability, and have the advantage of turning a currently publicly negative day care redesign venture into a positive one.

Initial Client Assessment Reviews indicate that clients wish to continue accessing our day care services, primarily in order to maintain contact with friends. The assessments have revealed that clients want the opportunity to get out of the house and meet up with friends. As transport is provided to the existing centres they would prefer them to carry on as they fear there would not be transport to other social activities. The provision of lunch seems to be not very important. All have listed the activities as enjoyable and many have identified other forms of activity they would enjoy. Families and carers have said the longer day is appreciated as it provides an opportunity for a break.

Clients and families have indicated that they would be willing to pay a non-subsidised rate for the service. There is considerable variation to the rate stated and care should be taken setting the charge too high.

Continuing to run a day care service as a social enterprise would, in the long-term, allow ACC to be free of reliance on Local Authority funding in this area.

Originally ACC investigated using a franchise model that was believed would relieve some of the costs involved and gain income from those signing up to be Day Activities Leaders. However, it has become apparent that ACC taking on employer responsibilities would be more cost effective.

Much can be learnt from our experience

Best	Worst
Dedicated staff producing caring atmosphere	Occasional examples of older people patronised esp. by volunteers. Staff unaware of the range of help available to clients via the organisation or unwilling to use time accessing that help. Unwillingness to change, introduce new activities
High levels of volunteer support but predominantly in rural areas	Very poor premises – City, Regency, Coronation Rd
Commitment from some villages	Purpose and outcomes become very confused
Freshly cooked lunches in some centres but reliance on frozen or bought in meals at others	Very heavy management, supervision and admin. structure leading to a high cost service
Transport provided	Lack of consistency in the service
	Small numbers
Staff in centres where lunches are not cooked on the premises have more contact time with clients and treat each one as an individual	Lack of client choice – same meal, same activity for all

Moving forward it would be vital to avoid replicating the current structure day services model.

The structure of the Age Well Cheshire service would not follow previous models used. The knowledge, skills and experience of a Leader working under Age Well Cheshire would be distinctly different to take account of the structural changes in how the service would be delivered to the public. We envisage a service with a much lighter touch supervision structure based on increasing the responsibility levels, and therefore, the capability levels of Leaders.

We envisage a different feel to the centres with clients much more in control of the pattern of activity and offered more choice.

Age Well Cheshire Leaders

- Agree to abide by the guidelines set out by ACC to ensure brand and reputation protection.
- Utilise ACC volunteers in line with ACC policies and procedures.
- Take responsibility for all associated risk assessment and risk management.
- Provide activities in line with member's wishes.
- Ensure membership criteria of users are implemented and upheld.
- Ensure all members have regular access to ACC services which may be of benefit.
- Ensure financial viability of their sessions
- Implement payment in advance processes
- Include any clients, already using current ACC day care services, that wish to transfer
- Ensure adequate staffing at all times
- Organise transport to and from premises (additional reasonable charge allowed)
- Achieve set targets
- Introduce set closure periods during holiday periods (Christmas; Summer)

Age Concern Cheshire would seek to

- Employ Age Well Cheshire Advisor to provide on-going support to those Day Care Centres that have to date expressed an interest in running the service should they continue with this process.
- Employ suitably qualified Age Well Cheshire Leaders to run sessions in the Cheshire area
- Provide volunteering opportunities through Age Well Cheshire sessions.
- Set the membership criteria.
- Set code of conduct for members and employees.
- Work with partner organisations to provide best customer benefits.
- Provide access to transportation service at additional reasonable charge (subject to current LA transportation reviews in progress)
- Provide access to other ACC services on a regular basis.
- Pay bonus based on targets achieved
- Provide technology that would permit digital inclusion where appropriate for members

7. Financial Plan

Each centre would operate as a single profit centre with the Leader responsible for achieving occupancy, client satisfaction and profit targets. The centres would need to be larger (approx 25 people registered per day) See attached .

Membership Fee £12.50 per session to be paid in advance for a defined period

This would cover attending a session, specified activities available and light refreshments. Payment for sessions would need to be made in advance to guarantee members place. Session fee would not include transportation, lunch time meal or unspecified activities. These will all be available to purchase separately and at the choice of members

Number of Centres

The current client numbers would indicate that there is a potential market of 242 clients from our current centres, post assessment. The distribution is imperfect to run larger centres of 25 people, with rural areas being the most difficult, and if current clients wish to transfer then they may have to travel longer distances.

The attached spreadsheet shows a potential positive balance of £2892 p.a. per unit but this does not include the costs of the Age Well Adviser, a post we are committed to providing to supporting any successful community initiative around day services following Cathy Reynolds interventions.

To cover the salary costs of the Age Well Adviser from this initiative we would need to run 12 centres. Exact locations would be determined but target areas would be Crewe x 2, Congleton x1, Ellesmere Port x 3, Chester x 2, Northwich x 2, Chester Rural x 1, Frodsham/Helsby/ x 1, with potential in Holmes Chapel/Sandbach

Activities

Leaders will be required to lead a daily session of physical activity appropriate to the clients but with a focus on postural stability.

They will also be required to lead sessions which offer mental stimulation and challenge to the clients with a focus on memory skills.

Digital inclusion

This must become a feature of the centres. Just over 50% of over 55's have access to the internet and so are unable to benefit from its availability. Each centre will be equipped with a PC and internet link (mobile if necessary) The Leader will ensure clients are enabled to take advantage of the facility to access information, govt web sites etc and make purchase (under strict guidelines)

Transportation

Note – There are new initiatives in both local authority areas around the provision of transport. ACC is involved in these initiatives, as a major referring partner, not as a provider.

However, ACC had made it clear that should these initiatives not succeed ACC will investigate the viability of setting up a financially sustainable transport option for Age Well members to use. This would require separate payment from the members to cover costs. Any ACC vehicles would be utilised generally in the community to generate further income and maximise use. Any research into this area would seek to assess the possibility of vehicles being donated via previous and new donors. This would, however, still leave funding for driver and maintenance costs to find and cover.

Lunchtime Meal

This option will be made available for all members to purchase at a separate rate. It is possible to provide a range of choice and a hot meal from external providers. The facility to provide their own food for consumption on the session premises will be made available subject to building rules implemented by their owners.

Unspecified Activities

Activities in this category refer to those provided by outsourced suppliers, for example tai chi session; trip to the theatre. Charge will be kept to a minimum but dependent on costs involved that is outside of the Age Well Leaders control. It is not proposed to continue the current practise of 'comfort funds'

Half day sessions

Half day sessions could be offered, with or without lunch at the clients choice.

Volunteers

Whilst welcome the model does not depend on volunteers for its success

8. Operational Plan

Marketing Objectives

- To position ourselves as a County market leader in this field
- To further develop partnerships that will position us high on the advertising list of places to go to achieve this outcome
- Develop recommendation business
- Expansion of the service

Staffing

- Age Well Leaders to run each session in line with new structure to be implemented.
- Age Well Advisor to provide support to community run sessions and monitor ACC Age Well Leaders and their sessions.
- Suitable percentage of Social Enterprise Managers time to oversee and develop Age Well service in line with objectives.

9.Risks

Failure to identify suitable premises

Drifting from the plan to satisfy demand from a small area

Plan not well received – seen as predatory

Charge not acceptable

Age Concern Cheshire
August 2010

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Summary and Recommendations:

1. The Wishing Well have an established reputation as a provider of services to vulnerable adults and the wider community. They have wide experience in the provision of services to the elderly and of recruiting community volunteers to assist in the provision of these services. (Page 7).

They offer the delivery of six Day Centre services, excluding Audlem but including Manor Court, Nantwich. The cost involved is £87,425 a saving of £21,556 on the present Age Concern costs, for 2010/11. This would still present a saving if the 7.1% general funding cut from the Comprehensive Spending Review is factored in as an average figure. (It should be noted at this stage that this figure is an assumption only – social care contracts will be subject to rigorous analysis once the full implications of the CSR has been factored into individual budget lines.)

Wishing Well is skilled at including the wider community in group activities and is noted for its capacity building skills which serve to integrate service users with a wide range of activities.

2. Following a meeting of Audlem Parish Council, attended by Cheshire East Council officers, a draft business plan has been submitted. (Page 10).

With the support of officers the Audlem Parish Council see the delivery of the Audlem Day Centre as a 'stand alone' service which can have far wider links into community engagement. Their proposal links to the development of a Community Trust 'umbrella charity' model which can develop further voluntary activity within the community.

The cost of this service is currently put at £12,100 to Cheshire East Council, a cost saving of around 33% on the existing contract. (Page 14).

3. The Age Concern Cheshire proposal (Page 17 – Appendix 1) – envisages the Day Care services as stand alone social enterprises, operating without cost to Cheshire East Council, but with a cost to individuals of £12.50 per session, not including lunch or transport.

The proposal would be a 'franchise' style operation with Age Concern Cheshire branding. This would connect to the benefits (outlined at page 23) of the link to Age Concern that such an operation would have. This link will provide a 'brand' identity with an existing reputation.

- Members are asked to give consideration to this range of proposals. While both option 1 and option 2 would be complimentary, there are potential costs of £99,525 in total.
- The 2010/11 budget for the Day Centre provision is £134,528, so a saving of £36,003 would be achieved.
- With the Age Concern proposal – 3; Although this could apply to all or some of the existing Day Centres – and it should be pointed out that at this stage only Audlem has expressed interest in becoming a ‘stand alone’ service – the potential net saving to Cheshire East Council would be £122, 428, based on 2010/11 figures. Service users would be asked to pay £12.50 per session, Audlem’s session cost would be £10.00 and Wishing Well propose keeping the existing £7.50.
- Each proposal has merit, and appears well thought out. Members are asked to consider which choice would be appropriate for the delivery of an effective Day Centre service.

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