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# Environment and Prosperity Scrutiny Committee

# Agenda

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| **Date:** | **Tuesday, 8th February, 2011** |
| **Time:** | **10.00 am** |
| **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/Whipping Declarations**

   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**

   A total period of 15 minutes is allocated for members of the public to make a statement(s) on any matter that falls within the remit 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

4. **Street Lighting Project**

   To receive a progress report on the street lighting project.

For any apologies or requests for further information, or to give notice of a question to be asked by a member of the public

**Contact**: Katie Smith
**Tel:** 01270 686465
**E-Mail:** katie.smith@cheshireeast.gov.uk

5. **Interim Planning Policy on Release of Housing Land** (Pages 1 - 26)

To give consideration to the draft Interim Planning Policy on Release of Housing Land

6. **Interim Planning Statement on Affordable Housing** (Pages 27 - 62)

To give consideration to the Interim Planning Statement on Affordable Housing.

7. **Local Transport Plan - Strategy and Draft Implementation Plan** (Pages 63 - 262)

To give consideration to the changes to the final LTP Strategy and to comment on the draft LTP implantation plan.

8. **Transformation of Highways Services** (Pages 263 - 268)

To note the progress made on the transformation of Highway Services

9. **Highway Routine Maintenance Operational Policies** (Pages 269 - 284)

To give consideration to the proposed Highway Routine Maintenance Operational Policies.

10. **Pavement Cafe Policy** (Pages 285 - 298)

To give consideration to the proposed Pavement Café Policy

11. **Forward Plan** (Pages 299 - 300)

To give consideration to the extracts of the forward plan which fall within the remit of the Committee.

12. **Work Programme** (Pages 301 - 308)

To give consideration to the work programme

Agenda Item 5

# CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

## REPORT TO: ENVIRONMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

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**Date of Meeting:** 8 February 2011
**Report of:** Strategic Director - Places
**Subject/Title:** Interim Planning Policy on Release of Housing Land
**Portfolio Holder:** Cllrs David Brown/Jamie Macrae

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### 1.0 Report Summary

1.1 At its meeting on 18 October 2010, Cabinet considered the requirement to maintain a five year supply of housing land and approved the draft Interim Planning Policy on the Release of Housing Land to manage the release of additional land as an interim measure pending the adoption of the Local Development Framework Core Strategy. This report considers the responses that have been received to the consultation that took place on the draft policy and proposes revisions to the draft Interim Planning Policy in the light of the comments made.

1.2 The report has been considered by Strategic Planning Board on 26 January and their recommendations have been included in the report.

### 2.0 Decision Requested

2.1 That Environment and Scrutiny Committee recommends:

1. approval of the housing requirement figure of 1150 net additional dwellings to be delivered annually, to be used pending the adoption of the Local Development Framework Core Strategy;

2. adoption of the Interim Planning Policy on the Release of Housing Land as set out in Appendix 2 and agrees that it be used in the determination of planning applications.

### 3.0 Reasons for Recommendations

3.1 To ensure that the Council has appropriate planning policies in place to guide the release of additional housing land to ensure the availability of five years supply of deliverable housing land in a manner that will not prejudice the preparation of the Local Development Framework.

### 3.0 Wards Affected

4.1 All wards

### 5.0 Local Ward Members

5.1 All

**6.0 Policy Implications including – Carbon Reduction**

6.1 The proposed interim policy will seek to focus new development in the principal town of Crewe where there are a good range of jobs, shops and services and a high standard of accessibility by means of travel other than the car. The policy also encourages the redevelopment of previously developed land within settlements for mixed uses including housing. New housing will be required to be energy efficient.

**- Health**

6.2 New housing developments will be required to include affordable housing which will be available for people in housing need, providing them with improved healthier living conditions. Sites will also be required to provide open space.

**7.0 Financial Implications (Authorised by the Borough Treasurer)**

7.1 The implementation of the policy will not require any additional staffing or financial resources.

7.2 The policy will require developers to contribute to strategic and local highway improvements, affordable housing, open space and community infrastructure required to serve the development through legal agreements.

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

8.1 Planning Policy 3 Housing sets out a requirement for local planning authorities to maintain a five year supply of deliverable housing land. The inability of the Council to demonstrate a five year supply of housing land carries a high risk that land owners/developers will submit speculative planning applications for their development on sites outside settlement boundaries. Such applications would have to be determined through the planning process in the usual way. In the case of refusal of planning permission, appeals may be upheld on the grounds that there is not a 5 years supply of housing land.

8.2 The Town and Country Planning Act 1990 requires that, in dealing with a planning application, the authority shall have regard to the provisions of the development plan and to any other material consideration. Although there may be arguments over the status of the Interim Planning Policy it will be promoted as a material consideration in determining planning applications for new housing development. It will provide a clear policy position for the local planning authority and planning inspectors considering appeals on applications for housing development outside Local Plan settlement boundaries.

8.3 Widespread consultation has been carried out on the draft policy with town and parish councils, stakeholders, the local community and the Housing Market Partnership in accordance with the Statement of Community Involvement. Although it has not been through the full process of an LDF document, the consultation process and its adoption following amendments due to that process will give weight to the policy and it will be a matter for both Members and, on appeal, the Planning

Inspectorate or the Secretary of State to judge that balance in considering individual applications.

## 9.0 Risk Management

9.1 As the Council is unable to demonstrate that it has a five year land supply of deliverable housing sites, there is high risk of planning appeals for housing development being upheld on greenfield sites outside settlement boundaries which may prejudice the preparation of the Local Development Framework and affect the Council's ability to objectively determine the most appropriate strategy and sites for future housing development.

## 10.0 Background and Options

10.1 The Government's planning policies for housing are set out in Planning Policy Statement 3 Housing (PPS3), the latest edition of which was published in June 2010. The PPS has to be taken into account in the preparation of the Council's Local Development Framework and in the determination of planning applications which involve new housing development.

10.2 Paragraph 10 of PPS3 sets out the housing policy objectives that provide the context for planning for housing through development plans and planning decisions. It states that the specific outcomes that the planning system should deliver are:

- High quality housing that is well designed and built to a high standard.
- A mix of housing both market and affordable, particularly in terms of tenure and price, to support a wide variety of households in all areas, both urban and rural.
- A sufficient quantity of housing taking into account need and demand and seeking to improve choice.
- Housing developments in suitable locations, which offer a good range of community facilities and with good access to jobs, key services and infrastructure.
- A flexible and responsive supply of land – managed in a way that makes efficient and effective use of land, including the re-use of previously – developed land, where appropriate.

10.3 Clearly one of the Government's priorities is for the planning system to deliver an adequate supply of suitable land available for housing development. In terms of the longer term delivery of housing, through its Local Development Framework Core Strategy and Site Allocations documents, the Council has to identify broad locations and specific sites that will enable the continuous delivery of sufficient housing for at least a fifteen year period.

10.4 The overall level of housing that the Council has to deliver over that fifteen year period has been set out in the Regional Spatial Strategy. As Members will be aware, the Government has written to Local Authorities setting out its intention to revoke Regional Spatial Strategies on 6th July this year. However following the judgement on the judicial review for CALA Homes in November 2010, Regional Spatial Strategies will remain as part of the development plan until formally revoked through the Localism Bill. Once Regional Spatial Strategies have been

revoked when the Localism Bill is enacted, references in the Interim Planning Policy Statement to the RSS will no longer apply. As a consequence of this, the annual housing supply figure for Cheshire East as set out in RSS will continue to be relevant. This figure will be reviewed a part of the preparation of the Local Development Framework. The Government has said that local planning authorities 'should continue to collect and use reliable information to justify their housing supply policies and defend them during the LDF examination process. They should do this in line with current policy in PPS3'[1].

10.5 The Council is at a relatively early stage in the production of its Core Strategy which will identify the level of new housing development that should take place in the Borough up to 2030. In accordance with Government advice, the level of new housing development upon which the Council decides must be based on robust evidence and be defensible at public examination.

10.6 Stakeholder consultation on the Issues and Strategic Options for the Core Strategy took place during November and December 2010. One of the key options consulted on was the proposed level of housing growth for the Borough These options took into account the findings from the Council's Strategic Housing Market Area Assessment and the projections for population and employment growth.

10.7 In the shorter term, PPS3 requires the Council to ensure that a continuous five years supply of deliverable housing sites is maintained. To be considered deliverable, sites should:

- be available now
- offer a suitable location for development which would contribute to the creation of sustainable, mixed communities
- have a reasonable prospect of delivering houses within five years.

10.8 Generally to be considered deliverable within five years, sites should have the benefit of planning permission or should be allocated in a Local Plan or should be specific, unallocated brownfield sites within settlement boundaries that have the potential to make a significant contribution to housing land supply in the five year period.

**The Annual Housing Requirement**

10.9 The accepted methodology for determining the total five year supply requirement has been based on figures from the Regional Spatial Strategy. The Regional Spatial Strategy housing requirement figure for Cheshire East is an average of 1150 net new dwellings per annum and this reflects the average level of house building in the Borough that was being delivered in the ten years up to April 2010.

10.10 **It is recommended therefore that until the future housing requirement has been agreed through the Local Development Framework Core Strategy, the housing requirement for Cheshire East should be set at 1150 net additional dwellings per annum.**

**Five Year Housing Land Supply**

[1] Letter from DCLG to all Chief Planning Officers dated 6/7/10

10.11 The Local Development Framework Annual Monitoring 2010 report calculated the Council's five year supply of housing land at 1 April 2010 as 4.58 years. This figure was calculated following a full review of potential sites carried out in parallel with the preparation of a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment for the whole of Cheshire East.

10.12 The failure to be able to demonstrate a five year supply of available housing land has implications for the Council. PPS3 states that "where local planning authorities cannot demonstrate an up to date five year supply of deliverable sites ..... they should consider favourably planning applications for housing, having regard to the policies in this PPS".

10.13 The inability of the Council to demonstrate a five year supply of housing land carries a high risk that land owners/developers will submit speculative planning applications for their development outside settlement boundaries. Such applications would have to be determined through the planning process in the usual way. In the case of refusal of planning permission, appeals may be upheld on the grounds that there is not a 5 years housing land supply. Nevertheless whilst there is less than a 5 year supply of deliverable housing sites, there is a high degree of risk that planning permission may be granted on appeal for housing on greenfield sites outside settlement boundaries in conflict with the policies of the three Local Plans. Such decisions would also prejudice the preparation of the Local Development Framework and affect the Council's ability to objectively determine the most appropriate strategy and sites for future housing development.

**Report of Consultation on Interim Policy to Manage the Release of Housing Land**

10.14 Given the current housing supply position and the timescale for the adoption of the Council's Core Strategy and Site Allocations documents, Cabinet agreed at its meeting on 18 October 2010 to consult on a draft Interim Planning Policy on the Release of Housing Land and to use the draft interim policy in the determination of planning applications for sites which do not form part of its identified supply of deliverable housing sites pending the adoption of the Local Development Framework Core Strategy.

10.15 Consultation on the draft Interim Planning Policy was carried out between 8 November and 17 December 2010. Notification of the consultation was sent to all town and parish councils, statutory consultees, organisations, businesses and individuals registered on the LDF database. A press release was issued and publicity given on the Council's website. The document was available for inspection at the Council offices and libraries and on the Council's website.

10.16 Comments were received from 70 respondents, many setting out detailed consideration of the wording of the policy. In total over 277 separate comments were made. 61 respondents supported the policy in principle as a means of ensuring that the Council maintains a 5 year supply of housing land and is able to properly plan for the sustainable development of its

settlements through the LDF. Appendix 1 sets out a summary of the points raised and recommendations for revisions to the Interim Planning Policy to address issues of concern.

10.17 A full report of consultation setting out full details of the comments received can be viewed on www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/ldf

10.18 The revised Interim Planning Policy is set out in Appendix 2.

10.19 The adopted Interim Planning Policy will be used in the determination of planning applications and appeals. The Policy will remain in place until additional development sites are allocated through the LDF Core Strategy. The need for and effectiveness of the Policy will be kept under review as part of the Local Development Framework Annual Monitoring Report.

**11.0 Access to Information**

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

Name: Rosemary Kidd
Designation: Spatial Planning Manager
Tel No: 01270 685921
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**APPENDIX 1**

**Interim Planning Policy on Release of Housing Land**
**Responses to comments received during consultation**

Abbreviations
LDF – Local Development Framework
SHLAA – Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment
SHMA – Strategic Housing Market Assessment

The revised wording of the Interim Policy and its explanatory text is shown in ***bold italics.*** Text in **bold** is unchanged from the draft.

| **Comment** | **Response and recommendation** |
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| Contrary to PPS3 guidance; a number of paragraphs are cited in representations in particular 32-35 relating to the assessment of the appropriate level of housing; 36 – 39 providing homes in suitable locations; 60-61, managing flexible and responsive supplies; 62-67 Implementation strategy; 68-74 determining planning applications.<br><br>Contrary to PPS12 in particular para 6.4 that states that local planning authorities should not produce planning guidance other than SPD where the guidance is intended to be used in decision making or the coordination of development. This could be construed as wishing to circumvent the provisions for consultation and sustainability appraisal which SPDs have. | The underlying concept behind the guidance in PPS3 is that Local Authorities should plan, monitor and manage the supply of housing. Local Development Framework should provide sufficient homes in suitable locations, of a mix of types and tenures to meet the needs of the local area. A five years supply of deliverable sites should be maintained.<br><br>The delivery of housing development should be monitored to ensure that there is an adequate supply. Appropriate measures should be taken to manage the supply. If there is not an adequate supply, planning applications for housing are to be viewed favourably.<br><br>The Council has commenced the preparation of its Local Development Framework which will develop a strategy for the planned location of new housing development until 2030 in accordance with PPS3 para 38. Through its monitoring of the supply of deliverable sites as advised in para 60 of PPS3, it is evident that there will not be a 5 years supply of deliverable sites in the period up until the Core Strategy is adopted. The Council has therefore developed the Interim Policy on the Release of Housing Land as a strategy to manage the supply in the meantime, in accordance with advice in para 52, 57 and 64 of PPS3. Should the Council fail to take any action to manage the supply of deliverable sites to maintain a 5 years supply, it would apply the advice in para 71 to view planning applications for residential development favourably..<br><br>The Council is satisfied that the Interim Policy accords with the advice set out in PPS3 and reflects the “plan, monitor, manage” approach that is advocated.<br><br>**Recommendation 1: No change** |
| Contrary to PPS12 in particular para 6.4 which states that local planning authorities should not produce planning guidance other than SPD where the guidance is intended to be used in decision making or the | The Interim Policy on the Release of Housing Land is to be adopted as Council policy not planning guidance. It has been subject to consultation, sustainability appraisal and Habitats Regulation Assessment.<br><br>**Recommendation 2: No change** |

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| coordination of development. This could be construed as wishing to circumvent the provisions for consultation and sustainability appraisal which SPDs have. | |
| The purpose and status of the Interim Policy should be made clearer | Paragraph 2.21 of the Background to the Interim Policy explains the weight to be given to the Interim Policy. It is proposed that the status of the Policy should be set out more clearly in the introduction.<br>**Recommendation 3:**<br>**Revise para 1.4 of the Introduction to the Interim Policy to read:**<br>***"The Interim Policy has been prepared in accordance with guidance in PPS3 to 'plan, monitor and manage' the supply of housing to ensure that there is a five years supply of deliverable sites. The Interim Policy has been the subject of consultation, sustainability appraisal and Habitats Regulations Assessment. It was adopted by Cheshire East Council on [date] to manage the release of additional land for residential development through the consideration of planning applications to maintain a five years supply as an interim measure pending the adoption of the Local Development Framework Core Strategy. The policy has been developed in a manner so that it would not prejudice the consideration of alternative options for the development strategy of the Local Development Framework. The Interim Policy is adopted Council Policy and will be used in the consideration of planning applications following its adoption as a 'material consideration".***<br>**Recommendation *4: Delete paragraphs 1.7 to 1.9 and 2.20 to 2.21 of the contextual material to the Interim Policy referring to the consultation on the draft policy.*** |
| Should include reference to RSS Policies L4, DP5, DP6.<br>The RSS housing provision figures for the three constituent authorities should be retained. | Since the approval of the draft Interim Policy, there has been a judicial review by Cala Homes, as a result of which RSS continues to be part of the development plan until the legislation is passed that revokes it. With the enactment of the Localism Bill, references to RSS policies within the Interim Policy will no longer be applicable.<br>It would therefore be appropriate to include a reference to the RSS Policy L4 that sets out the Regional Housing Provision as the context for the housing requirement. The Council has been advised by the Government Office that it should plan on the basis of the combined figures of the three constituent authorities.<br>Policies DP5 and DP6 relate to the accessibility of development and linking areas of economic opportunity to areas of greatest need. It is considered that they are not significant enough to warrant reference in the context to the policy.<br>**Recommendation 5: Revise paragraph 2.7 sentences 2** |

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| | **and 3 to read:**<br><br>**"*The Government has indicated that it intends to revoke Regional Spatial Strategies, however, following a successful legal challenge, they continue to be part of the development plan until the legislation has been passed. Policy L4 of the North West of England Plan, Regional Strategy to 2010 requires local authorities to monitor and manage the availability of land to achieve the housing provision set out in Table 7.1 of the policy. The total for the Cheshire East constituent authorities is 1150 net additional dwellings per annum. This figure* reflects the level of house building in the Borough that was delivered in the ten years up to April 2010."**<br><br>**Recommendation 6: Delete paragraphs 2.8 – 2.11**<br><br>**Recommendation 7: Revise paragraph 2.12 (now para 2.8) to read:**<br><br>**"The Regional Spatial Strategy housing provision figure of 1150 net additional houses per annum will continue to be the housing requirement for Cheshire East until it is reviewed through the Local Development Framework."** |
| Argues that a higher annual housing target should be set based on evidence in the SHMA | The review of the housing requirement using evidence from projections and the SHMA will be carried out as part of the preparation of the LDF Core Strategy. The RSS housing requirement will continue to be used until then.<br><br>**Recommendation 8: No change** |
| Queries the calculations of housing land supply;<br><br>Need to ensure that assessment of sites is robust and that sites are deliverable | The assessment of sites has been carried out in consultation with the Housing Market Partnership and has been carried out in a robust manner in accordance with a methodology agreed with the Partnership. The calculations have been published. It is acknowledged that the current housing market and difficulties in securing finance may be affecting developers' ability to commence the development of sites, however, the sites are available for development and should be included in the supply figures.<br><br>**Recommendation 9: No change** |
| Queries whether the policy will deliver sufficient land | It is estimated that the policy could enable the release of sites capable of accommodating approximately 1700 dwellings taking the supply to about 6 years. The effectiveness of the policy will be kept under review as part of the LDF Annual Monitoring Report.<br><br>**Recommendation 10: No change** |
| Important that the sites released do not prejudice the preparation of the LDF | Paragraph 2.16 of the context to the Interim Policy explains how the development of Crewe is fundamental to the strategy for the LDF.<br><br>**Recommendation 11: No change** |
| Seeks release of land in Macclesfield and all Key Service Centres;<br><br>Argues that housing should be | The purpose of introducing the policy is to secure the managed release of sufficient land for housing development in the short term pending the development of a strategy to |

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| delivered where there is most demand in the north of the Borough in towns other than Crewe;<br>A number of Greenfield sites on the edges of towns have been proposed | guide the development and growth of the Principal Towns and Key Service Centres through the LDF.<br>It is recognised that there are a number of areas within towns of the Borough that may have potential for to support the regeneration of the town. These sites will be considered and determined using policies contained within the existing Local Plans.<br>The LDF will give full consideration to the need for housing development in all parts of the Borough and the suitability and sustainability of potential sites.<br>Whilst the Interim Policy properly gives full endorsement to developments around Crewe, it does not explicitly prohibit development elsewhere. These can be still be considered according to the specific merits of each proposal.<br>**Recommendation 12: No change** |
| Development should be permitted in other towns where it would contribute to delivery of significant infrastructure to the benefit of the community eg at Middlewich | An Infrastructure Plan is being prepared to support the delivery of the LDF and the introduction of the Community Infrastructure Levy. Full consideration will be given through the preparation of the LDF to the amount and location of development required in other towns to support the delivery on local infrastructure.<br>It is recognised that there are a number of areas within towns of the Borough that may have potential for to support the regeneration of the town. These sites will be considered and determined using policies contained within the existing Local Plans.<br>**Recommendation 13: No change** |
| The Interim Policy should not be based on the Crewe Vision;<br>The policy could create an oversupply of housing in Crewe;<br>Policy would lead to sites coming forward in an uncoordinated manner. | Crewe is a Principal Town and the Council has agreed that it should be the focus for significant future growth to develop its role as a sub-regional centre. The Crewe Vision has been drawn up to provide an overarching strategy to guide the development of plans and strategies (including the LDF) to deliver this ambition.<br>It will be for developers to demonstrate as part of their planning applications that any sites released under this policy can be delivered within 5 years.<br>The Policy will enable the local authority to manage the release of a limited number of sites around the edge of Crewe as well as redevelopment sites in other towns. Without the policy, the Council would be faced with considerable pressure from developers to release sites on the edge of towns and villages throughout the Borough in an uncoordinated manner.<br>**Recommendation 14: No change** |
| Urban extensions to Crewe need to be masterplanned. The release of smaller sites should not jeopardise the comprehensive planning of larger urban extensions. | A number of potential urban extensions to Crewe have been proposed by developers as long term growth areas. Options for the future directions of growth of Crewe up to 2030 will be considered as part of the LDF.<br>The release of sites under the Interim Policy will have to |

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| | consider how the site could form part of a possible urban extension in the area.<br>**Recommendation 15: No change** |
| The release of Greenfield sites on the edge of Crewe is not supported ahead of the development of available brownfield sites.<br>Green Belt sites should not be released | The SHLAA has identified and assessed the potential of brownfield sites within settlements for housing development. Those that are deliverable in the next 5 years have been included in the 5 year land supply figures. The results demonstrate that taking these brownfield sites into account the supply of housing land is less than 5 years and there is therefore a need to identify further greenfield sites to maintain an adequate supply.<br>The Interim Policy does not propose the release of any sites in the Green Belt.<br>**Recommendation 16: No change** |
| Should define "in and around Crewe" | The policy clearly states that sites will be permitted "adjacent to the settlement boundary of Crewe, subject to 4 provisos." Para 3.2 confirms this and that the village of Shavington is excluded.<br>**Recommendation 17: No change** |
| The Interim Policy should refer to the Greater Crewe area as envisaged in the Crewe Vision, including Shavington | A number of potential sites around Shavington have been included in the SHLAA. Shavington has not been included in the Interim Policy to enable consideration to be given to the future role of this settlement and the assessment of the suitability of potential sites through the LDF.<br>**Recommendation 18: No change** |
| Sites in the Green Gap should not be excluded | The Interim Policy reflects saved policies in the Crewe and Nantwich Local Plan which includes a policy to safeguard the Green Gap between Crewe and Nantwich. It is considered that sufficient housing sites can be made available outside the Green Gap to meet the short term need for additional housing land.<br>**Recommendation 19: No change** |
| Should exclude land reserved for "operational need of hospital" | It is understood the Leighton Hospital is reviewing its future development needs. Until their plans are known, it would be appropriate to continue to safeguard this area of land.<br>**Recommendation 20: Add an additional bullet point to section 1 of the Interim Policy to read:**<br>• **"is not within an area safeguarded for the future operational need of Leighton Hospital** " |
| Should explain how infrastructure requirements will be delivered and how contributions will be assessed and secured towards "strategic highway network" | Developers will be required to mitigate for the potential impacts of their proposals through contributions secured under S106 agreements in accordance with Circular 5/2005. The contributions will be subject to negotiation with the developer. They will be required to submit a Traffic Impact Assessment as part their planning applications.<br>**Recommendation 21: No change** |

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| Concerned that the release of sites on the edge of Crewe will lead to congestion and will impact on access to the hospital and other community infrastructure | Developers will be required to mitigate for the potential impacts of their proposals through contributions secured under S106 agreements. They will be required to submit a Traffic Impact Assessment as part their planning applications.<br>**Recommendation 22: No change** |
| Mixed use developments should not require housing developer to build out employment floor space. | Where housing development is allowed under this policy to enable sites to come forward for development for mixed uses, including employment uses, a legal agreement will be sought to ensure that the housing development makes a contribution to the delivery of other uses on the site. The requirement on each proposal will vary and will be subject to negotiation with developers.<br>**Recommendation 23: No change** |
| Allocated employment areas at Basford East and West should be included so that housing development can help to deliver these sites | These significant areas of land extending to 150ha are flagship sites of sub-regional importance are allocated for employment development. Any proposals for housing development on these sites need to be considered through existing policies or the LDF as part of the overall strategy for Crewe and should demonstrate how they will support the wider delivery of employment development on these strategic sites. The focus of the Interim policy is to look at areas not currently identified for development and it is criteria based rather than being site specific. As such it would not be appropriate to include detailed proposals for individual sites.<br>**Recommendation 24: No change** |
| Should indicate which town centres the policy refers to | Town centres are defined in the policies in the three Local Plans.<br>**Recommendation 25: No change** |
| Should include an explanation of the term “regeneration area”, does this differ to the general term “brownfield land”<br>It is unlikely that additional dwellings will be realised through this source. | Paras 3.5 – 3.6 of the justification to the policy explain that “there are a number of areas within town centres and older employment areas throughout the towns of the Borough that may have the potential for regeneration.” Local Plan policies usually safeguard these areas for town centre and employment uses. The Interim Policy will enable consideration to be given to securing the redevelopment of these sites by including an element of housing as part of a mixed use development.<br>“Brownfield land” refers to any site that have been previously developed. Where there are no policy safeguards on the future use of these sites, they may be brought forward for housing development under the current of the Local Plans’ policies.<br>**Recommendation 26: No change** |
| Developers should be required to demonstrate as part of their planning application that the development is | When considering development proposals brought forward under the Interim Policy, the Council will wish to ensure that the site is capable of being developed within 5 years. This |

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| deliverable in 5 years;<br>The size of sites released under the Interim Policy should be limited eg to 100 houses | will depend on the developers' ability to build and market the houses on the site. It is considered that it would be unduly restrictive to set a maximum size for sites to be released.<br>**Recommendation 27: Add the following after the first sentence in para 3.3**<br>***"Developers will be required to demonstrate as part of their planning application that the development is deliverable within 5 years. Conditions may be attached to planning permissions to grant consent for a limited period and require that sites to be started within a prescribed period."*** |
| Site should be "substantially" completed in 5 years. | It is acknowledged that it is difficult to be precise about the rate of development of a site and this will depend on housing market conditions. However, the introduction of the word "substantially" introduces a degree of uncertainty into the policy that will be difficult to define.<br>**Recommendation 28: No change** |
| The affordable housing requirement should be reduced from 35% to 30% in line with the Interim Planning Statement on Affordable Housing.<br>Some respondents propose a reduction to 25% | Greenfield sites outside settlement boundaries that are to released for housing development under the Interim Planning Policy will be released as exceptions to the adopted Local Plan policy. In normal circumstances, these sites would be released until they were allocated in the LDF, in 2013 - 2014.<br>In view of the exceptional circumstances around the release of these sites, and the consequential saving in the developers' time and expenses in seeking the allocation of these sites, the Council is seeking to ensure that sites released under the Interim Policy deliver a high level of affordable housing that is needed under the current market conditions.<br>The Economic Viability testing of potential development sites demonstrated that under normal market conditions greenfield sites should be able to deliver 35% affordable housing.<br>**Recommendation 29: No change** |
| The affordable housing requirement should be expressed as a target and not a minimum | There are circumstances where a single target may have advantages over a minimum figure. However the Interim Policy is designed to release land ahead of the normal development plan process and has a particular emphasis on promoting affordability. In these circumstances it is appropriate to be explicitly promotional in encouraging additional affordable homes. As such references to a minimum should remain.<br>**Recommendation 30: No change** |
| The viability caveat should relate to greenfield sites as well as brownfield | This caveat recognises that brownfield sites are often subject to exceptional development costs which may affect the viability of proposals.<br>The Interim Planning Statement on Affordable Housing sets out the procedures for assessing the viability of schemes. |

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| | **Recommendation 31: No change** |
| Should not require Code for Sustainable Homes Level 4 | Government targets will require all new housing to achieve a Code rating of level 3 by 2010 and level 4 by 2013. The Planning and Energy Act 2008 and the Planning for Climate Change supplement to Planning Policy Statement 1 provide the powers and guidance to local planning authorities in England to impose reasonable requirements for development in their area to comply with energy efficiency standards that exceed the energy requirements of the Buildings Regulations.<br><br>The Council wishes to ensure that housing built on any sites released as exceptions under this policy is well designed and energy efficient. Most of the houses built under the Interim Policy will be constructed from 2013 onwards and should therefore be designed to comply with the Level 4 requirements. Developers are fully aware of the requirements under the Code for Sustainable Homes and have had time to prepare for its introduction and to include any costs arising from it in their valuations of sites to be developed in the next five years.<br><br>**Recommendation 32: No change** |
| Should not require Building for Life Silver standard | Policy BE2 of the Crewe and Nantwich Local Plan sets out design principles that should be taken into account with the aim of ensuring that new development is well designed.<br><br>"Building For Life" is an accepted national standard for assessing the quality of design of new residential development. Achieving the Silver standard or higher is the measure of a well designed development.<br><br>**Recommendation 33: No change** |
| It could be construed that the requirements set out in the second and third set of bullet points in the Interim Policy could be applied to all housing development permitted whilst the Interim Policy is in operation and not just the exceptional sites released under the first part of the policy. | The Interim Policy would not be used in the consideration of sites that could be approved under the saved Local Plan policies. However, for the sake of clarity, the following revisions are proposed.<br><br>**Recommendation 34: revise the Interim Policy to read:**<br><br>**Housing development on greenfield sites *permitted under this policy* will be required to deliver:**<br><br>**Recommendation 35: revise the Interim Policy to read:**<br><br>**Subject to the assessment of the economic viability of the scheme, housing development on mixed use redevelopment sites *permitted under this policy* will be expected to deliver:** |
| Should explain how policy will be monitored and how it will be reviewed | Agreed<br><br>**Recommendation 36: Add the following at the end of para 2.13 (now para 2.9)**<br><br>***"The effectiveness of the policy will be kept under review as part of the LDF Annual Monitoring Report."*** |

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| The sustainability appraisal only compares the impact of implementing the policy against doing nothing. It should consider other options | Although the guidance states that "the consideration of reasonable alternatives is a legal requirement under the SEA Directive", guidance also states that "only reasonable, realistic and relevant options need to be put forward".<br><br>The only reasonable and realistic option developed was that in the Interim Policy, as this would allow the 5 year supply to be met without compromising the future development of the LDF. It is considered that the sustainability appraisal was carried out in an appropriate manner.<br><br>**Recommendation 37: No change** |
| Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) | The HRA Screening Report identified that a full HRA was required. Subject to consultation, the HRA has identified the need for mitigation measures to be included in the policy to require that the developer ensures that the location and design of new development will not negatively impact upon a designated or candidate European Site.<br><br>**Recommendation 38: Delete final sentence of para 1.6 and replace with**<br><br>***"The HRA has identified the need for mitigation measures to be included in the policy to require that the developer ensures that the location and design of new development will not negatively impact upon a designated or candidate European Site."***<br><br>**Recommendation 39: Amend section in the Interim Policy relating to Greenfield sites to read:**<br><br>**"Housing development *and its infrastructure* on greenfield sites will be required *to demonstrate that they will not impact on the designated or candidate European Sites (Special Areas of Conservation; Special Protection Areas; Ramsar Sites and Offshore Marine Sites) protected under the European Habitats Directives 92/43/EEC or Conservation (Natural Habitats) Regulations 2007 and* to deliver:"** |
| Delivering a good choice of quality housing | It will be important for any proposed sites released under this interim policy to deliver a good choice of quality residential development and for sites to support the vision and objectives for Crewe.<br><br>**Recommendation 40: Add the following to the bullet points under section (1)**<br><br>• ***Delivers development that improves the supply, choice and quality of housing in Crewe; and***<br><br>• ***Supports the delivery of the Council's overall vision and objectives for Crewe*** |

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# Cheshire East

## Interim Planning Policy on the Release of Housing Land







February 2011

Cheshire East Council

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# 1 Introduction

**1.1** This document sets out the Council's policy approach to maintaining a five years supply of deliverable housing land to be used as an interim measure pending the adoption of the Local Development Framework Core Strategy.

**1.2** Planning Policy Statement 3 'Housing' requires local planning authorities to monitor and manage the release of housing land to ensure that there is a five years supply of deliverable sites. This includes sites with planning permission, sites allocated for residential development in the Local Plan and identified redevelopment sites within settlement boundaries.

**1.3** Until the Local Development Framework is adopted, the development plan policies for Cheshire East relevant to the consideration of proposals for residential development are the saved policies of the Crewe and Nantwich, Congleton and Macclesfield Local Plans. The revised timetable for the adoption of the Core Strategy indicates a date for adoption of late 2013.

**1.4** ***The Interim Policy has been prepared in accordance with guidance in PPS3 to 'plan, monitor and manage' the supply of housing to ensure that there is a five years supply of deliverable sites. The Interim Policy has been the subject of consultation, Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulations Assessment. It was adopted by Cheshire East Council on [date] to manage the release of additional land for residential development through the consideration of planning applications to maintain a five years supply as an interim measure pending the adoption of the Local Development Framework Core Strategy. The policy has been developed in a manner so that it would not prejudice the consideration of alternative options for the development strategy of the Local Development Framework. The Interim Policy is adopted Council Policy and will be used in the consideration of planning applications following its adoption as a 'material consideration'.***

## Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulations

**1.5** The Council has prepared a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) to test and refine the policies and proposals in this document. Sustainability Appraisal is a systematic process, which is carried out during the production of planning documents to ensure that policies and proposals contribute towards relevant environmental, social and economic objectives.

**1.6** In addition amendments made to the UK Conservation (Habitats and etc) Regulations 2006 require a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) under Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitat Directive 92/43/EEC for all land use plans likely to have a significant effect on a European site. European sites consist of Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Offshore Marine Sites (OMS).***The HRA has identified the need for mitigation measures to be included in the policy to require the developer ensures that the location and design of new development will not negatively impact upon a designated or candidate European Site.***

## 2 Background

**2.1** Planning Policy Statement 3 (PPS3) was published in 2006 (and amended in 2010) and sets out the national planning policy framework for delivering the Government's housing objectives.

**2.2** Paragraph 10 of PPS3 sets out the housing policy objectives that provide the context for planning for housing through development plans and planning decisions. It states that the specific outcomes that the planning system should deliver are:

- High quality housing that is well-designed and built to a high standard.
- A mix of housing, both market and affordable, particularly in terms of tenure and price, to support a wide variety of households in all areas, both urban and rural.
- A sufficient quantity of housing taking into account need and demand and seeking to improve choice.
- Housing developments in suitable locations, which offer a good range of community facilities and with good access to jobs, key services and infrastructure.
- A flexible, responsive supply of land – managed in a way that makes efficient and effective use of land, including re-use of previously-developed land, where appropriate.

**2.3** Paragraph 60 explains the steps local authorities are required to take to maintain a flexible, responsive supply of land. The supply of deliverable sites should be monitored on an annual basis through the Annual Monitoring Report. If a five year deliverable supply is not likely to be available, consideration should then be given to the arrangements necessary to maintain an adequate supply of deliverable sites.

**2.4** In circumstances where the Local Planning Authority does not manage the supply of housing land and cannot demonstrate an up-to-date five years supply of deliverable sites, paragraph 71 requires that they should consider favourably planning applications for housing, having regard to the policies in PPS3 including the considerations in paragraph 69.

**2.5** If the local authority cannot demonstrate that it has a deliverable five years supply, this means that the Local Planning Authority should give favourable consideration to planning applications for housing development on sites outside of settlement boundaries. Providing that developers can demonstrate that they meet the requirements of paragraph 69 of PPS3 (which relate to the quality of development, mix of housing in the scheme, environmental sustainability and meeting housing need without undermining the spatial vision for the area), it is will be difficult for a Local Planning Authority to refuse such applications.

**2.6** This leaves the Local Planning Authority having to deal with planning applications without reference to a planned approach to the development of the communities of the Borough. PPS3 states that the authority cannot argue that the release of any particular site is premature and should be considered through the Local Development Framework process. Examples from other local authorities demonstrate that in considering appeals in these circumstances, inspectors have frequently allowed developments, because of the lack of a five year housing land supply. There have been cases of such development being allowed in Green Belt locations.

# 2 Background

## The Annual Housing Requirement

**2.7** The accepted methodology for determining the total five year supply requirement has been based on figures from the Regional Spatial Strategy. ***The Government has indicated that it intends to revoke Regional Spatial Strategies, however, following a successful legal challenge, they continue to be part of the development plan until the legislation has been passed. Policy L4 of the North West of England Plan, Regional Strategy to 2010 requires local authorities to monitor and manage the availability of land to achieve the housing provision set out in Table 7.1 of the policy. The total for the Cheshire East constituent authorities is 1150 net additional dwellings per annum. This figure reflects the level of house building in the Borough that was delivered in the ten years up to April 2010.***

**2.8** ***The Regional Spatial Strategy housing provision figure of*** **1150 net additional houses per annum will continue to be the housing requirement for Cheshire East until it is reviewed through the Local Development Framework.**

## Managing the Five Year Housing Land Supply

**2.9** The Local Development Framework Annual Monitoring 2009 report calculated the Council's five year supply of housing land at 1 April 2009 as 5.14 years, based on the RSS figure. Since then a full review of potential sites has been carried out in parallel with the preparation of a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment for the whole of Cheshire East. The latest assessment indicates a supply of 4.58 years at 1 April 2010. ***The effectiveness of the Interim Housing Policy will be kept under review as part of the Local Development Framework Annual Monitoring Report.***

**2.10** The failure to be able to demonstrate a five year supply of available housing land has implications for the Council. PPS3 states that "where local planning authorities cannot demonstrate an up to date five year supply of deliverable sites . . . they should consider favourably planning applications for housing, having regard to the policies in this PPS".

**2.11** The inability of the Council to demonstrate a five year supply of housing land carries a high risk that land owners/developers will submit speculative planning applications for their development outside settlement boundaries. Such applications would have to be determined through the planning process in the usual way. In the case of refusal of planning permission, appeals may be upheld on the grounds that there is not a 5 years housing land supply. Nevertheless whilst there is less than a 5 year supply of deliverable housing sites, there is a high degree of risk that planning permission may be granted on appeal for housing on greenfield sites outside settlement boundaries in conflict with the policies of the three Local Plans. Such decisions would also prejudice the preparation of the Local Development Framework and affect the Council's ability to objectively determine the most appropriate strategy and sites for future housing development.

## Interim Policy to Manage the Release of Housing Land

**2.12** The Interim Planning Policy on the Release of Housing Land has been drawn up in the context of the work that has been undertaken on developing the Crewe Vision to promote the growth and prosperity of Crewe as a town of sub-regional importance. The development

of Crewe will be fundamental to the development strategy for the Borough. Development in Crewe will support sustainability objectives as Crewe has a good range of jobs, shops and services and a high standard of accessibility by means of travel other than the car.

**2.13** The development proposals envisaged for Crewe will require significant investment in the strategic highway network around Crewe, in particular the Crewe Green Link Road and the Barthomley Link Road, to improve accessibility to Junction 16 of the M6. In addition, improvements to the local highway network in Crewe and public transport and cycling provision will be required to facilitate new housing development on the outskirts of Crewe. The Council is currently considering options for securing funding of the necessary strategic and local transport improvements. Once the funding arrangements have been approved by the Council, any new housing developments that impact on the highway network in and around Crewe will be required to make contributions towards both strategic and local transport improvements

**2.14** The Interim Planning Policy will facilitate the release of a limited number of housing sites on the edge of Crewe outside the green gap. Developers of these sites will have to demonstrate that the site can be delivered within five years of the grant of permission and as there are little or no redevelopment costs associated with these greenfield sites, they will be required to deliver high quality, well designed developments with a minimum of 35% of the housing being affordable in accordance with the Interim Planning Statement on Affordable Housing as well as contributions to improve the strategic and local transport networks in accordance with the forthcoming Transport Contributions Levy. In addition, open space and/or community benefits will be required to meet the needs of future residents in accordance with the saved Local Plan policies.

**2.15** The Interim Planning Policy will also enable housing to be brought forward as part of mixed use redevelopment schemes within settlements to support the development of the site for employment, town centres and or other uses, in accordance with the relevant Local Plan policies. Subject to economic viability assessment, a minimum of 30% of the housing should be affordable in accordance with the Interim Planning Statement on Affordable Housing.

3 Interim Planning Policy on the Release of Housing Land

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**Interim Planning Policy on the Release of Housing Land**

When it is demonstrated through the Annual Monitoring Report that there is not a five year supply of housing land as defined by PPS3, subject to other saved policies of the relevant Local Plan being satisfied, residential development will be permitted in the following locations:

1. Adjacent to the settlement boundary of Crewe provided that the site:

- is well related to the built framework of the settlement;
- is not within the Green Gap;
- is not within an allocated employment area;
- ***is not within an area safeguarded for the operational needs of Leighton Hospital;***
- is capable of being fully developed within five years of the granting of outline planning permission;
- ***delivers development that improves the supply, choice and quality of housing in Crewe; and***
- ***supports the delivery of the Council's overall vision and objectives for Crewe.***

2. As part of mixed developments in town centres and regeneration areas to support the provision of employment, town centre and community uses.

Housing developments ***and its infrastructure*** on greenfield sites ***permitted under this policy*** will be required ***to demonstrate that they will not impact on the designated or candidate European Sites (Special Areas of Conservation; Special Protection Areas; Ramsar Sites and Offshore Marine Sites) protected under the European Habitats Directives 92/43/EEC or Conservation (Natural Habitats) Regulations 2007 and to*** deliver:

- a minimum of 35% affordable housing in accordance with the Interim Planning Statement on Affordable Housing;
- open space and / or community facilities in accordance with the relevant saved Local Plan policy
- improvements to the strategic and local highway network, public transport, and pedestrian and cycle routes; and
- a high quality designed development to Code for Sustainable Homes Level 4 or higher and Building for Life Silver standard or higher.

Subject to the assessment of the economic viability of the scheme, housing development on mixed use redevelopment sites ***permitted under this policy*** will be expected to deliver:

- a minimum of 30% affordable housing in accordance with the Interim Planning Statement on Affordable Housing;
- employment, town centre and / or community uses within the site; and

# 3 Interim Planning Policy on the Release of Housing Land

- a high quality design to Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3 or higher and Building for Life Silver standard.

## Justification

**3.1** PPS3 states that the Council is required to demonstrate that there is a five year supply of deliverable housing land. Pending the adoption of the Cheshire East Local Development Framework Core Strategy it is likely that there will be insufficient deliverable housing land within the settlement boundaries identified in the three Local Plans of the former local authorities. The Interim Planning Policy on the Release of Housing Land has been introduced as an interim measure to facilitate the release of additional sites on the edge of Crewe and to encourage the redevelopment of sites within town centres and elsewhere for mixed uses including housing development.

**3.2** Crewe is a principal town and will continue to be a focus for future housing development in the Borough as envisaged in the Crewe Vision. Although the overall amount and direction for growth has yet to be determined, it is considered that there is scope for sufficient housing development to be brought forward adjacent to the Local Plan settlement boundary of Crewe (not including the village of Shavington) to meet the short term need for housing land in the Borough in a way that would not prejudice the preparation of the Local Development Framework.

**3.3** Sites that are approved under this interim policy should be capable of being built out within five years of the grant of outline planning permission under average market conditions. ***Developers will be required to demonstrate as part of their planning application that the development is deliverable within 5 years. Conditions may be attached to planning permissions to grant consent for a limited period and require that sites to be started within a prescribed period.*** For sites that will require a longer period for development, permission will only be granted for the first phase of the site.

**3.4** The development of any greenfield sites adjacent to the settlement boundaries will be considered as exceptional development and will be required to be of a high design standard and deliver 35% of the development as affordable housing in accordance with the Interim Affordable Housing Policy. They will also be required to contribute towards the improvements to the strategic and local transport networks and public transport in and around Crewe.

**3.5** It is recognised that there are a number of areas within town centres and older employment areas throughout the towns of the Borough that may have the potential for regeneration. This policy aims to encourage mixed use schemes to come forward which include housing development to support the redevelopment of the site for a range of employment and other uses.

**3.6** Many older areas are designated as conservation areas and include listed buildings. Any scheme should seek to retain and convert existing buildings in these areas. Particular care will be needed with the design of new developments to ensure that they are appropriate to the character of the area.

Cheshire East Council

# CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

## REPORT TO: ENVIRONMENT AND PROSPERITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

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**Date of Meeting:** 8 February 2011
**Report of:** Strategic Director - Places
**Subject/Title:** Interim Planning Statement on Affordable Housing
**Portfolio Holder:** Cllrs David Brown/Jamie Macrae

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### 1.0 Report Summary

1.1 The Cabinet approved the draft Interim Planning Statement on Affordable Housing on 20th September 2010. This report considers the responses that have been received to the consultation that took place and proposes revisions to the draft Statement in the light of comments made.

1.2 The report has been considered by Strategic Planning Board on 26 January and their recommendations have been included in the report.

### 2.0 Decision Requested

2.1 That Environment and Prosperity Scrutiny Committee recommends the adoption of the Interim Planning Statement on Affordable Housing as set out in Appendix 2 and agrees that it be used in the determination of planning applications.

### 3.0 Reasons for Recommendations

3.1 To ensure that the Council has up to date planning guidance on affordable housing pending the adoption of a new Council wide policy in the Local Development Framework.

### 4.0 Wards Affected

4.1 All wards

### 5.0 Local Ward Members

5.1 All members

### 6.0 Policy Implications including – Carbon Reduction – Health

6.1 The Interim Planning Statement on Affordable Housing provides guidance on the delivery of policies on affordable housing. New housing is required to achieve high levels of energy efficiency and provide healthy living conditions.

### 7.0 Financial Implications (Authorised by the Borough Treasurer)

7.1 There are no operational financial implications of this statement as any change in officer time in negotiating schemes and S106 agreements will be managed within existing budgets.

7.2 Paragraph 2.13 of the Interim Planning Statement on Affordable Housing recognises that the requirements will result in a cost to the developer. This in turn will impact on the value of any land that the Council sells for housing.

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

8.1 The Town and Country Planning Act requires that in dealing with a planning application the authority shall have regard to the provisions of the development plan and all other material considerations. It will be argued that as this policy has gone through the consultation procedure, and following adoption, it should be given substantial weight by members and inspectors in deciding individual applications and appeals.

**9.0 Risk Management**

9.1 The 2010 Strategic Housing Market Assessment has demonstrated the continuing high level of demand for affordable housing throughout the Borough that warrants an increase in the target for the amount of affordable housing to be provided on development sites. Without the introduction of the Interim Housing Policy on Affordable Housing, a lower level of affordable housing would be provided.

**10.0 Background and Options**

10.1 The Council has inherited three different planning policies for affordable housing in the Local Plans of the predecessor district authorities. The Crewe and Nantwich and Congleton Borough Local Plans both seek a minimum target of 30% affordable housing on allocated and windfall sites. The Macclesfield Borough Local Plan requires a minimum of 25%. Differences exist in the threshold at which the affordable housing requirement is applied. The Macclesfield Local Plan does not contain a rural exceptions policy whereas the other two Local Plans do, albeit with slightly different wording

10.2 The three current Local Plans recognise that there may be instances when the level of affordable housing provided on individual sites might be influenced by economic viability issues. However, over the past 12 to 18 months, there has been an increasing number of occasions when developers have sought to provide a significantly lower level of affordable housing on sites due to viability issues which have been brought into sharper focus due to the down turn in the UK housing market. There is a lack of a clear framework for evaluating viability issues for individual planning applications.

10.3 An Interim Planning Statement on Affordable Housing was produced therefore to address these issues. The Planning Statement is intended to provide updated guidance on affordable housing provision, with particular reference to the determination of planning applications where there is an affordable housing requirement and to ensure consistency of approach in negotiating the

provision of affordable housing. The Interim Planning Statement on Affordable Housing also addresses the increasing number of issues surrounding development economics and the viability of providing affordable housing.

10.4 Members will recall that at the Cabinet meeting on 20th September 2010 it was agreed that, subject to the endorsement of the document by the Strategic Planning Board, a draft Interim Planning Statement on Affordable Housing was approved for consultation purposes, and agreed that it be treated as a material consideration in the determination of planning applications pending the adoption of the finalised document in such a format as may be appropriate following the consultation process.

10.5 The document was subsequently endorsed by the Strategic Planning Board at its meeting on 6th October 2010 and was subject to public consultation between 8th November and 17th December 2010. Notification of the consultation was sent to all town and parish councils, statutory consultees, organisations, businesses and individuals registered on the LDF database. A press release was issued and publicity given on the Council's website. The document was made available for inspection at the Council offices and libraries and on the Council's website.

10.6 During the consultation period 233 representations were received from 39 respondents. A full report of consultation setting out full details of the comments received can be viewed on www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/ldf

10.7 Appendix 1 contains a summary of the consultation responses and the Council's comments to them with recommendations for revisions to the Interim Planning Statement, where appropriate. It is also proposed to amend the document to refer to the Regional Spatial Strategy for the North West which has now been reinstated as part of the Development Plan and other minor typographical errors. Once Regional Spatial Strategies have been revoked as part of the Localism Bill, references contained in the Interim Planning Policy Statement on the Release of Housing Land will no longer apply and will be removed.

10.8 A copy of the Interim Planning Statement on Affordable Housing incorporating these amendments is contained in Appendix 2.

10.9 The revised Interim Planning Statement on Affordable Housing will be used in the determination of planning applications and appeals. The Policy will remain in force until such time as new affordable housing policies are in place through the Local Development Framework Core Strategy and Site Allocations and Policies Documents. The effectiveness of the Policy will be kept under review as part of the Local Development Framework Annual Monitoring Report.

## 11.0 Access to Information

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

Name: Richard House

Designation: Local Development Framework Manager
Tel No: 01270 686612
Email: richard.house@cheshireeast.gov.uk

**APPENDIX 1**

**Interim Planning Statement on Affordable Housing**
**Responses to comments received during consultation**

| COMMENT | RESPONSE AND RECOMMENDATION |
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| A number of respondents have argued that the Council is endeavouring to introduce targets for affordable and low cost housing through the IPS whereas they should be included in the Local Development Framework. Paragraph 6.1 of PPS12 states that SPDs should not be prepared to avoid the need for examination. The requirement for low cost market housing is a new policy to Crewe and Nantwich and Macclesfield and Macclesfield Local Plan requires 25% affordable housing. | Whilst the establishment of an affordable housing policy for Cheshire East will be undertaken as part of the Local Development Framework, the Core Strategy is unlikely to be adopted until the end of 2013. It is important, in the light of new evidence of affordable housing need across the Borough which has emerged in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment, that interim policy is put in place as soon as possible to provide a consistent approach to achieving affordable housing through the planning process.<br>**Recommendation 1: No Change** |
| The targets for affordable housing have not been fully tested for their impact on viability and practicality of housing development as required by PPS 3 and PPS 12. | As part of the work carried out on the Strategic Housing Market Assessment, a robust assessment of the viability of affordable housing targets was undertaken. The assessment indicated that a 35% target was a viable policy option. The viability assessment was agreed by the Housing Market Partnership. The interim policy statement seeks a 30% target only which is considered should generally have no impact upon the viability of development schemes.<br>**Recommendation 2: No Change** |
| The expression of the target of 30% affordable housing as a target implies that the Council may seek a higher proportion of affordable housing on a particular scheme and that the burden of demonstrating why this is not possible will be placed on developers. The Council should therefore state that the affordable housing requirement will be 30% subject to viability and other considerations. | The targets for affordable housing in the three existing adopted local plans are expressed differently; Congleton as a minimum, Crewe and Nantwich as a maximum and Macclesfield unqualified. In order to achieve consistency and certainty for developers it would preferable that the target in the IPS should be expressed as a minimum target of 30%.<br>**Recommendation 3: No Change** |
| The contribution to affordable housing on all sites of three or more dwellings or 0.2 acres in size in settlements of less than 3,000 population is unviable. | The need for affordable housing in our smaller rural communities is significant and all opportunities to provide affordable housing should be utilised. The interim policy statement provides for flexibility in individual cases where it can be satisfactorily demonstrated that viability is an issue. |

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| | **Recommendation 4: No Change** |
| The Council cannot specify the size, type, tenure and price of market housing. This would be contrary to PPS3. The requirement for 25% low cost market housing is therefore unacceptable. | The Strategic Housing Market assessment provides evidence that not only is there a substantial need for affordable homes but that there is a need for smaller market housing to meet the needs of first time buyers across the Borough . it is reasonable therefore for the interim policy to endeavour to secure this across the Borough and not solely in the former Congleton Borough where such a policy has been successfully operated for a number of years.<br><br>**Recommendation 5: No Change** |
| There is no basis in policy or viability to require the Code for Sustainable Homes standards to be applied to affordable homes if there is no grant available. The Government has cancelled the proposed requirement for the Homes and Communities Agency for affordable dwellings to be built to Level 4 of these standards. | In the light of the Government's decision to cancel the proposed move to Level 4 of the Code for Sustainable Homes in respect of the Homes and Communities Agency funding regime, it would be unduly onerous for the Council to require this standard. It is recommended therefore that Level 3 should be minimum requirement although we would encourage Level 4 wherever possible.<br><br>**Recommendation 6: Revise Para 4.9 to read "*affordable homes….. should achieve at least Level 3 of the Code for Sustainable Homes (2007) and will be expected to achieve at least Level 4 by 2013.*"** |
| The requirement for the affordable units in a development to be provided not later than the sale or let of 50% of the open market housing is unreasonable because the sale of market houses helps to finance the cost of the affordable units and because this would preclude the 'pepper potting' of the affordable units throughout the development which the Council requires. | It is accepted that the requirement for all affordable units to be provided prior to 50% of the open market housing being completed can act against 'pepper potting' of affordable homes throughout a scheme. It is would be appropriate therefore for the document to be amended to require all affordable units to be provided prior to 80 % of open market housing in schemes with a high degree of 'pepper potting'.<br><br>**Recommendation 7: Revise paras 4.10 and 5.3 to refer to all affordable units to be provided prior to 80 % of open market housing in schemes with a high degree of 'pepper potting'**<br><br>**Add the following at the end of paras 4.10**<br><br>***"However, in schemes that provide for a phased delivery and a high degree of 'pepper potting' of affordable homes, the maximum proportion of open market homes that may be completed before the provision of all affordable units may be*** |

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| | ***increased to 80%"***<br>**Revise para 5.3 to read**<br>***"the Council will expect that the provision of affordable housing element will be phased in accordance with Para 4.10 of this Statement".***<br>**Delete "available and ready for occupation before 50% of the market housing is sold**". |
| The requirement for affordable housing to remain so in perpetuity is unacceptable to lenders at present and represents a significant obstacle to delivery of affordable housing. | The requirement for affordable housing to remain so in perpetuity is enshrined in the adopted local plan policies for the three predecessor authorities and should remain the baseline position. The document should however refer to occasions where the discount in Discounted Housing for sale may be purchased and the subsidy to be recycled. This should only be allowed at the discretion of the Council.<br>**Recommendation 8: Add the following at the end of para 2.6 to refer to the possibility of the discount to be purchased and the subsidy to be recycled but only in exceptional circumstances and at the discretion of the Council.**<br>**"*At the discretion of the Council and in exceptional circumstances there may be occasions when it would be appropriate to allow for the discount*"** |
| The Homes and Communities Agency has no mechanism for entering into partnership with non Registered Social Landlords. | Agreed<br>**Recommendation 9: Amend Paras 2.3 and 2.13 to delete reference to bodies other than RSL's entering into partnerships with the Homes and Communities Agency.** |
| The document should refer to key worker eligibility for affordable housing | Agreed<br>**Recommendation 10: Add the following to the end of para 2.9.**<br>***"In addition an applicant may be eligible if he/she is a key worker and contributes to the local community."*** |
| Rural exception schemes should accord with the Council's strategic priorities | Agreed<br>**Recommendation 11: Add the following as the penultimate sentence in para 3.10:**<br>**"In addition the provision needs to meet the strategic priorities of the Council in relation to the development of affordable** |

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| | **housing in rural areas. These will be contained in the Housing Strategy for Cheshire East which is due to be published in spring 2011".** |
| All rural exception sites should be in sustainable locations. | Agreed, rural exceptions sites should not be developed in isolated locations, but should be located close to villages.<br>**Recommendation 12: Revise para 4.1 to clarify this:**<br>**"All affordable housing should be located on sites *which contribute to the creation of mixed and sustainable urban and rural communities*"** |
| Improvements to the section on New Build Homebuy are proposed to ensure that it better reflects current Government legislation | **Recommendation 13: Revise paragraph 2.4 as follows**<br>……Additional shares can be purchased which will enable a resident to increase their equity share in the property ***and in many cases buy the final share and own the whole home. However,*** in 2009 the Government introduced new legislation whereby most of the rural parts of Cheshire East Council became 'Designated Protected Areas' whereby new affordable shared ownership dwellings in these areas would be subject to requirement that owners are either not able to acquire more than 80% equity in a property or if they acquire 100% equity, it has to be sold back to the RSL to retain as affordable housing in perpetuity. ***When staircasing has taken place the additional payments will be recycled and used for affordable housing in Cheshire East.*** The Council normally expect all schemes to ***be transferred to*** and managed by a RSL although consideration will be given to other suitable providers. In such cases legal restrictions on eligibility and rental levels will be necessary (see Section 5). |

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# 1 Introduction

**1.1** The document relates to the provision of all forms of affordable housing by developers on housing sites within the Borough. As such it sets out the Council's definition of affordable housing and specific site requirements, as well as providing guidance on development considerations and means of securing their provision. It also sets out the Council's requirements for achieving mixed and balanced communities including the housing needs of specific groups.

**1.2** This Interim Planning Statement (IPS) has been produced within the framework of the three adopted Local Plans for the former District authorities of Crewe and Nantwich, Congleton and Macclesfield, the Council's Strategic Housing Market Area Assessment (SHMA) and government guidance as expressed in national planning guidance and policy statements. It is also consistent with the Council's Corporate Objectives and the Sustainable Community Strategy.

**1.3** The production of the IPS has been necessary because of changes to Government guidance since the Local Plans were adopted and sets out how that guidance will be applied pending the production of the Cheshire East Local Development Framework Core Strategy. It also reflects up to date housing need information for the Borough contained in the 2010 Strategic Housing Market Assessment. The IPS also addresses the increasing number of issues surrounding development economics and the viability of providing affordable housing.

## Creating Balanced and Mixed Communities

**1.4** A community's need for an appropriate balance and mix of housing including the provision of affordable housing is recognised at national level as a material consideration in determining planning applications for housing development. Government policy is to create sustainable communities that offer a wide range of housing and are socially inclusive.

**1.5** Although the Borough has a stock of good quality housing with relatively low vacancy rates, in many areas there is an imbalance in the type and tenure of available housing. There is a need to ensure that future housing development in Cheshire East helps to support economic growth by providing for a range of income groups. This includes housing for economically active households seeking open market dwellings; households requiring affordable housing (both social rented and increased diversity of options through intermediate tenure). Such an approach will help to maintain long-term community sustainability and enhance the quality of life for local residents

**1.6** The 2010 SHMA demonstrates strongest aspirations for traditional houses (three bedrooms in particular) from groups most likely to be economically active. It identifies a need to stimulate the housing market at all levels to ensure an adequate supply to accommodate a range of household types and income levels. Evidence suggests that across Cheshire East there is considerable market imbalance, with demand exceeding supply. Preferences are predominantly for houses (76.9%), followed by bungalows (15.4%) and flats (7.8%). Aspirations are therefore traditional and a key challenge is to reconcile this with development opportunities and site density requirements.

**1.7** In addition the SHMA identifies that, based on CLG modelling, there is a net shortfall of 1,243 affordable homes each year across the District for the five year period 2009/10 to 2013/14. On this basis there is both a clearly identified need for more affordable housing, but there will not be sufficient supply side opportunities through which this can be addressed. It is therefore important that the Council establish an affordable housing target within its LDF policies that secures a proper balance between the provision of affordable and market housing, reflecting the needs in Cheshire East.

**1.8** In order to address these deficiencies and needs, the Council will expect that all sites for new housing developments contribute to the creation of balanced and mixed communities. Mixed and balanced communities are those which provide a mix of tenures, dwelling types and sizes appropriate to the needs of the local community. This is recognised at national, regional and local level as being important to achieving social diversity and avoids creating concentrations of deprivation. The extent to which a site can contribute towards achieving this mix will be dependent on the size of the site and other factors such as site characteristics, site suitability and economics of provision - on larger sites there will clearly be greater scope to provide a range of different house types and tenures.

**1.9** Whilst it is expected that general market housing will continue to make a significant contribution to meeting future housing needs, the Council gives priority to addressing other forms of housing to ensure that the Borough's housing needs are properly met. The IPS seeks to address principally those other forms of housing - affordable housing, low-cost market housing, special needs housing etc. – which are required to create properly balanced and mixed communities.

## The Borough's Need for Affordable Housing

**1.10** The 2010 SHMAA shows that In terms of relative affordability, Cheshire East is ranked the 8th least affordable District in the North West. The SHMAA found a high level of need for affordable housing in the Borough with an estimated annual requirement of 1243 additional affordable homes per year.

**1.11** The main need for affordable housing provision is for social rented accommodation but the SHMAA identifies that 35% of households in need would consider intermediate tenures

**1.12** Analysis suggests that around 54.2% of annual affordable requirement is likely to be satisfied through existing supply and an element of newbuild (which varies by the former districts: in the former Crewe and Nantwich 60.3% of requirement is likely to be satisfied, Congleton 58.2% and Macclesfield 46.9%).

**1.13** Analysis of affordable housing requirements suggests that a range of affordable dwellings are required, in particular two and three bedroom general needs properties to address the needs of families. It is important that particular care is taken to ensure that properties are built to reflect the demand from families and in the interests of long-term community sustainability.

# 1 Introduction

## Background, National and Regional Policy

**1.14** Planning Policy Statement 3 Housing (issued in 2006 and amended in 2010) states the national policy context for affordable housing.

**1.15** Paragraph 29 of PPS3 states what should be included in Local Development Documents with regard to targets and specific details for the amount, type, size etc of affordable housing and these documents must be based on robust, shared evidence base, through a Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA).

**1.16** Paragraph 30 goes on state the advice for affordable housing in rural communities, mentioning local authorities adopting a positive and pro–active approach which is informed by evidence, with clear targets for the delivery of rural affordable housing. Where viable and practical, LPA's should consider allocating and releasing sites solely for affordable housing, including using a Rural Exception Site Policy. These small sites should only be used for affordable housing in perpetuity and the policy should seek to address the needs of the local community by accommodating households who are either current residents or have an existing family or employment connection.

**1.17** ***At the regional level, the North West Regional Plan (policy L5) requires local authorities, using the results of up to date Strategic Housing Market Assessments and local studies, to address the need for more affordable housing and identify the methods by which they will aim to introduce an element of affordable housing into residential and mixed use development schemes, ensuring long term provision and availability in perpetuity, which may include the need to set conditions relating to occupancy.*** Local policy is provided by the adopted Local Plans of the three former District Authorities as expanded on below. It should be noted that all three Local Plans and the Congleton Supplementary Planning Document 6 predated the publication of PPS3 in 2006.

**Crewe and Nantwich Borough Local Plan**

**1.18** Policy RES 7 of the Crewe and Nantwich Replacement Local Plan (2005) sets a target of a maximum of 30% affordable housing on allocated housing sites and on windfall sites. In relation to windfall sites, the threshold for application of the policy is sites of 25 units or more or greater than 1.0 hectares in size. However in settlements of less than 3,000 population or less a lower threshold of 5 units is applied and exceptionally, where there is a proven need, the threshold is sites of more than 1 unit.

**1.19** The Policy states that, in determining whether a site is suitable for an element of affordable housing, the local planning authority will take into account:

- Whether the existing affordable housing stock meets the identified need
- The proximity of the site to local facilities and public transport
- The targets in the plan derived from the 2005 Housing Needs Survey
- The suitability of the site for housing and
- Economics of provision

**1.20** This policy was modified by the former Crewe and Nantwich Borough Council in November 2005 to increase the affordable housing target to 35% and to lower the threshold to sites of 15 units or more or greater than 0.5 hectares in size. This reflected the findings and recommendations of the 2005 Housing Needs Survey for the former Borough of Crewe and Nantwich. The policy is therefore a material consideration, when dealing with planning applications. The modified policy could not, however, be saved by the Secretary of State under the Direction issued in February 2008.

**Congleton Borough Local Plan and SPD 6**

**1.21** Policy H13 of the Congleton Borough Local Plan First Review (2005) states that the Council will negotiate the provision of an appropriate element of affordable housing on allocated sites and on unidentified housing sites of 1 hectare or more or comprising 25 or more dwelling units. The scale and nature of provision will be determined by local need, site characteristics, general location, site suitability, economics of provision, proximity to local services and facilities and other planning objectives.

**1.22** Policy H13 is supported by the Supplementary Planning Document No.6 'Affordable Housing and Mixed Communities', which was adopted by Congleton Borough Council on 27th April 2006. On all sites which have been allocated for new housing in the Local Plan, the SPD states that the Borough Council will negotiate for the provision of a specific percentage of the total dwelling provision to be affordable homes. The desired target percentage for affordable housing for all allocated site is a minimum of 30%, in accordance with the recommendation of the 2004 Housing Need Survey.

**1.23** The SPD also states that the Planning Authority will negotiate for the provision of an appropriate element of the total dwelling provision to be for affordable housing on all unidentified 'windfall' sites of 0.5 hectare or 15 dwellings or more. The exact level of provision will be determined by local need, site characteristics, general location, site suitability, economics of provision, proximity to local services and facilities, and other planning objectives. However, the general minimum proportion of affordable housing for any site will normally be 30%.

**1.24** On allocated sites and windfall sites which are subject to an affordable housing requirement, there is also a requirement for 25% of dwellings to be 'low cost market housing'.

**Macclesfield Borough Local Plan**

**1.25** Policy H8 and its supporting Reason set out and explain the position with regard to affordable housing requirements. Generally the policy provides that in developments of 25 or more dwellings, or on residential sites of 1 hectare or more, irrespective of the number of dwellings, the Council will negotiate for the provision of 25% of the dwellings as affordable housing.

**1.26** Policy H8 also states that in settlements in rural areas with a population of 3,000 or fewer, the council will negotiate for a proportion of affordable housing to be provided on every housing proposal, where justified by reference to an assessment of housing needs and the available supply of land for housing.

# 1 Introduction

**1.27** The policy states that in determining the level of affordable housing on specific sites, site suitability, economics of provision, the need to achieve a successful housing development and site size will be taken into account.

# 2 Delivering Affordable Housing

## Definition of Affordable Housing

**2.1** The government has defined affordable housing in Planning Policy Statement PPS3 '*Housing*' in November 2006 (revised 2010) as follows:

"It should meet the needs of households who are unable to access or afford market housing. It should be available at a cost low enough for them to afford, determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Its supply should include provision for the home to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision.

It can be:

- social rented (owned and managed by councils or registered social landlords); or
- intermediate housing (available at prices and rents above those of social rent, but below market levels)."

## Acceptable Forms of Affordable Housing

**2.2** As indicated above affordable housing may take the form of social rented or intermediate housing. Intermediate housing includes shared ownership schemes, discounted housing for sale and intermediate rent. Details of each of the main types are given below, although the Council will consider any other means of achieving affordable housing appropriate to the development:

**Social Rented Housing**

**2.3** This refers to the provision of rented accommodation which is provided at levels no higher than the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) target rents. The Council will normally require all social rented housing to be developed and managed by RSLs (Registered Social Landlords) as these organisations have as their prime objective the provision of social housing and are regulated by the HCA. Where an RSL is involved there are normally no reasons for the Council to impose legal restrictions on allocation, future occupation etc, other than those required to restrict eligibility on rural schemes (see Section 5). ~~***Consideration will, however, also be given to other suitable providers of social rented housing undertaken in partnership with the HCA, but in such cases legal restrictions on eligibility and rental levels will be necessary (see Section 5).***~~ The local authority will require, in the first instance, 75% nomination rights to all social rented properties and 50% on subsequent lettings. In order to ensure a balanced community is achieved, a local lettings policy may also be applied as stipulated within the Cheshire Homechoice service.

**New Build Homebuy (Shared Ownership)**

**2.4** New Build Homebuy is a way of helping households to buy a share in their own home even though they cannot afford the full market value. The household purchases a share usually between 25 – 75% and pays rent on the remaining proportion to the managing Registered Social Landlord (RSL). Additional shares can be purchased which will enable a

resident to increase their equity share in the property ***and in many cases buy the final share and own the whole home. However,*** in 2009 the Government introduced new legislation whereby most of the rural parts of Cheshire East Council became 'Designated Protected Areas' whereby new affordable shared ownership dwellings in these areas would be subject to requirement that owners are either not able to acquire more than 80% equity in a property or if they acquire 100% equity, it has to be sold back to the RSL to retain as affordable housing in perpetuity. ***When staircasing has taken place the additional payments will be recycled and used for affordable housing in Cheshire East.*** The Council normally expect all schemes to be ***transferred to ~~developed~~*** and managed by a RSL although consideration will be given to other suitable providers. In such cases legal restrictions on eligibility and rental levels will be necessary (see Section 5).

**Discounted Housing For Sale**

**2.5** This refers to the provision of subsidised low-cost market accommodation through a re-sale covenant scheme. The principle is that the accommodation is available at a fixed discount below the open market value to households in need. The level of discount will be that which is required to achieve the maximum selling price determined by the Council for those in need locally who cannot afford to buy on the open market.

**2.6** The individual circumstances of each case and the area will be taken into consideration and will need to be negotiated with the Council prior to the determination of the relevant planning application. Evidence has shown that in order to achieve an affordable price, the level of discount will normally be required to be a minimum of 30% and up to 50% of the market price. The discount applies on initial and all subsequent re-sales thus ensuring that the accommodation is retained as affordable. Further information on the operation of re-sale covenant schemes is available on request. Discounted housing for sale will normally be provided by a private developer, in which case it should be subject to a satisfactory arrangement to ensure that the benefit of below market price housing is available in perpetuity to future occupants. ***At the discretion of the Council and in exceptional circumstances there may be occasions when it would be appropriate to allow for the discount.***

**2.7** The Council will consider other forms of discounting housing for sale that meets its affordable housing objectives.

**Intermediate Rent**

**2.8** This is housing that is a step between social rented and renting at full market value. Intermediate rents are lower than full market rents but higher than social rents.

## Eligibility Requirements

**2.9** The underlying criteria for eligibility to affordable housing is that households must be in unsuitable housing and unable to afford to rent or buy on the open market. This is the Council's definition of housing need for affordable housing. ***In addition an applicant may be eligible if he / she is a key worker and contributes to the local community.***

**2.10** If an RSL is to manage the affordable housing, either for rent or sale, then the Council is satisfied that this will be sufficient to control both eligibility and future occupancy.

**2.11** If affordable housing is developed by other housing providers the Council will require arrangements in place to ensure that any accommodation is available to those in housing need, as defined by the Council. Priority will also be required to be given to persons with a direct connection to the location of the scheme – location being defined as the catchment area for the property as agreed with the Council. In this respect direct connection would be defined as currently living in the location, having a first line relative currently living in the location (having been there over 5 years), or currently in employment in the location.

**2.12** In the case of rural exceptions site schemes further occupancy criteria, generally as set out below, will need to be followed, in addition to the main housing need requirement. The details of such criteria will be the subject of discussion with the relevant Parish Council (See Section 7)

**Criteria for Rural Exception Sites**

- Occupancy will generally be restricted to a person resident or working in the relevant locality, or who has other strong links with the relevant locality.
- The locality to which the occupancy criteria are to be applied will need to be agreed with the Council prior to determination of the relevant planning application. Generally this is taken as the Parish or adjoining Parishes.
- To ensure an adequate supply of occupiers in the future, the Council will expect there to be a "cascade" approach to the locality issue appropriate to the type of tenure. Thus, first priority is to be given to those satisfying the occupancy criteria in relation to the geographical area immediately surrounding the application site, widening in agreed geographical stages.

## House Prices and Rent Levels

**2.13** **Social Rented and Intermediate Rented Accommodation** - where an RSL is involved rental levels will be set at an affordable level by the RSL itself. For social rented accommodation provided by other providers ~~***this must be in partnership with the Homes and Communities Agency and***~~ the rental levels will also need to be clarified with the Council to ensure they are set at an affordable level. For intermediate rental schemes, rents are typically at no more than 80% of market levels. In all cases a Section 106 Agreement will be required to ensure that rental levels remain affordable

**2.14** **New Build Homebuy (Shared Ownership)** - where an RSL is involved the rental element will be set at an affordable level by the RSL itself but will need to be clarified with the Council. For shared ownership provided by other providers this must be in partnership with the Homes and Communities Agency and the rental element will also need to be clarified with the Council to ensure they are set at an affordable level. In such cases a Section 106 Agreement will be required. As indicated in Para 2.4 above, in most of the rural areas of the Borough, the Government has applied restrictions on the amount of equity that an owner is able to acquire. The house price of each property will be based on the open market value prevailing at the time of marketing the property as agreed with the Council, less a discount off open market value.

# 2 Delivering Affordable Housing

**2.15** **Discounted Housing for Sale** - the house price of each property will be based on the open market value prevailing at the time of marketing the property as agreed with the Council, less the appropriate discount to achieve the agreed maximum selling price based on evidence contained in the SHMA and as updated annually by the Council's Housing Section. A Section 106 Agreement will be required to ensure that the level of discount remains in force for all initial and subsequent re-sales.

## Resourcing an Affordable Housing Scheme

**2.16** The Council recognises that requiring developers to develop or to allow parts of their site to be used for non-market affordable housing will result in a cost to the developer. Developers should assume that no social housing grant is available to support the provision of affordable housing. Therefore, in order to offset these costs developers will be expected to take the requirement for affordable housing into account when negotiating land value with site owners.

**2.17** Where an RSL is to be involved the developer will be required to subsidise the cost of providing the housing either through the provision of land or the building of the accommodation or through a financial contribution such as to enable the property to be sold or rented at an affordable level without the need for social housing grant. In such cases, the number of units and the developer's contribution will normally be expected to reflect the total cost of the required affordable housing minus the capital element that can be serviced through the rents.

**2.18** Where funding is provided towards a scheme by the Homes and Communities Agency, there must be evidence that the grant is adding value over and above that which would be obtained without the funding.

## Use of Financial and Other Contributions In-Lieu

**2.19** As a rule, the Council would prefer to see affordable housing provided on-site. This is in line with Government guidance to encourage the development of sustainable and balanced communities. However, there may be physical or other circumstances where an on-site provision would not be practical or desirable. Such circumstances might include where:

- the provision of the affordable housing elsewhere in the locality would provide a better mix of housing types
- management of the affordable dwellings on site would not be feasible
- it would be more appropriate to bring back existing vacant housing into use as affordable units
- the constraints of the site prevent the provision of the size and type of affordable housing required in the area

**2.20** In such exceptional cases and entirely at the Council's discretion, developers may, in lieu of such provision, provide off-site affordable housing, or offer financial or other contributions towards the provision of affordable housing on an alternative site.

**2.21** Where a financial contribution is offered, the amount of such contribution will normally be expected to reflect the cost necessary to facilitate an equivalent amount of affordable housing as would have been provided on-site. The amount of any contribution will need to be agreed with the Council. Where off-site provision is made by the developer or as a result of any financial contribution, this should be in a location elsewhere within the Borough where there is an identified need.

## How to Achieve Affordable Housing

**2.22** The policy requirement to provide affordable housing places an onus on the developer and/or landowner of a site to consider its provision prior to the sale or acquisition of a site.

**2.23** To be accepted by the Council as affordable housing it must accord with the Council's definition of affordable housing as set out in this IPS, be of a suitable type and size, be on a suitable site and be subject to adequate arrangements to ensure its provision and continued occupancy by appropriate households. The IPS sets out precisely what those requirements are and all developers are expected to adhere to them.

**2.24** Where a site meets the criteria for affordable housing as set out in the IPS, the Council will produce a Housing Needs Statement (HNS) for the site based upon current information. The HNS will set out the affordable housing needs of the area and the Council's requirements for the site in terms of the most appropriate mix of affordable house types and advise on the most appropriate means of securing their provision. Developers are therefore advised to approach the Council and seek early involvement of an RSL prior to submission of a planning application to enable negotiations to be entered into at an early stage.

**2.25** Achieving affordable housing will require liaison between the developer and the relevant Sections of the Council. Depending on the nature of the housing it may also be appropriate to involve any third party responsible for managing the scheme and the Homes and Communities Agency in discussions. The agreed provision will then be secured through the use of planning obligations attached to the approved scheme.

**2.26** In respect of rural exceptions schemes, the Council will require that a local housing needs survey is carried out before submitting a planning application in order to determine the extent of any need.

# 3 Site Specific Requirements for Affordable Housing

## Allocated Sites

**3.1** On all sites which have been allocated for new housing in any of the Congleton, Crewe and Nantwich and Macclesfield Local Plans, the Council will negotiate for the provision of a specific percentage of the total dwelling provision to be affordable homes. The desired target percentage for affordable housing for all allocated sites will be a **minimum of 30%**, in accordance with the recommendations of the 2010 Strategic Housing Market Assessment. This percentage relates to the provision of both social rented and/or intermediate housing, as appropriate. Normally the |Council would expect a ratio of 65/35 between social rented and intermediate housing. In addition, the Council will require the provision of an element of the market housing to be unsubsidised low-cost market housing (see para. 3.13).

## Windfall Sites - Settlements of 3,000 Population or More

**3.2** Planning Policy Statement 3 'Housing' states that the minimum site-size threshold above which affordable housing is to be sought should be 15 dwellings or more. The Council will therefore negotiate for the provision of an appropriate element of the total dwelling provision to be for affordable housing on all unidentified 'windfall' sites of 15 dwellings or more or than 0.4 hectare in size.

**3.3** The exact level of provision will be determined by local need, site characteristics, general location, site suitability, economics of provision, proximity to local services and facilities, and other planning objectives. However, the general minimum proportion of affordable housing for any site will normally be 30%, in accordance with the recommendation of the 2010 Strategic Housing Market Assessment. This proportion relates to the provision of both social rented and/or intermediate housing, as appropriate. In addition, the Council will require the provision of an element of the market housing to be unsubsidised low-cost market housing (see para. 3.13). Where a scheme is for 100% affordable housing, an RSL should be involved in managing a proportion of the units in order to achieve a mix of tenures.

**3.4** On sites below the size threshold the provision of affordable housing will not be a material consideration in determining the application, but developers are invited to consider making provision for an element of such housing as part of the overall scheme. In particular, the Council may seek the provision of an element of unsubsidised low-cost market housing in some areas to overcome deficiencies in this sector of the market.

**3.5** In applying the size threshold, site areas will normally be measured to the natural, physical perimeters of the site. It will not be acceptable for developers to divide a site into smaller components in order to take the site below the threshold.

## Windfall Sites - Settlements of Less Than 3,000 Population

**3.6** Planning Policy Statement 3 'Housing' states that local authorities may wish to set lower minimum thresholds in rural areas where viable and practical this approach is supported by the 2010 Strategic Housing Market Assessment, subject to substantiating evidence.

# 3 Site Specific Requirements for Affordable Housing

**3.7** Monitoring has shown that in settlements of less than 3,000 population the majority of new housing has been delivered on sites of less than 15 dwellings. The Council will therefore negotiate for the provision of an appropriate element of the total dwelling provision to be for affordable housing on all unidentified 'windfall' sites of 0.2 hectares or 3 dwellings or more in all settlements in the rural areas with a population of less than 3,000 population. The exact level of provision will be determined by local need, site characteristics, general location, site suitability, economics of provision, proximity to local services and facilities, and other planning objectives. However, the general minimum proportion for any site will normally be 30%. This proportion includes the provision of social rented and/or intermediate housing as appropriate. In addition, the Council may seek the provision of an element unsubsidised low-cost market housing (see para. 3.13).

**3.8** On small sites the Council may agree that a payment in lieu of on-site provision is more appropriate to enable the affordable housing needs of the area to be met through provision elsewhere in the area or by other means, such as rehabilitation of empty properties. On sites below the size threshold the provision of affordable housing will not be a material consideration in determining the application, but developers are invited to consider making provision for an element of such housing as part of the overall scheme. In particular, the Council may seek the provision of an element of unsubsidised low-cost market housing in some areas to overcome deficiencies in this sector of the market.

**3.9** In applying the size threshold, site areas will normally be measured to the natural, physical perimeters of the site. It will not be acceptable for applicants to divide a site into smaller components in order to take the site below the threshold.

## Rural Exception Sites

**3.10** Planning Policy Statement 3 'Housing' advises Local Planning Authorities to consider releasing sites solely for affordable housing in rural areas where planning permission for housing development would not normally be allowed. The Congleton and Crewe and Nantwich Local Plans both contain policies for these 'rural exception sites'. Such sites must be close to existing or proposed services and facilities. Proposals must be for small schemes appropriate to the locality and consist in their entirety of subsidised housing that will be retained in perpetuity for rent, shared ownership or in partnership with a RSL. In all such cases they must be supported by an up-to-date survey identifying the need for such provision within the local community. The Council's Rural Housing Enabler can give advice on the methodology for the survey which should normally be carried out either by, or in association with, the Parish Council. Unless the survey indicates a need for such provision, planning permission will not be granted. ***In addition the provision needs to meet the strategic priorities of the Council in relation to the development of affordable housing in rural areas. These will be contained in the Housing Strategy for Cheshire East which is due to be published in Spring 2011.*** Section 7 of this statement gives further information on how Parish Councils can assist in the delivery of affordable homes to meet the needs of their communities.

# 3 Site Specific Requirements for Affordable Housing

**3.11** As the release of such sites will be an exception to normal planning policy, the location, scale, layout, density, access and design of any proposed scheme will be critical in determining whether it is acceptable. The 'Rural Exceptions' policy does not apply to proposals for individual homes in the rural areas not forming part of an overall affordable housing scheme, and consequently such proposals must accord with normal planning policies for the area.

## Retirement Housing Schemes

**3.12** Recently some innovative models of private sector housing for older people have been developed, including retirement and extra care villages. These schemes are characterised by the availability of varying degrees of care, 24 hour staffing and ancillary facilities. The Council recognises that such models can contribute to meeting affordable and special needs housing, thus the Council will seek an affordable housing contribution from these schemes in accordance with paragraph 3.2 above.

## Low Cost market Housing Provided Without Subsidy

**3.13** Low-cost market housing provided without subsidy cannot be regarded as affordable housing. However, it does have an important role to play in meeting the needs of households with income levels just adequate to access the open market. Because of the nature of the housing stock in the Borough there is a shortage of housing at the lower end of the market range. The Council will therefore normally require any new housing development of 10 dwellings or more to provide an element of its market housing units as unsubsidised low-cost market housing. Generally, and in addition to the requirement for affordable housing, the Council will look for a **minimum of 25%** of the total housing units on such sites to be unsubsidised low-cost market housing, although the nature of the site, economic considerations, the level of affordable housing provision, its location and nearby provision will be taken into consideration in determining the exact level of provision.

**3.14** To be acceptable, unsubsidised low-cost market housing must be designed in an appropriate manner to be able to be more affordable than most general market housing in the area by virtue of its size, accommodation and amenities. The level of house prices for low-cost market housing for sale will be set by the developer but should be competitively priced to attract those who cannot afford existing housing in the locality. Usually this implies housing priced in the lower quartile of house prices for the area averaged over the most recent 12 months. The Council will also normally require all such housing to meet the dwelling type and size preferences set out for affordable housing property in para. 4.5.

**3.15** Such forms of housing are usually provided by a private developer and are not subject to any eligibility or tenure controls by the Council, although there may be controls on the type of property and a requirement to ensure that the property is made available at an initial sale price in the lower quartile of house prices for the area.

# 4 Development Considerations for Affordable Housing

## Location

**4.1** All affordable housing accommodation should be located on sites which ~~***are sustainable and***~~ contribute to the creation of mixed ***and sustainable*** urban and rural communities. Wherever feasible and practicable, priority should be given to the use of previously developed (brownfield) sites in sustainable locations and to the reuse and conversion of existing buildings, particularly buildings which are of architectural or historic interest. All proposals will be required to accord with the policies of the adopted Local Plan in respect of their location.

## Dwelling Types

**4.2** The provision of affordable housing must be appropriate in size and type to meet the needs of specific households identified by the local authority as part of its strategic assessment of housing need. Wherever possible any affordable housing scheme should incorporate a range and mix of affordable house types although it is recognised that in smaller schemes the range and mix will be more limited.

**4.3** The 2010 Strategic Housing Market Assessment indicates that in terms of affordable housing tenure, there is a requirement for both affordable homes for rent and intermediate housing options. a tenure target that matches the stated preferences of the target households of 35% intermediate and 65% social rented is considered appropriate to maximise the benefits of financially efficient intermediate housing options.

**4.4** Where there is an identified need, affordable housing may also include other forms of dwelling types, such as communal flats, bungalows and sheltered accommodation, which are suitable for accommodating households with special needs e.g. elderly, physically disabled or those with learning disabilities.

**4.5** In terms of property size and type, the requirements identified indicate a range of needs with some variation across the Borough. The appropriate mix of affordable housing should therefore be considered for each specific location. Overall, the 2010 Strategic Housing Market Assessment indicates that affordable needs are for the additional supply to be

- 14% for older persons comprising one or two bedroom units
- 50% one or two bedroom properties for general needs. Note that these figures combine the data for one bedroom (20%) and two bedroom (30%) as the long-term sustainability of small units should be carefully considered against the needs and demand.
- 23% three-bedroom and
- 13% four bedroom or larger.

**4.6** With regard to the type of properties, in order to achieve mixed and tenure-blind developments, it is desirable that the affordable homes match the types being provided for the open market. The identified property preferences (house 42.3%, flat 38.7% and bungalow 19%), indicate that a range of types is appropriate.

# 4 Development Considerations for Affordable Housing

## Design and Layout

**4.7** The Borough Council recognises that dwellings are more likely to be affordable in comparative terms if the development in which they are comprised is at a relatively high density. On sites well served by public transport or close to the town centre, higher densities of development are particularly appropriate.

**4.8** The design of new housing developments should ensure that affordable homes are integrated with open-market homes to promote social inclusion and should not be segregated in discrete or peripheral areas. Affordable homes should therefore be 'pepper potted' within the development. The external design, comprising elevation, detail and materials, should be compatible with open market homes on the development in question thus achieving full visual integration.

**4.9** Affordable homes should be constructed in accordance with the standards proposed to be adopted by the Homes and Communities Agency and should achieve at least Level ~~***4***~~ ***3*** of the Code for Sustainable Homes (2007) ***and will be expected to achieve at least level 4 by 2013***. The design and construction of affordable housing should also take into account forthcoming changes to the Building Regulations which will result in higher build standards particularly in respect of ventilation and the conservation of fuel and power.

## Phasing

**4.10** In order to ensure the proper integration of affordable housing with open market housing, particularly on larger schemes, conditions and/or legal agreements attached to a planning permission will require that the delivery of affordable units will be phased to ensure that they are delivered periodically throughout the construction period. ***The actual percentage will be decided on a site by site basis but the norm will be that affordable units will be provided*** ~~***but in any event***~~ not later than the sale or let of 50 % of the open market homes. ***However, in schemes that provide for a phased delivery and a high degree of 'pepper potting' of affordable homes, the maximum proportion of open market homes that may be completed before the provision of all affordable units may be increased to 80%.***

# 5 Agreements for Securing Affordable Housing

## General

**5.1** The Council will require any provision of affordable housing and/or any control of occupancy in accordance with this ***Statement*** ~~***SPD***~~ to be secured by means of planning obligations pursuant to Section 106 of the Town and County Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

**5.2** The Agreement will cover the number, type and size of units; their availability; need and affordability; price control and agreed tenure. In some instances it will address issues of periodic viability reviews where a reduced or nil element of affordable housing has been agreed.

**5.3** Where any element of affordable housing is to be comprised in a larger development which also includes market housing, the Council will expect that ***provision of*** the affordable housing element will be ***phased in accordance with Paragraph 4.10 of this Statement.*** ~~available and ready for occupation before 50% of the market housing is sold or let~~. The Council will therefore require the Agreement to contain an obligation restricting the developer from allowing the sale or letting of an appropriate proportion of the market housing until the affordable housing element is built and ready for occupation.

**5.4** In all cases where an RSL is to be involved in the provision of any element of affordable housing, then the Council will require that the Agreement contains an obligation that such housing is transferred to and managed by an RSL and that it should only be used for the purposes of providing housing accommodation to meet the objectives of an RSL as set out in the Housing Act 1996.

## Need and Affordability

**5.5** The Council regards the involvement of an RSL in any element of affordable housing as a sufficient guarantee of need and affordability without any additional control. In all other cases of affordable housing, the Council will require the Agreement to contain an obligation to make the affordable housing available to those in housing need and at less than the market price or rent in perpetuity, so far as the law allows, in accordance with the guidance set out in this Policy Statement

## Tenure

**5.6** The Council will require the Agreement to contain obligations appropriate to each tenure. Thus, where a development contains an element of affordable housing that is to be available for rent, the Council will require the Agreement to contain an obligation that any such housing is to be managed by an RSL or other agreed landlord.

**5.7** Where a development contains an element of affordable housing that is to be available for sale or shared ownership, then the Council will require the Agreement to contain adequate principles of a scheme that has already been approved in advance by the Council or alternatively the Agreement may reserve the Council's right to approve a specific scheme prior to implementation.

# 5 Agreements for Securing Affordable Housing

## Dwelling Types and Sizes

**5.8** If the relevant planning application is in outline only, then the Council will require that the Agreement must stipulate ***an acceptable range for*** the number, type, tenure and size of all affordable housing units.

**5.9** If the relevant planning application is a detailed application, then the Council will require that the Agreement contains an obligation that the affordable dwellings are to be built in accordance with the details comprised in the approved application as regards number, type, design, tenure and size of each dwelling.

## Price and Rent Control

**5.10** Where a development contains an element of affordable housing that is to be available for sale, the Council will require that the Agreement sets out the formula to be applied to achieve the desired level of discount in perpetuity. Where a development contains an element of affordable housing that is to be available for intermediate rent, the Council will require that the Agreement sets out the provisions and safeguards to achieve an affordable rent in perpetuity.

## Rural Exception Sites

**5.11** In addition to the above requirements, the Council will require the Agreement to contain obligations which adequately reflect the occupancy criteria and the locality criteria referred to in para. 2.9.

## Use of Financial or Other Contributions

**5.12** Where developers offer financial or other contributions towards the provision of affordable housing on an alternative site in the locality, and it is agreed by the Council that this is an acceptable means of providing affordable housing, the Borough Council will expect the Agreement to contain obligations relating to the provision of such contribution.

# 6 Viability of Affordable Housing Provision

**6.1** National Planning Policy as set out in PPS3 'Housing' requires Local Planning Authorities to set economically viable targets for affordable housing. Consequently the targets set out in the Statement have been independently tested for economic viability through the Strategic Housing Market Assessment and are appropriate for use in current market conditions.

**6.2** Nevertheless, as made clear in Section 3 of this Statement, the viability of individual schemes will be a material consideration in deciding planning applications. Since 2008 there has been significant downturn in the housing market and particularly on brownfield sites where costs of redevelopment are proportionally higher than greenfield sites. Developers have sought and continue to seek to negotiate a lower (or in some cases nil) provision of affordable housing on the basis that the Council's normal requirements would render redevelopment unviable. It is important therefore that a clear methodology for testing the viability of specific development proposals is established.

**6.3** Accordingly the Council will require applicants, who are suggesting that exceptional financial circumstances exist to the extent that the Council's requirements for affordable housing cannot be achieved, shall provide a robust development appraisal and appropriate supporting evidence with their application when submitted.

**6.4** Prior to submission the Council will expect that applicants' development appraisals shall have been independently verified by an external valuation expert. The costs of this independent verification shall be borne by the applicant. The external valuation expert to be used shall be previously agreed by the Council.

**6.5** The minimum level of information that should be included in such a development appraisal is set out in Appendix 1 of this statement.

**6.6** Where it is accepted by the Council that a development is not sufficiently viable to provide the requisite level of affordable housing, and where the development is in all other respects acceptable, it may consider requiring the applicant to enter into a legal agreement which effectively defers developer contributions during the period of development. More detail on this approach is contained in the Home and Communities Agency Good Practice Note on Investment and Planning Obligations (July2009), however the broad principles are explained below.

**6.7** In these circumstances subject to the developer agreeing to initially provide the proportion (if any) of the affordable housing that the development appraisal indicated was viable, a further payment in lieu of the remaining affordable housing would become payable if and when there was an increase in the achieved sale values of the dwellings compared to the values assumed in the development appraisal. The calculation of further payments would be at agreed periods during the life of the development. This mechanism would only apply once development had commenced.

# 7 Rural Exceptions

**7.1** Generally planning policies do not allow for new housing development in the open countryside outside of villages with settlement boundary lines. However in certain circumstances planning permission may be granted for small schemes of affordable housing where;

- The site adjoins the settlement boundary of a village or is within a village with no settlement boundary
- There is an identified need for affordable housing in that village or locality
- All the proposed housing is affordable, for people with a local connection and will remain affordable in perpetuity
- The development is in accordance with other local plan policies

**7.2** The Council considers that the development of affordable housing in rural areas is best achieved in partnership with Parish Councils and local communities. For that reason the Council has appointed a Rural Housing Enabler who will provide Parish Councils with independent advice, support and information in developing a local affordable housing scheme.

## Identifying Local Housing Needs

**7.3** The first stage will be a rigorous assessment of local housing needs by means of a survey of all households in the Parish. The Rural Housing Enabler will advise on the detailed wording of the survey form, however a model form is attached at Appendix 2 of this Statement.

**7.4** The survey will provide evidence of the level of need based on the number of households living in unsuitable accommodation or living with relations. It will give an idea of the potential number and type of dwellings that may be required and any specialist requirements (i.e disabled adaptations).

**7.5** The Rural Housing Enabler, in conjunction with the Parish Council, will then undertake an analysis of the survey results.

## Site Assessment

**7.6** Subject to a need being identified, the next stage will be to identify a suitable site. The Parish Council would be expected to play an important role in site identification having an in depth local knowledge, although it will be important to involve the Council's Planning Officers to ensure that sites are suitable in terms of landscape impact, access, flood risk, nature conservation etc.

**7.7** Priority will be given to sites within or on the edge of villages with a reasonable level of services and public transport. Clearly it is crucial that the landowner of any identified site is supportive of it being developed for affordable housing. Rural exception sites work because of the low values of the sites concerned. For this reason the inclusion of open market dwellings to subsidise the overall scheme is unacceptable and landowners should be made aware of this at the outset.

## Development Partners

**7.8** Normally a Registered Social Landlord (RSL) will be identified to lead the development process and to provide long term management of the resultant scheme. The RSL will undertake detailed site investigations, negotiate with the landowner to acquire the site and apply for planning permission. In designing the scheme prior to submitting a planning application, the RSL will be expected to work closely with the Parish Council and Council Planning Officers to achieve a suitable design and layout. The exact number and type of dwellings will necessarily depend upon the nature of the site and the level of identified need, however these types of development should be small scale and integrate well into the existing village scene.

**7.9** A local consultation event will normally be held to allow local people the opportunity to comment on the plans before a formal planning application is submitted.

## Implementation

**7.10** Once planning permission has been granted the site may be developed and the dwellings built will be let to local people. In most cases the dwellings will be sold to an RSL which will then allocate or sell the properties to local people in housing need. The planning permission will be subject to a legal agreement that ensures that the dwellings will remain affordable to meet local needs in perpetuity. The legal agreement will also restrict occupancy of the dwellings to people who either live in the area or have strong local connection. In those cases where shared ownership housing is provided, it is likely that there will be restrictions on ‘staircasing’ (i.e. the level of equity in a property that the owner is able to secure) as explained in Para 2.4 of this document.

**7.11** In the rare event that a property cannot be let to a person who either lives locally or has strong local connections, the legal agreement will include a cascade mechanism to ensure that an affordable dwelling is not left empty. In these circumstances a property may be let to a person who lives in a neighbouring parish or failing that other people on the Council’s Housing Register. (See Para 2.9 above)

Appendices

## Appendix 1 Viability of Delivery of Affordable Housing

The Council will expect an 'open book' type of approach by the developer when considering evidence supplied about viability. The following gives an indication of the type of information that will be required from the developer in order for an assessment of viability to be carried out. All information supplied should be independently verified at the developer's cost by experts previously agreed by the Council.

**REVENUES**

- Gross Internal floor area of the properties
- The anticipated total sales value of the market housing.
- The anticipated value of the 30% affordable housing provision
- Affordable Housing Grant

**COSTS**

- Marketing and sales costs associated with the sales of the dwellings.
- Site acquisition costs including legal costs, stamp duty, fees etc.
- Build costs
- Preliminaries indicating what are included.
- Fees e.g. architect, quantity surveyor etc
- Planning and building control costs
- Site infrastructure to include site roadways, landscaping, boundary treatment etc
- Costs of finance including interest rate and term
- Other Section 106 costs such as external highways works, public open space, community benefits or infrastructure etc.
- Abnormal costs (i.e. not known at time of site acquisition)
- Developer's profit margin.
- Contingencies

# Appendix 2 Model Housing Needs Survey Form

## Appendix 2 Model Housing Needs Survey Form

**Rural Housing Needs Survey**

Whether you consider yourself to have a housing need or not, the information that you provide is highly important, so please spend a few minutes filling in this form. The more information that we collect, the more accurate this survey will be. Please note all information provided will be treated in the strictest confidence.

To be completed by the householder (If a joint household can one person please complete)

Please cross one answer per question unless otherwise instructed, and keep the cross in the box. ☒

**Q1. Which parish do you currently live in?** (See accompanying letter for assistance and write in below)

For office use only

**If you are not sure, could you please provide us with your postcode**

**Q2. How many people live in your household? (Including yourself)**

Enter a number in the box (e.g. 02)

Adults (16 and over) Children (under 16)

**Q3. In which of these ways does your household occupy your current accommodation?**

- Tied accommodation ☐
- Private renting ☐
- Housing assoc. renting ☐
- Owner occupier ☐
- Other (please specify) ☐

**Q4. Are you, the householder, currently needing alternative accommodation in your local area?**

Yes ☐ No ☐ **If no, go to question 6**

**Q5. Please indicate why you need alternative accommodation? (Please cross all that apply)**

- Need larger accommodation ☐
- Need smaller accommodation ☐
- Need independent accommodation ☐
- Neel Level or physically adapted accommodation ☐
- Need to be closer to employment ☐
- Need cheaper home ☐
- Need permanent accommodation *(If living in short term let)* ☐
- Need to be closer to a carer or dependent ☐
- Other reason (please specify) ☐

# Appendix 2 Model Housing Needs Survey Form

**Q6. Do any other members of your household wish to form a new household inside Cheshire East within the next 5 years and need their own accommodation?**

Yes ☐ No ☐ **If no, go to question 20**

**Q7. How many members of your household wish to form a new household inside Cheshire East within the next 5 years and need their own accommodation?**

One ☐ Two ☐ Three or more ☐

**For the following questions up to question 19, please consider the one household member who requires the move earliest.**

**Q8. What would be the total annual income of the new household?**

(We understand you may prefer not to answer this question but it would help us get the right mix of rented and subsidised ownership on any new sites if we know what people can afford to pay. Please note that this answer will remain confidential.)

Under £15,000 ☐ £25,000 - £30,000 ☐

£15,000 - £20,000 ☐ £30,000 - £35,000 ☐

£20,000 - £25,000 ☐ Over £35,000 ☐ Prefer not to say ☐

**Q9. Who is looking for accommodation?**

Daughter or son ☐ Other (please specify) ☐

**Q10. When is the move required?**

Within 1 year ☐ Between 2 & 3 years ☐

Between 1 & 2 years ☐ Between 3 & 5 years ☐

**Q11. Taking into account the cost of housing in your area what type of tenure would they realistically be looking for? (Please cross all that apply)**

Subsidised Ownership to an affordable level ☐

Private renting ☐

Social renting ☐

Buying on the open market ☐ **If you have chosen only buying on the open market than go to question 20.**

**Q12. If the considered tenure of the new household is shared ownership, what mortgage would be affordable?**

*(Please take into account that with shared ownership there is also a rent to pay).*

Under £60,000 ☐ £100,000 - £150,000 ☐

£60,000 - £85,000 ☐ Over £150,000 ☐

£85,000 - £100,000 ☐ Not considering shared ownership ☐

# Appendix 2 Model Housing Needs Survey Form

**Q13. Where is the new household required?**

Outside current parish but within Cheshire East ☐

Within the Parish that is currently lived in ☐ **Go to question 15**

**Q14. Please state which parishes within the survey area would be considered?** (See accompanying letter for assistance and write in below)

**Q15. What type of accommodation is preferred? (Please cross all that apply)**

House ☐ Supported housing ☐

Flat ☐ Any ☐

Bungalow ☐

**Q16. What is the minimum number of bedrooms required?**

Enter a number in the box (e.g. 02) ☐☐

**Q17. Please indicate how many adults there will be within each age range in the new household?**

Please cross one box per line

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 or more |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 16-19 | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 20-29 | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 30-44 | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 45-59 | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 60-74 | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 75+ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

**Q18. Will the new household have specific housing needs (e.g. mobility, disability requirements)?**

Yes ☐ No ☐

**Q19. How many children under 16 will there be in the new household?**

Enter a number in the box (e.g. 02) ☐☐

**Q20. Has any member of your household moved out of either your parish or the Cheshire East area within the last 5 years, because they could not afford to buy/ rent a home in the area?**

Yes ☐ No ☐ **If no, go to question 23**

# Appendix 2 Model Housing Needs Survey Form

**Q21. If yes, would the member(s) of your household who have moved out wish to return if affordable housing were available?**

Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure ☐ **If no or unsure, go to question 22**

**Q22. What type of tenure would they consider?** Please cross all that apply

- Subsidised Ownership to an affordable level ☐
- Private renting ☐
- Social renting ☐
- Buying on the open market ☐
- Other ☐

**Q23. Would you be in favour of a small development of affordable housing being built in your parish to meet the needs of those having a local connection to the parish?**

Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure ☐

If you wish to, please give a reason for this view

**Q24. Are you aware of any sites that might be suitable in your local area for affordable housing and if so please let us have the details?**

**This survey is printed in mainly Arial, font size 11. If you require a copy in larger print please contact:**

**Cheshire East Research and Intelligence unit by ringing: (01244) 977560**
**Or email: randi@cheshireeast.gov.uk**

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.
Please return it in the pre-paid envelope provided.

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Agenda Item 7

# CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

## REPORT TO: Environment & Prosperity Scrutiny Committee

**Date of Meeting:** Tuesday 8th February 2011
**Report of:** Strategic Director – Places
**Subject/Title:** Local Transport Plan – Strategy & Draft Implementation Plan
**Portfolio Holder:** Cllr Jamie Macrae & Cllr Rod Menlove

### 1.0 Report Summary

1.1 This paper outlines the proposed changes to the Local Transport Plan (LTP) strategy as a result of public consultation and sets out the draft implementation plan, which will be aligned with the Government's four year spending review period (April 2011 to March 2015).

1.2 The draft implementation plan contains details of the initiatives which will be delivered in order to meet the objectives and priorities for transport set out in the 15 year LTP strategy. A four week period of public consultation on the draft implementation plan began on the 18th January and runs until the 16th February.

### 2.0 Decision Requested

2.1 Comment on the changes to the final LTP strategy which have been agreed by Cabinet as a result of the first phase of public consultation in October/November (see Appendix 2).

2.2 Comment on the draft LTP implementation plan as part of the second phase of public consultation which is currently underway (see Appendix 1).

### 3.0 Reasons for Recommendations

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

3.2 Future investment in highways and transport will be directed towards the policies and interventions which support the priority themes of "Ensure a Sustainable Future" and "Create Conditions for Business Growth".

### 4.0 Wards Affected

4.1 All

**5.0 Local Ward Members**

5.1 All

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

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

**7.0 Financial Implications (Authorised by the Borough Treasurer)**

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

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

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

**9.0 Risk Management**

9.1 The first phase of public consultation on the strategy (during October/November) was extended by one week and a simplified alternative on-line survey form created to compensate for minor technical issues with the interactive consultation portal in the first week of consultation period. 230 individual responses to the consultation were received.

9.3 The financial challenges during the first implementation plan period underline the need to make tough decisions about how funding will be allocated, manage expectation and plan delivery carefully over the next four years. Reductions in funding may also impact on our ability to deliver against performance indicators.

9.4 Other challenges include the need to effectively manage the transition from current in-house provision of highway services to an external contractor, whilst maintaining service provision. Further challenges include the extremely difficult economic climate, as well as meeting the needs of an

increasingly ageing population and the imperative to adapt and respond to climate change.

9.5 LTP guidance makes clear that the overall quality and delivery of an authority's LTP will be taken into account by the DfT in decisions on bids for challenge funding and/or major projects. It is therefore vital that Cheshire East is able to demonstrate how the strategy has been translated into delivery through the implementation plan, in line with local priorities representing the highest possible value for money.

## 10.0 Background and Options

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

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

<u>LTP Strategy – Consultation Response</u>

10.2 The public consultation respondents endorsed the high-level priorities for the LTP strategy to "ensure a sustainable future" and "create conditions for business growth" [60% agreed with these priorities, 30% disagreed and 10% neither agreed nor disagreed.]

10.3 When prompted to express an alternative priority, "ensure a sustainable future" and "nurturing strong communities" were the highest placed alternatives.

10.4 ***It is proposed that no changes are made to the high-level priorities taken through to the final LTP****.*

10.5 Within the sustainability theme, the majority of respondents agreed with the proposed priority policies [50% agreed, 41% disagreed and 9% neither agreed nor disagreed]. However, over a fifth (21%) of respondents would like to see the cycling policy prioritised within the final plan.

10.6 ***It is proposed that the cycling policy is added as a priority within the sustainability theme of the final LTP*** resulting in the following priority policies:

- Policy S1: Spatial Planning – Seek to minimise the future need to travel through a strategic approach in the Local Development Framework that focuses most new development in locations where there is a good range of housing, jobs, shops and services already accessible by public transport, cycling and walking.

- Policy S3: Public Transport (Service Levels & Reliability) – Work with passenger transport operators to explore improvements to service levels and reliability.
- Policy S4: Public Transport (Integration & Facilities) – Work with passenger transport providers to improve public transport integration and facilities.
- Policy S8: Cycling – Work with stakeholders to improve facilities for cycling so that it is attractive for shorter journeys.

10.7 Within the business growth theme, there was general support for the proposed priority policies [49% agreed, 32% disagreed and 19% neither agreed nor disagreed]. However, when prompted to express an alternative priority, "Network Improvement" was the highest placed alternative [chosen by 18% of respondents].

10.8 The "Network Improvement" policy was discussed in detail by Members in the earlier workshops alongside the "Enabling Development" and "Network Management" policies. The discussion centred on the need to utilise limited budgets on creating new infrastructure where this would "unlock potential" and enable new development to deliver economic growth, while making the most of existing infrastructure. Given the financial implications of "Network Improvement" and current budget constraints, it is considered that there would need to be compelling public opposition to the original priorities put forward to justify change in priorities.

10.9 The consultation also identified a measure of support for Policy B1 Strategic Partnerships for economic growth [selected by 20% of respondents]. Since work on the draft LTP has been completed, the need to work in partnership with others has been further highlighted by the successful bid to create the Cheshire & Warrington Local Economic Partnership (LEP). Support for such partnership working will be crucial in delivering the Council's economic and regeneration priorities.

10.10 ***It is proposed that the policy on Strategic Partnerships is added as a priority within the business growth theme of the final LTP*** resulting in the following priority policies:

- Policy B1: Strategic Partnerships for Economic Growth – Work with neighbouring authorities, appropriate regional/sub-regional organisations, public transport operators and providers to enhance cross-boundary and strategic investment opportunities in transport.
- Policy B2: Enabling Development – Seek to enable appropriate new development by supporting transport infrastructure, regeneration and/or behaviour change initiatives that will mitigate the potential impact of development proposals.
- Policy B3: Network Management – Effectively manage the highway network to reduce the level of delay and provide for the needs of all road users including pedestrians, cyclists and motorists.
- Policy B8: Maintenance – Adopt a robust and efficient approach to maintenance to minimise deterioration in the highway network and associated infrastructure assets

10.11 Within the health theme, there was general support for the proposed priority policies [56% agreed, 34% disagreed and 11% neither agreed nor disagreed]. However, the consultation did show a mixed response to prioritising the type of road safety intervention most appropriate – the policies of "Road Safety (Education)", "Road Safety (Enforcement)" and Road Safety (Engineering) all received similar levels of support.

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

10.13 In the interim***, it is proposed that there is no change made to the priorities for health*** listed below.

- Policy H2: Promotion of Active Travel and Healthy Activities – Work in partnership to promote walking, cycling and horse riding as active travel options and healthy activities.
- Policy H3: Public Rights of Way & Green Infrastructure – Protect and enhance public rights of way and transport related green infrastructure and will endeavour to create new links where beneficial for health or access to green spaces.
- Policy H8: Road Safety (Engineering) – Improve road safety through highway design improvements at collision blackspots.

10.14 Within the stronger communities, young people and older people thematic areas, respondents expressed strong support for the proposed priority policies [73% agreed, 17% disagreed and 9% neither agreed nor disagreed].

10.15 ***It is proposed that there is no change made to the priorities within the stronger communities, young people and older people theme*** listed below.

- Policy C1: Community – Work in partnership with local communities to support community led solutions that improve accessibility to key services.
- Policy C2: Accessibility of Services – Work with partner organisations and local communities to make key services easier to access with a particular focus on disadvantaged groups and areas, including people living in rural areas, older people, young people and those without access to a car.
- Policy C3: Access for all – Consider the diverse range of needs concerning disabled people and other groups who experience difficulties using the transport system.

10.16 Finally the consultation found strong support for the proposed approach of producing transport frameworks for our towns. These frameworks will interpret borough wide policies at a more local level and will be undertaken in conjunction with the LDF team.

<u>Draft Implementation Plan</u>

10.17 Cheshire East's first LTP implementation plan will cover a four year period from April 2011 until March 2015, in line with the Government's spending

review period. The draft implementation plan contains details of the initiatives which will be delivered in order to meet the objectives and priorities for transport set out in the 15 year strategy.

10.18 A draft implementation plan is attached as Appendix 1 illustrating how staff and financial resources are proposed to be allocated in line with the priority policies listed above. Appendix 1 also includes a draft set of performance indicators to record our achievement against the plan. The majority of the proposed indicators will be monitored through the National Highway & Transportation (NHT) survey undertaken by Ipsos Mori on an annual basis reducing the level of local data collection.

10.24 The implementation plan includes bidding for additional Government funding through the Local Sustainable Transport Fund (£560m), which intends to support packages of low cost, high value measures that support economic growth and reduce carbon emissions in local communities. Work is underway to prepare an ambitious bid for Cheshire East.

## 11.0 Overview of Year One and Term One Issues

11.1 The LTP is a statutory document that must be prepared by the Council by April 2011, including a 15 year strategy and a four year implementation plan.

## 12.0 *Access to Information*

12.1 The Sustainability Appraisal Report incorporating the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), a Health Impact Assessment (HIA), and an Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) can be viewed in the Members Room.

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

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# Local Transport Plan

## Draft Implementation Plan

# Have Your Say

www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/travel

Cheshire East Council

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# 1 Consultation - Have Your Say!

1.1 This document sets out Cheshire East's first Local Transport Plan (LTP) implementation plan for consultation. The plan is aligned with the Government's four year spending review period (April 2011 to March 2015) and contains details of the initiatives which will be delivered in order to meet the objectives and priorities for transport set out in the 15 year LTP strategy.

1.2 The LTP strategy and draft implementation plan reflect the feedback from the first phase of public consultation undertaken during October and November last year. This document has been produced as part of the second phase of consultation on the draft implementation plan. The consultation period runs from Tuesday 18th January until Wednesday 16th February 2011.

1.3 The thematic priorities of the LTP are "ensure a sustainable future" and "create conditions for business growth". Future investment in transport will be directed towards the policies and interventions which support the priority areas to help grow the economy and tackle carbon emissions. The priority policies are listed below.

## Ensure a Sustainable Future

- **Policy S1: Spatial Planning** – Seek to minimise the future need to travel through a strategic approach in the Local Development Framework that focuses most new development in locations where there is a good range of housing, jobs, shops and services already accessible by public transport, cycling and walking.
- **Policy S3: Public Transport (Service Levels & Reliability)** – Work with passenger transport operators to explore improvements to service levels and reliability.
- **Policy S4: Public Transport (Integration & Facilities)** – Work with passenger transport providers to improve public transport integration and facilities.
- **Policy S8: Cycling** – Work with stakeholders to improve facilities for cycling so that it is attractive for shorter journeys.

## Create Conditions for Business Growth

- **Policy B1: Strategic Partnerships for Economic Growth** – Work with neighbouring authorities, appropriate regional/sub-regional organisations, public transport operators and providers to enhance cross-boundary and strategic investment opportunities in transport.
- **Policy B2: Enabling Development** – Seek to enable appropriate new development by supporting transport infrastructure, regeneration and/or behaviour change initiatives that will mitigate the potential impact of development proposals.

# 1 Consultation - Have Your Say!

- **Policy B3: Network Management** – Effectively manage the highway network to reduce the level of delay and provide for the needs of all road users including pedestrians, cyclists and motorists.
- **Policy B8: Maintenance** – Adopt a robust and efficient approach to maintenance to minimise deterioration in the highway network and associated infrastructure assets

**1.4** The following tables include the schemes and initiatives which are proposed within each theme to translate the priority policies into action. This is your opportunity to have your say on our proposals.

| Priority Policy | Initiative | Delivery Partners | Location | Year of Implementation | Resource |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **S1 Spatial Planning** | Undertake transport and accessibility assessments of strategic site proposals to inform and influence the Local Development Framework (LDF) and ensure sites have good access to services by sustainable modes of transport (e.g. Walking, cycling, public transport). This will include an assessment of the cumulative impact of LDF proposals and those of neighbouring authorities. | Spatial planning team, neighbouring authorities | Boroughwide | Year 1 & 2 - 2011/12 during development of LDF Core Strategy | Staff & Financial |
| **S3 Public Transport (Integration & Facilities)** | Facilitate partnership working with public transport operators through the Cheshire East Public Transport Forum, ensuring ongoing liaison and positive dialogue with operators, including cross boundary working with partners such as the Association of Greater Manchester Authorities (AGMA). | Public transport operators, cross boundary authorities | Boroughwide | Ongoing throughout<br><br>2011/15 | Staff |
| | Prepare bids for external funding to support the co-ordination and integration of different modes of transport, as well as improvements to facilities for passengers at bus and railway stations. During year 1 a bid will be prepared for the Government's recently announced Local Sustainable Transport Fund. | Health sector, Sustrans, community partnerships | Various locations still to be determined - will include Crewe | Year 1 and ongoing throughout | Staff & Financial |

| Priority Policy | Initiative | Delivery Partners | Location | Year of Implementation | Resource |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Explore opportunities to improve integration between modes of transport with bus and rail operators, including timetable modifications to reduce interchange times and provision of cycle parking at public transport hubs. | Public transport operators, user groups and community partnerships | Boroughwide | Ongoing throughout 2011/15 | Staff |
| | Work with train operating companies to identify improvements that are needed at Cheshire East railway stations and work in partnership to secure investment through external funding opportunities and developer contributions, particularly in Crewe. | Train operating companies, economic development team | Boroughwide, with particular focus on Crewe and Wilmslow | Ongoing throughout 2011/15 | Staff & Financial |
| **S4 Public Transport (Service Levels & Reliability)** | Work closely with bus operators to facilitate and encourage as much commercial enterprise as possible, particularly where there is likely to be a concentration of new potential demand (e.g. new employment and housing development sites). | Bus operators, planning team | Boroughwide | Ongoing throughout 2011/15 | Staff |
| | Utilise developer contributions to explore innovative public transport solutions, particularly in rural areas. | Planning team | Boroughwide, particularly in rural areas | Ongoing throughout 2011/15 | Staff |
| | Develop new criteria to determine investment in supported bus services. Locally determined criteria will prioritise investment in services in order to contribute to the achievement of | Bus operators | Boroughwide | Year 1 - 2011/12 | Staff & Financial |

| Priority Policy | Initiative | Delivery Partners | Location | Year of Implementation | Resource |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | strategic priorities for transport within the LTP strategy. | | | | |
| | Work with strategic partners and rail investment lobby groups to influence rail service specifications. The two main franchise agreements serving Cheshire East are due for renewal - the West Coast Franchise (currently Virgin Trains) in 2012 and the Northern Franchise (currently Northern Trains) in 2013. | DfT, AGMA, Welsh Assembly Gov. (WAG), rail user groups, community partnerships | Boroughwide | Ongoing until 2013 | Staff |
| | Work with partners including Middlewich Town Council to support the re-opening of the Sandbach to Northwich railway line to passengers and seek funding opportunities to take this scheme through the next development stage. | Middlewich Town Council, Cheshire West Council | Sandbach, Middlewich | Ongoing throughout 2011/15 | Staff |
| **S8 Cycling** | Support the Cheshire East Cycling Forum to promote improvements to the facilities for cyclists and encourage more people to cycle more often as part of everyday life | Sustrans, Cheshire East Cycling Forum, health sector | Boroughwide | Ongoing throughout 2011/15 | Staff |
| | Prepare bids for external funding (e.g. Local Sustainable Transport Fund) to improve cycling infrastructure, including junction and route improvements, more on-road cycle lanes and off-road routes and improve route signing. | Sustrans, Cheshire East Cycling Forum, health sector | Boroughwide | Ongoing throughout 2011/15 | Staff & Financial |

| Priority Policy | Initiative | Delivery Partners | Location | Year of Implementation | Resource |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Seek developer contributions through the planning process to provide greater access to cycling facilities in town centres, community facilities, service and employment locations. | Planning team, Service providers, Sustrans | Boroughwide | Ongoing throughout 2011/15 | Staff |
| **Complementary Policies:** Further schemes and initiatives within the "Ensure a Sustainable Future" theme will be implemented as resources allow within the policy areas of S2 Climate Change - Mitigation & Adaptation, S5 Public Transport (Information & Marketing), S6 Public Transport (Fares & Ticketing), S7 Walking and S9 Technology & Energy Efficiency. | | | | | |

| Priority Policy | Initiative | Delivery Partners | Priority Location | Year of Implementation | Resources |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **B1 Strategic Partnerships for Economic Growth** | Work with strategic partners through the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) to secure improvements in transport to facilitate economic growth - including neighbouring authorities, Manchester Airport, Network Rail, Highways Agency and visitor economy partnerships. | Cheshire & Warrington LEP | Boroughwide | Ongoing throughout 2011/15 | Staff |
| | Work in partnerships with the Highways Agency to deliver the A556 Knutsford to Bowden dual carriageway upgrade scheme, ensuring the concerns of local residents are considered and incorporated wherever possible. | Highways Agency, Knutsford Area Partnership | Knutsford | To be confirmed | Staff |
| | Support and engage in proposals for improving rail connectivity through High Speed Rail and the Northern Hub capacity improvement scheme. The Northern hub will release capacity in central Manchester and unlock improvements in the speed, frequency and reliability of train services across Cheshire East. | Network Rail | Boroughwide | Ongoing throughout 2011/15 | Staff |
| | Work with Assocation of Greater Manchester Authorities (AGMA) to carry out feasibility studies of tram-train opportunities in the north of the Borough, particularly Park & Ride sites from the strategic road network into the city centre. | AGMA, Highways Agency | North of the Borough | Ongoing throughout 2011/15 | Staff & Financial |
| | Work with partners to develop a bid for the Governments Local Sustainable Transport Fund | Economic development | Various locations still | Year 1 - 2011 | Staff |

| Priority Policy | Initiative | Delivery Partners | Priority Location | Year of Implementation | Resources |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | to support economic growth and reduce carbon emissions. | team, business community | to be determined - will include Crewe | | |
| **B2 Enabling Development** | Work with the planning team to develop a new approach to developer contributions that enables improvements to both local and strategic transport provision. Facilitate provision for walking, cycling, public transport and recharging points for hybrid or electric vehicles in large new developments in order to reduce carbon emissions. | Planning team, highway development control team, developers | Boroughwide | Ongoing throughout 2011/15 | Staff |
| | Continue to work with the Department for Transport (DfT) to develop the business case to provide funding for Crewe Green Link Road which will unlock new development opportunities in Crewe. | DfT, planning team | Crewe | Year 1 - 2011 | Staff & Financial |
| | Work with partners to deliver further infrastructure that unlocks new development opportunities, including capacity improvements on the A500 Barthomley link, Crewe Green Roundabout and the provision of Middlewich Eastern Bypass, along with a suitable highway link between the A536 and A523 to open up the South Macclesfield Development Area. | Developers, land owners, funding bodies, planning team. | Boroughwide | Ongoing throughout 2011/15 | Staff |

| Priority Policy | Initiative | Delivery Partners | Priority Location | Year of Implementation | Resources |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **B3 Network Management** | Monitor implementation of the Network Management Plan, outlining how the highway network will be managed to secure the efficient movement of traffic and ensuring the asset is used as affectively as possible. This will include cross-boundary "route management" of freight and commuter routes, as well as reviewing the efficiency of winter gritting and preparing for climate change. | Neighbouring authorities, Highways agency, Highway service provider | Boroughwide | Ongoing throughout 2011/15 | Staff |
| | Monitor the delivery of improvements and efficiencies in junction operation and improve co-ordination of roadwork / major event management to minimise network disruption through the new highway contract. | Highway service provider, Cheshire Police | Boroughwide | Ongoing throughout 2011/15 | Staff |
| | Monitor implementation of the programme of remedial work at road rail incursion sites which carry a high risk of road traffic entering the rail line area. Seek appropriate developer contributions where proposals are close to high risk sites. | Planning team,Network Rail, Highway service provider | Boroughwide | Ongoing throughout 2011/15 | Staff & Financial |
| **B8 Maintenance** | Monitor the delivery of the new highway contract to implement the Transport Asset Management Plan (TAMP) and prioritise investment in structural and operational maintenance across the Borough's highway network. Develop a | Highway service provider | Boroughwide | Ongoing throughout 2011/15 | Staff & Financial |

| Priority Policy | Initiative | Delivery Partners | Priority Location | Year of Implementation | Resources |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 'whole' life cycle approach to consider the most effective use of preventative maintenance rather than a reactive approach. | | | | |
| | Monitor the new highway contract to ensure efficiencies in the approach to repairing highway network defects and increase the durability and lifespan of temporary road repairs through the use of innovative technologies and materials. | Highway service provider | Boroughwide | Ongoing throughout 2011/15 | Staff & Financial |
| **Complementary Policies:** Further schemes and initiatives within the "Create Conditions for Business Growth" theme will be implemented as resources allow within the policy areas of B4 Network Improvement, B5 Freight, B6 Parking, B7 Business Innovation. | | | | | |

# 4 Ongoing Strategy Development

| Policy | Initiative | Delivery Partners | Priority Location | Year of implementation | Resources |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **T1 Towns** | Develop a series of transport frameworks for towns, in conjunction with the LDF process, to ascertain local priorities and undertake locally specific discussion on transport issues to interpret Boroughwide policies at a local level. | Local Area Partnerships, Town & Parish Councils, Community Groups | Boroughwide | Year 1 & 2 - 2011/12 | Staff |

# 5 Other Thematic Areas - Initiatives

| Policy | Initiative | Delivery Partners | Location Priority | Year of Implementation | Resources |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **C1 Community** | Implement small-scale improvements to local transport infrastructure identified by Councillors and local communities across the borough. | Local Area Partnerships (LAPs), Councillors | Boroughwide | Year 1 - 2011 | Staff & Financial |
| | Support community-led initiatives for transport and service provision (e.g. community car share schemes, devolution of services), particularly in rural communities. | Service providers, LAPs, Town & Parish Councils, Community & Voluntary Groups | Boroughwide | Ongoing throughout 2011/15 | Staff |
| **C2 Accessibility of Services** | Work with partner organisations and local communities to make key services easier to access with a particular focus on disadvantaged groups and areas, including people living in rural areas, older people, young people and those without access to a car. | Service providers, LAPs, Town & Parish Councils, Community and Voluntary Groups | Boroughwide | Ongoing throughout 2011/15 | Staff |
| **C3 Access for all** | Provide personalised journey planning advice targeted at disadvantaged groups (e.g. adult | Social care providers, public | Boroughwide | Ongoing throughout 2011/15 | Staff |

| Policy | Initiative | Delivery Partners | Location Priority | Year of Implementation | Resources |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | social care) to promote access for all. | transport operators | | | |
| | Review concessionary bus travel criteria to ensure it offers value for money and supports broader policy objectives. | Bus operators | Boroughwide | Year 1 - 2011 | Staff |
| **H2 Promotion of Active Travel & Healthy Activities** | Work in partnership to promote walking, cycling and horse riding as active travel options and healthy activities. | Health agencies, community and voluntary groups, user groups | Boroughwide | Ongoing throughout 2011/15 | Staff |
| **H3 Public Rights of Way & Green Infrastructure** | Seek to improve and create links to key services (e.g. schools, community centres and tourism destinations) by routes and green infrastructure such as canal towpaths. | Local Access Forum, landowners, community & voluntary groups, user groups | Boroughwide | Ongoing throughout 2011/15 | Staff & Financial |
| **H6, H7, H8 Road Safety** | Monitor the delivery of road safety measures - education & training, engineering and enforcement - in conjunction with partners. | Highway service provider, Cheshire | Boroughwide | Ongoing throughout 2011/15 | Staff & Financial |

# 5 Other Thematic Areas - Initiatives

| Policy | Initiative | Delivery Partners | Location Priority | Year of Implementation | Resources |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Police, Cheshire Fire & Rescue, neighbouring authorities | | | |

# 6 Draft Performance Indicators - 2011/15

6.1 In order to monitor the delivery and impact of the LTP implementation plan, the following performance measures will be adopted on a Borough wide basis. Separate local indicators will be considered as part of the process of developing transport frameworks for towns. Additional indicators will include those developed for the new highway service provider. Reporting will be either quarterly or annually in April each year.

## Ensure a Sustainable Future

| Proposed Indicator | Measure of Performance | Policy Link |
|---|---|---|
| Accessibility Level | Proportion of housing built within 30 minutes public transport travel time of key services | S1 Spatial Planning |
| Bus Service - Public Satisfaction | Public overall satisfaction with local bus services | S3 Public Transport (Integration & Facilities)<br><br>S4 Public Transport (Service Levels & Reliability) |
| Rail Patronage | Footfall at railway stations in Cheshire East | S3 Public Transport (Integration & Facilities) |
| Commercial Viability of Bus Services | % of supported bus services that become commercially viable | S4 Public Transport (Service Levels & Reliability) |
| Number of trips made on Demand Responsive Transport | Number of journeys made on Council supported demand responsive services | S4 Public Transport (Service Levels & Reliability) |
| Community Transport Satisfaction | Public overall satisfaction with Community Transport (e.g. Dial-a-Ride). | S4 Public Transport (Service Levels & Reliability) |
| Cycle Routes and Facilities | Public overall satisfaction with cycle routes and facilities | S8 Cycling |

## Create Conditions for Business Growth

| Proposed Indicator | Measure of Performance | Policy Link |
|---|---|---|
| Public Satisfaction with Roadwork Management | Public Satisfaction with Roadwork Management | B3 Network Management |
| Traffic Levels in Key Urban Areas | Aggregate monitoring data to measure traffic levels, particularly in Crewe and Macclesfield | B3 Network Management |
| Road Condition - Principal roads | Provides an indication of the proportion of principal road carriageway where structural maintenance should be considered over the next 12 months. This is a significant indicator of the state of the highways asset (former National Indicator 168) | B8 Maintenance |
| Road Condition - Class B & C. | Provides an indication of the proportion of B and C class road carriageways where structural maintenance should be considered over the next 12 months. This is a significant indicator of the start of the highway asset (former National Indicator 169) | B8 Maintenance |
| Quality of Footways | Measures the condition of primary and secondary footways in Cheshire East where structural maintenance should be considered over the next 12 months. (New national footway network survey) | B8 Maintenance |
| Road Condition - Unclassified Road Network | % of unclassified road where structural maintenance should be considered | B8 Maintenance |
| Public Perception of Highway Condition | Public satisfaction with highway maintenance | B8 Maintenance |

## Nurture Strong Communities

| Proposed Indicator | Measure of Performance | Policy Link |
|---|---|---|
| Delivery of Local Infrastructure Schemes | % spend of allocated budget in each financial year | C1 Community |
| Availability of Community Transport | Public perception of the availability of community transport | C1 Community |
| Availability of Community Car Schemes | Number of community car schemes in operation throughout Cheshire East | C1 Community |
| Ease of Access to Key Services (All People) | Annual public opinion survey | C2 Accessibility of Services |
| Ease of Access to Key Services (People with Disabilities) | Annual public opinion survey | C3 Access for All |

## Other Key Indicators

| Proposed Indicator | Measure of Performance | Policy Link |
|---|---|---|
| Mode of travel for journey to school | Children travelling to school - mode of travel usually used (former National Indicator 198) | Y1 Travel to Education |
| Number of people killed or seriously injured | Continue to collect data subject to new guidance from the Department for Transport (former National Indicator 47) | H6, H7, H8 Road Safety |

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This information is available in other formats on request

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# Local Transport Plan

## Draft Strategy (2011-2026)

www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/travel

Cheshire East Council

## Foreword

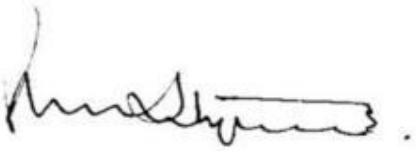
Transport and travel is a fundamental part of everyday life – it enables us to visit friends and family, commute to work, access healthcare, education, shopping and leisure activities, and supports a healthy and vibrant economy. The Local Transport Plan (LTP) aims to capitalise on the strengths of the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

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

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

The LTP strategy has been developed in close co-operation with stakeholders and reflects the consultation feedback from the public. It will shape future investment in our highways and public transport network over the next 15 years, and will be supported by three/four year implementation plans that will transform our strategy into action.





Wesley Fitzgerald
**Leader of Cheshire East Council**

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## Executive Summary

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

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

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

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




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

## Executive Summary

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

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

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

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

**9** The LTP strategy will be supported by rolling three year implementation plans, translating the strategy into deliverable actions. The first implementation plan will include a prioritised list of initiatives to be progressed during the first three years and will set out high-level performance indicators. The LTP will remain a live document supporting continuous improvement in the planning and delivery of services with a focus on achieving greater outcomes more efficiently, with fully engaged communities.

**Thematic Areas – Key Transport Links**

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

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

12 The scale of the challenge in this area is evidenced by the past and projected growth in CO2 emissions from road transport, which is 37% of the total and is expected to grow by 2020 – whereas other sources of carbon are being reduced. Macclesfield, Knutsford and Wilmslow have the highest emissions from road transport in the borough. This is indicative of a very car dominated area and low public transport use relative to other areas.

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




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

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

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

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

## Executive Summary

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

**18** To create conditions for business growth support for transport infrastructure is vital. The following 'core' priority policies have been identified:

- Maintenance – Adopt a robust and efficient approach to maintenance to minimise deterioration in the highway network and associated infrastructure assets (e.g. lighting, street furniture etc.)
- Network Management – Effectively manage the highway network to reduce the level of delay and provide for the needs of all road users including pedestrians, cyclists and motorists.
- Enabling Development – Seek to enable appropriate new development by supporting transport infrastructure, regeneration and/or behaviour change initiatives that will mitigate the potential impact of development proposals.
- Strategic Partnerships for Economic Growth - Work with neighbouring authorities, appropriate regional/sub-regional organisations, public transport operators and providers to enhance cross-boundary and strategic investment opportunities in transport.

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

## Executive Summary

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

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

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

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

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

**33** Inevitably, physical mobility declines with age, and it is important to ensure that day-to-day use of transport systems and streets is not compromised by unnecessary barriers to older people's mobility such as high kerbs or steps, lack of seating, or poor information, as well as minimising the risk of slips, trips and falls on streets and in transport systems. The Poynton shared space scheme is a positive example of where this approach has been implemented.



**Poynton Shared Space Scheme Concept**

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

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

## Executive Summary

# 1 Introduction & Context

## Introduction




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

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

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

## What is a Local Transport Plan?

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

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

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

# 1 Introduction & Context

## Setting the Context - The People

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

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

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

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

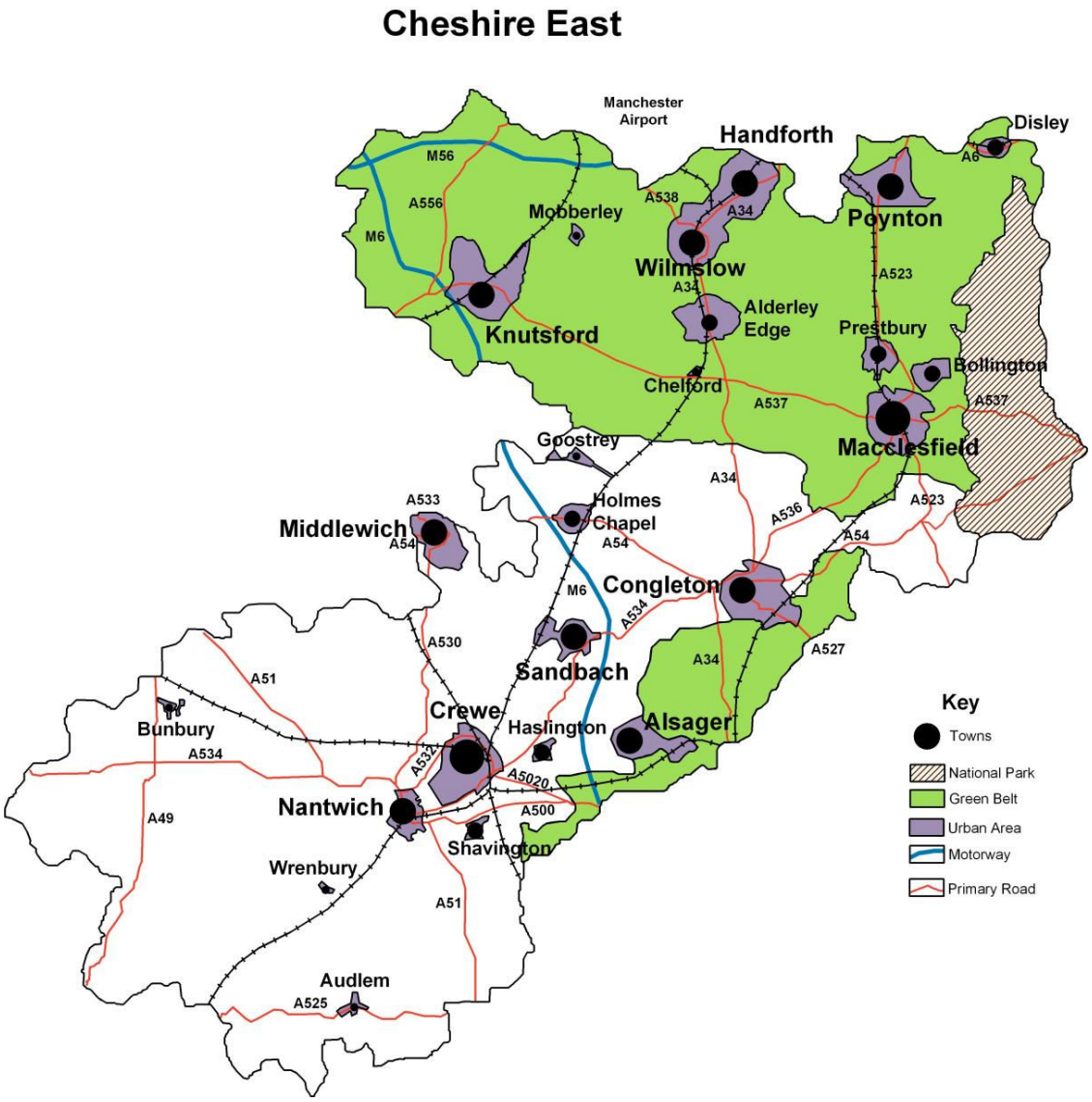
**1.11** There are some significant health inequalities between parts of Cheshire East. For example, life expectancy ranges from 73 years for men in parts of Crewe to 84 years in parts of Wilmslow. Life expectancy is as low as 77 years for women in some parts of Crewe but is 94 years in parts of Macclesfield.

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

## Setting the Context - The Place

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

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




**Map of Cheshire East**

**1.15** 93% of the area is classed as at least 'more rural than urban', while 88% is classified as 'greenspace'. The borough has a wide variety of green spaces including parts of the Peak District National Park, the Cheshire plain, mosses, meres and heaths. The National Park designation is linked to two statutory purposes: to conserve and enhance natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage, and promote opportunities for understanding and enjoyment of the National Park by the public.

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

**1.17** These assets include Macclesfield's industrial heritage, Tatton Park, Little Moreton Hall, Crewe railway heritage, Tegg's Nose, the canal network, historic towns such as Nantwich, parts of the Peak District National Park and 2,637

listed buildings, of which 47 are Grade I listed. In addition, we have other unique attractions such as Jodrell Bank Radio Telescope and the many fine houses and gardens open to the public. The wealth of heritage and history is seen by local people as one of the areas most distinctive and valuable assets.



**Jodrell Bank**

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

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

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

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

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

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

1.24 Cheshire East has been sub-divided into seven Local Area Partnership (LAP) areas. These partnerships bring together the key agencies (e.g. emergency services, health bodies, town and parish council representatives, third sector organisations) within localities to ensure engagement with communities, provide empowerment opportunities and improve service delivery through the development of robust, evidence based Area Delivery Plans.

## Policy Context

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

### Sustainable Community Strategy

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

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

1.28 The SCS defines seven priority areas for action:

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

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

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

# 1 Introduction & Context

### Cheshire East Council's Corporate Plan

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

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




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

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

### Local Development Framework (LDF)

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

### Economic Development Strategy (EDS)

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

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

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

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

### Climate Change Strategy

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

### Other Key Strategies

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

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

## Cheshire & Warrington LEP

1.40 The Government recently approved the formation of a Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) for the Cheshire and Warrington sub-region. The LEP will consist of the three Leaders of the unitary authorities of Cheshire East, Cheshire West & Chester and Warrington, plus the Chairman of the Cheshire & Warrington Enterprise Commission, seven private business sector leaders, and three members of other sectors (voluntary sector, education).

1.41 The precise relationship between the LEP and central Government is still to be determined but whatever emerges, the Cheshire and Warrington LEP will seek to ensure close working between the public and other sectors in forging the economic strategy and priorities for the area. It will become a powerful lobbying group to promote transport schemes and priorities to support the sub-regional economy.

1.42 The LEP will be driven by a private sector dominated board, with a private sector business chair. Although it will be the Initial LEP Board (ILB) itself to propose its detailed terms of reference and operational procedures, it is likely that strategic transportation issues will be a significant area of work for the group. It is anticipated that that in due course a collective response to supporting longer term strategic aspirations will be required.

# 1 Introduction & Context

1.43 **Policy B1: Strategic Partnerships for Economic Growth** within the Business Growth chapter will be particularly relevant, however, the LEP will potentially seek to influence and promote a large range of objectives which have links to transport ranging from climate change to tourism. The LTP will need to adapt to any future requirements of the LEP as well as progressing local issues.

## LTP Objectives

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

### RELEVANT OBJECTIVES

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

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

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

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

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

**Objective 6 (Environment):** Protect and enhance the local and global natural environment (including environmental assets such as biodiversity, geodiversity, soils and protected landscapes).

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

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

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

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

**SCS themes and LTP objectives**

## Developing the Plan

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

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

**1.47** The initial high-level vision which informs the LTP was developed in conjunction with the process that led to the adoption of “Ambition for all: the Cheshire East Sustainable Community Strategy 2010-2025”, by directly engaging with the strategic and thematic partnerships and undertaking consultation with members of the public. The process sought to identify genuine priorities for transport across a range of stakeholder and partnership opportunities - not only those projects that the Council has the potential to support financially. In many cases external funding from both the public and private sector will be required (e.g. rail improvement projects).

# 1 Introduction & Context

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

**Consultation Process**

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

**1.50** Public and stakeholder views on the draft LTP were then collated during the October/November consultation period through a survey form (available in libraries and information centres, and on-line) and at consultation events (including presentations to all town councils and public consultation events in various locations).

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

## Sustainability Appraisal Process

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

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

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

**1.54** As part of the appraisal process, 13 sustainability objectives were set and tested against LTP policies. The objectives were:

1. **Biodiversity, habitats, geology…**To protect and enhance biodiversity, habitats and important geological features including soil and water

resources; with particular care to sites designated internationally, nationally, regionally and locally.

2. **Flooding…** To prevent inappropriate transport infrastructure on floodplains and guard against increased risk of flooding.
3. **Minimise need to travel & sustainable modes…** To minimise the need to travel by car and facilitate integrated forms of sustainable transport.
4. **Heritage & landscape…** To protect and enhance the quality, integrity and distinctiveness of the area's heritage, landscapes and townscapes, through high quality transport planning and design.
5. **Pollution & climate change…** To minimise the level of noise, water, soil and air pollution from transport and reduce the borough's transport contribution to climate change.
6. **Resources & green infrastructure…** To reduce the consumption of natural resources, protect and optimise utilisation of green infrastructure.
7. **Energy…** To minimise the requirement for energy use, promote energy efficiency, and increase the use of energy from renewable sources for transport and transport related assets.
8. **Design…** To promote high quality building/layout design that supports transport sustainability.
9. **Towns & local centres…** To support and increase the vitality and viability of town and local centres.
10. **Economy & access to employment skills…** Achieving the interconnected objectives of establishing a sustainable, competitive local economy and improving access to skills, knowledge and employment both in rural and urban areas.
11. **Safety…** To create a safe environment to live in and reduce fear of crime.
12. **Quality of life…** To enhance and promote the quality of life, health and social inclusion of all residents in the borough.
13. **Access to leisure countryside…** To maintain and enhance access to formal and informal cultural, leisure and recreational facilities and improve access to the countryside.

**1.55** The SA contributed to the prioritised approach that sets the need to create conditions for business growth alongside the need to ensure a sustainable future. Where the findings of the SA are found to be particularly relevant, these have been included within each chapter.



**Bosley Cloud**

# 1 Introduction & Context

## Challenges & Priorities

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

**1.57** The LTP must be realistic and deliverable whilst also retaining the ambition to achieve much more when the funding climate improves. In order to achieve this it is necessary to indicate which themes and policies have priority over others.

**1.58** Through consultation with elected Members, two proposed priority SCS themes have emerged – these are **creating the conditions for business growth**, and **ensure a sustainable future**. This does not mean that the needs of other areas will be neglected – rather they will be supported by targeted aspects of the core policy solutions adopted.

**1.59** A similar exercise has been undertaken to prioritise the policies within each area. Proposed 'core' and 'complementary' polices are highlighted in the chapters. The level of funding available for transport over the lifespan of this strategy will determine the number of policy areas that can effectively be delivered.

## "Daughter Documents"

**1.60** The transport priorities of the final LTP will be reflected in a series of technical, topic specific, "daughter documents". The scope of these documents will be separately determined for each, but will consider the Council's approach to both statutory and non-statutory duties in the context of LTP priorities. The following "daughter documents" are to be prepared either in parallel to the LTP or during the first year of the plan period:

- Rights of Way Improvement Plan
- Transport Asset Management Plan
- Network Management Plan
- Passenger Transport Strategy
- Road Safety Strategy
- A series of individual Transport Frameworks for towns

## LTP Structure

**1.61** The chapters are structured around the SCS themes:

- **Chapter 2: Sustainability** – Ensure a sustainable future
- **Chapter 3: Business** – Create conditions for business growth
- **Chapter 4: Health** – Drive out the sources of poor health
- **Chapter 5: Communities** – Nurture strong communities
- **Chapter 6: Young people** – Support our children and young people
- **Chapter 7: Older people** – Prepare for an increasingly older population
- **Chapter 8: Towns** – Unlock the potential of our towns

1.62 In each chapter, the ways in which the SCS area for action is linked to transport are identified, relevant evidence is assessed, and emerging issues identified. These are refined down to more transport-specific challenges, and a range of policies and interventions which might resolve a challenge identified. This process is brought together through cross-referencing where policies that might also have a beneficial impact in other action areas are highlighted.

1.63 **Chapter 8: Towns** is slightly different from the rest, in that it sets out the mechanism to ascertain local priorities and undertake locally specific discussion on transport issues, through preparation of a series of Transport Frameworks for towns.

1.64 The mechanism for delivering the aspirations of the strategy will be set out in the first implementation plan which will also contain details of how performance will be measured.

1.65 **Appendix A** contains a draft Transport Framework for Crewe.

# 2 Ensure a Sustainable Future

## Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) Priorities

**2.1** The SCS has identified four priorities for action to encourage sustainable living and meet the future needs of communities in Cheshire East. These are:

- Provision of affordable and appropriate housing
- Encouraging environmentally sustainable living
- Improving transport connections and accessible services
- Protecting and enhancing our heritage and countryside

**2.2** Transport will be influential within each of the four SCS actions for sustainability. Spatial planning decisions need to be proactively considered due to the long term influence on sustainability. The key sustainable development objective is to strike the right balance between the ability of transport to serve economic development and the ability to protect the environment and sustain quality of life, both now and in the future. The policies and initiatives within this chapter will very often help deliver the conditions for business growth by opening up markets and opportunities through sustainable travel modes. For example, a new railway station in Middlewich will make the town more attractive to employers and boost the town's reputation as a tourist destination, while a through train service will also encourage modal shift, potentially reducing congestion and carbon emissions.

**2.3** The location of housing and key services influences the need to travel and the ability to use non-car modes. Encouraging environmentally sustainable living through the use of public transport, walking and cycling will minimise the impact that individuals have on the natural environment.

## Evidence Overview

**2.4** Road transport accounts for 37% of the total carbon dioxide emissions in Cheshire East. When compared to the North West, Cheshire East has a higher percentage of emissions from domestic and local transport services. Macclesfield, Knutsford and Wilmslow have some of the highest emissions from road transport in the North West. This is indicative of the high car dependency and low public transport use in Cheshire East relative to other areas.

**2.5** Transport is the only sector of the economy where emissions have increased since 1990, and the only sector where emissions are predicted to increase up to 2020[a]. However, the carbon emissions from transport should not be seen as an insurmountable challenge, but an opportunity for systemic change over the next 15 years.

**2.6** The bus industry is taking the lead for road transport through the statutory introduction of low emission vehicles. These standards are progressively being raised over time, making buses one of the least polluting forms of road transport. Achieving modal shift from private vehicles to bus use would significantly reduce carbon emissions from transport.




**2.7** In addition, much of the rail network in Cheshire East has been electrified, reducing emissions from trains. Many of the electric trains used on suburban services in the borough are fitted with regenerative braking, where the braking energy is fed back into the power supply and reused by other trains for acceleration, thereby reducing energy consumption and emissions.

**2.8** Smarter choices are techniques for reducing the need to travel and influencing travel behaviour towards more sustainable modes of transport. They can be applied to both personal and business travel. Evidence suggests that we are not doing enough to implement and monitor smarter choices locally within Cheshire East.

**2.9** However, national evidence suggests that smarter choice techniques are cost effective in influencing travel behaviour. The results from the DfT's 'Sustainable Travel Towns' programme found that annual per capita emissions from car driving fell by approximately 4.6% for journeys of all lengths.

## Stakeholder Opinion

**2.10** Attendees at the final stakeholder consultation workshop identified the need to **create a sustainable future** as one of the two key priority themes, alongside **creating the conditions for business growth.** These priority themes were supported by the general public through the consultation survey and events.

**2.11** The consultation process also identified the following priority policy areas:

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



(bus, rail and community transport) to improve public transport integration and facilities.

- Spatial Planning – Seek to minimise the future need to travel through a strategy in the Local Development Framework that focuses most new developments in larger settlements where there is a good range of housing, jobs, shops and services already accessible by public transport, cycling and walking.
- Cycling - Work with stakeholders to improve facilities for cycling so that it is attractive for shorter journeys.

**2.12** In exploring the detailed transport challenges related to planning for sustainability and future needs, there was strong stakeholder support (throughout all stages of consultation) for improving the quality of public transport and tackling climate change through improving the network for sustainable modes of travel.

## LTP Objectives

### RELEVANT OBJECTIVES

**Objective 6 (Environment): Protect and enhance the local and global natural environment (including environmental assets such as biodiversity, geodiversity, soils and protected landscapes).**

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

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

## Sustainability Appraisal

**2.13** In developing the policies set out in the LTP, stakeholders, council Members and the general public were supportive of the need to balance aspirations for business growth with a sustainable approach to transport.

**2.14** The Sustainability Appraisal of policies within this chapter found beneficial effects across the majority of sustainability objectives. At least four positive effects were predicted for each individual policy across the full range of sustainability objectives below:

- 1 Biodiversity, habitats, geology…
- 2 Flooding…
- 3 Minimise need to travel & sustainable modes…
- 4 Heritage & landscape…
- 5 Pollution & climate change…
- 6 Resources & green infrastructure…
- 7 Energy…

- 8 Design…
- 9 Towns & local centres…
- 10 Economy & access to employment skills…
- 11 Safety…
- 12 Quality of life…
- 13 Access to leisure countryside…

**2.15** Policies on walking and cycling showed benefits in eight of the sustainability objectives. This contributed to the evidence that made cycling a priority policy following public consultation.

**2.16** The only sustainability objective that was not linked to a beneficial effects from sustainability policy was "4 Heritage & landscape…". Uncertain effects were identified for this objective in relation to policies on spatial planning, walking and cycling. The effect (such as detrimental increases in visitor numbers) on this objective would need to be determined at scheme design level, however, it is considered that any impacts could be mitigated through careful management.

**2.17** In conclusion, the Sustainability Appraisal of the policies within this chapter were overwhelmingly beneficial, and the appraisal contributed to the upgrade in priority of cycling.

## Transport Challenges & Policy Solutions

### Spatial Planning

**2.18** The Council's Local Development Framework (LDF) will provide the overall spatial development strategy for the borough. There is a critical link between spatial planning and transport – as the location of housing, employment, retail, healthcare and education facilities will be a major determinant of the need to travel and the attractiveness of each mode.

**2.19** Current planning policy encourages new development in sustainable locations, so as to minimise the need to travel to that destination by private vehicle. Where a greater range of attractive travel opportunities exist, more people will have the ability to choose sustainable travel modes such as public transport, walking and cycling. There is also a balance to be struck regarding the future vitality of rural towns and villages whereby new development and population increase may support jobs and services - such issues will be dealt with through the LDF process rather than the LTP process.

**2.20** The aim for the LTP, which is widely supported by stakeholders, is to ensure that development sites have good accessibility and that appropriate conditions are imposed on the application which will ensure the developer makes them accessible - whether in urban or rural locations. This will help create sustainable communities where people are able to "live local, work local and buy local".

# 2 Ensure a Sustainable Future

**2.21** LTP policy needs to reinforce and help deliver the approach set out in the forthcoming LDF – there are two strands of influence: the first is guiding most new development to locations with good existing levels of accessibility, the second relates to mitigating the impact of development and encouraging provision of high quality sustainable transport options. This chapter, on sustainability and future needs, focuses on the first element and seeks to influence spatial considerations within the LDF.

**2.22** The policy on mitigating the transport impact of development is in **Chapter 3: Business.**

**2.23** It should be noted that general accessibility issues (such as access to services in rural communities or from areas of deprivation) are considered in more detail in **Chapter 5: Communities.**

## PRIORITY POLICY

**Policy S1 Spatial Planning:** Seek to minimise the future need to travel through a strategic approach in the Local Development Framework that focuses most new development in locations where there is a good range of housing, jobs, shops and services already accessible by public transport, cycling and walking.

### S1 Policy Initiatives

**2.24** **Transport assessment of strategic site proposals:** Assess the likely cumulative impact of development proposals on the highways and transport network, and inform the LDF process by producing public transport accessibility mapping of all strategic sites proposals.

**2.25** **Neighbouring authority developments:** Work with neighbouring authorities to test the transport impact of adjacent developments on Cheshire East highways and transport network and ensure appropriate mitigation is provided.

| S1 Related Initiatives | Policy |
|---|---|
| Key service locations | C2 Accessibility of Services |
| Access to employment, skills & education | C2 Accessibility of Services |
| Transport & Regeneration | B2 Enabling Development |
| Developer contributions | B2 Enabling Development |

## Climate Change - Mitigation & Adaptation

**2.26** Climate change is nationally recognised as one of the most important challenges facing our society. Transport accounts for 25% of our carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions in the UK and personal car travel is the single biggest contributor to individual CO2 emissions[b].

**2.27** Residents of Cheshire East have higher than average carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions at 10.3 tonnes per person, compared to the national average of 8.4 tonnes per person. In addition, transport accounts for an average of 35% of these emissions, rising to as much as 41% in the Macclesfield area[c]. The LTP aims to help reduce emissions and will contribute to targets for Cheshire East as a whole.

**2.28** A partnership of all the public sector bodies in Cheshire & Warrington has come together to jointly tackle carbon management issues within their own estate. This group includes the 3 local authorities, health care providers, universities and colleges, Cheshire Constabulary and Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service. Projects include joint campaigns, research and communications.

**2.29** In addition, the Cheshire & Warrington Climate Change & Sustainability Commission (C&WCCSC) consists of organisations from the public sector, as well as business and voluntary groups. Its aim is to champion and drive forward the climate change and sustainability agendas in the Cheshire and Warrington area through joint working. Three main areas for projects have been agreed around adaptation, mitigation and communication programmes.

**2.30** The possibility of hotter summers, wetter winters and more frequent climatic events will not only affect our weather, but also the health of local residents and the growth of the economy. In relation to transport, this could mean more frequent flooding or snow causing road closures, reduced durability of road surfaces, heat buckling the railways, or fog and high winds affecting air travel.

**2.31** Transport networks, and their associated green infrastructure, can provide valuable ecosystem services that can assist in the management of, and adaptation to climate change. This green infrastructure can provide carbon storage by trees; sustainable drainage and water conservation; cooling urban heat islands; and ecological connectivity. For example, linear transport features (such as canal towpaths, public rights of way, road verges, cycle routes and

railway embankments) are well suited to enhancing wildlife connectivity across the countryside, as well as providing areas for carbon storage, enabling better water conservation, and in towns and cities, providing valuable cooling systems.

## POLICY

**Policy S2 Climate Change – Mitigation & Adaptation:** Ensure that transport policies support wider climate change objectives and adaptation needs.

### S2 Policy Initiatives

2.32 **Strategic joint working:** Support strategic partners across all sectors to develop, implement and monitor initiatives to reduce CO2 emissions from transport.

2.33 **Carbon Management Plan:** Implement the Council's internal plan which seeks to reduce CO2 emissions from its buildings, transport and service delivery. The plan has been produced alongside the Carbon Trust and will be published in 2011.

2.34 **Influence travel behaviour:** Support initiatives to reduce the need to travel by private vehicle and promote the use of sustainable modes of transport. Initiatives include greater use of technology, provision of personalised journey planning and encouraging increased levels of walking, cycling and public transport use.

| S2 Related Initiatives | Policy |
|---|---|
| Sustainable communities | C2 Accessibility of services |
| Community groups | C2 Community |
| Prepare for climate change | B3 Network Management |
| Broadband infrastructure | B7 Business Innovation |
| Travel plan initiatives | B7 Business Innovation |
| Council travel | B7 Business Innovation |

## Public Transport

2.35 Public transport has an important role to play in planning for sustainability and future needs by encouraging a shift towards low carbon transport. It is also a cross-cutting theme supporting the delivery of many of the policy objectives within the transport strategy for Cheshire East, including creating the conditions for business growth, improved accessibility to services, helping older people

live independently and supporting regeneration. The initiatives within the public transport theme will be a key focus for developing bids to access potential funding sources (e.g. Sustainable Transport Fund).

**2.36** A Passenger Transport Strategy will be developed as a daughter document to the LTP, identifying specific policies for public transport, home to school transport and adult services transport. The strategy will investigate the opportunity to integrate transport assets to maximise benefits across communities, reduce duplication and achieve efficiencies on the supported network (e.g. integrate home to school and community transport services).

## Integration & Facilities

**2.37** A lack of integration between transport services has been identified as a significant barrier to greater use of bus and rail services, causing significant increases in journey time and discouraging multi-modal travel. Any initiatives to overcome this (e.g. timetable modifications which facilitate interchange) should increase the appeal of travel by public transport and provide an attractive alternative to the private car.

**2.38** Stakeholder consultation identified widespread support for working with stakeholders to influence rail and bus station improvements and providing parking at public transport hubs to reduce congestion in urban areas. It is recognised that Crewe railway station is in great need of upgrading due to unsatisfactory facilities and poor maintenance[d]. Indeed, the improvement of the station is a key component of 'All Change for Crewe' – Crewe's strategic framework for economic growth 2010-2030.

**2.39** The provision of additional facilities will also enhance users' safety (both actual and perceived) whilst waiting at bus stops and railway stations. Better communication (e.g. real-time information) would help ensure that users who have just missed a connection do not wait unnecessarily, but are aware of the next service available. The provision of raised kerbs can improve accessibility for wheelchair users, parents with buggies and people with mobility constraints.



**Bus stop facilities**

**2.40** The borough's integrated transport forum will bring together bus, rail and community transport operators at a strategic level to explore opportunities to co-ordinate and integrate travel by different modes of transport, ensuring ongoing liaison and positive dialogue with operators.

# 2 Ensure a Sustainable Future

## PRIORITY POLICY

**Policy S3 Public Transport (Integration & Facilities)**: Work with passenger transport providers (bus, rail and community transport) to improve public transport integration and facilities.

### S3 Policy Initiatives

2.41 **Encouraging multi-modal travel:** Support initiatives to improve integration between different modes of transport, such as timetable or route modifications to reduce interchange times or provision for bicycles on public transport.

2.42 **Railway station improvements:** Work with train operating companies to identify improvements and secure investment in Cheshire East railway stations – especially Crewe. This may include securing developer contributions to upgrade facilities or services.



2.43 **Facilities at public transport hubs:** Examine the potential for improved car parking and cycle parking at bus and railway stations across the borough, particularly those which improve access into Manchester.

2.44 **Access to public transport hubs:** Support initiatives to increase access to bus and railway stations through improved signing and improvements to walking routes. Directional signing will also seek to provide information on the distance to facilities. Where demand and potential funding exists work with providers to introduce shuttle services to link public transport hubs and business centres and educational establishments.

2.45 **Bus stop condition:** Support improvements to the quality and safety of bus stops, including the provision of raised kerbs and dropped crossings, lighting, CCTV, shelter, seating, litter bins and real-time information.

2.46 **Green fleet:** Encourage the use of low energy, hybrid and electric vehicles by building incentives and disincentives into the procurement process, particularly in Air Quality Management Areas. Promote driver training to operators to reduce emissions and support cleaner operation of the fleet.

| S3 Related Initiatives | Policy |
|---|---|
| Developer Contributions | B2 Enabling development |
| Retail parking | B6 Parking |
| Social care transport options | C3 Access for all |
| Accessibility Audits | C3 Access for all |
| Accessible vehicles | C3 Access for all |
| Manchester Airport Group (MAG) | B1 Strategic Partnership |

## Service Levels & Reliability

**2.47** Service levels and reliability have been identified by local residents as a disincentive to greater use of public transport services. The issues are particularly acute in rural areas where there is more limited access to conventional fixed route public transport services.

### Bus Services

**2.48** Currently 80% of the bus network is run by commercial operators. The commercial network consists of fixed route services where there is a concentration of passenger demand along a defined route corridor. The network is most dense in the principal towns of Crewe and Macclesfield. Not surprisingly, commercial fixed route services are more limited in the rural areas of the borough, except on roads serving the main towns. The infrequency of rural bus services is a common concern for rural communities where lack of demand due to low population makes higher frequencies commercially inviable.




**2.49** The Council will work with commercial operators to increase patronage, particularly on marginal services which are 'at risk' of withdrawal, through increased promotion and marketing in order to improve the viability of services. Ultimately the aim is to encourage modal shift from the private car to public transport and expand the commercial bus network in the borough. New developments provide the opportunity to explore new commercial opportunities

where there is likely to be a concentration of passenger demand. The potential for conventional or demand responsive public transport services that link areas of Cheshire East with the Airport may also exist.

**2.50** The remaining 20% of the bus network is subsidised by the Council as part of its statutory duty to identify the transport needs of the area and consider financial and other support for public and community transport services where deemed to be socially necessary. The Sustainable Transport Fund will be targeted as a potential significant source of funding for future subsidised bus services.

**2.51** As part of the Passenger Transport Strategy, the Council will review the existing bus support criteria in order to prioritise the most socially necessary services and target investment based on need through locally determined criteria in line with strategic objectives for transport contained within this LTP. Criteria is likely to include factors such as whether services provide access to hospital or access to employment through evening/weekend services.

**2.52** In reviewing the criteria there will be a need to balance a range of competing priorities (e.g. rural accessibility, urban areas of deprivation, access to healthcare, elderly populations,congestion hotspots) and explore innovative solutions to improving service levels through the commercial and subsidised transport networks, as well as community based solutions.

**2.53** In addition, the Passenger Transport Strategy will explore the opportunity to integrate the Council's transport assets to reduce duplication and achieve efficiencies, which could release capacity to improve service levels and better meet the needs of local communities (e.g. integrate home to school and community transport services). Improved networking, coordination and support of community transport providers will help small providers meet demand for services and tackle "fragmentation" of providers across sectors.

**2.54** In terms of reliability, data provided by bus operators identified that 84% of services ran on time in 2008/9 and targets have been set to increase this to 87% in 2011/12. Ongoing liaison between operators and the Council's highways service will ensure a co-ordinated approach to highway management issues (e.g. congestion) and a shared understanding of the effects of highway works on passenger transport operators and users.

**2.55** Through the Council's Network Management Plan there may also be opportunities to develop bus priority measures on the highway network to reduce delays and improve reliability of services (see **Chapter 3: Business**).

**Rail Services**

**2.56** The number of passengers carried by rail services serving Cheshire East continues to show strong growth. For example Alderley Edge, Sandbach, Holmes Chapel, Chelford, and Disley stations have all seen passenger numbers grow by over 30% in the past two years. Currently a number of rail lines through Cheshire East are operating at or over capacity, including the West Coast Main Line, the Crewe to Manchester line and the Buxton to Manchester line.

**2.57** There are clear benefits associated with increased rail connectivity and capacity both within the North West and with other parts of the country and railway stations have an important role to play as public transport interchanges. The Northern Hub proposals aim to address rail congestion and overcapacity in central Manchester, which will be important in unlocking improvements in the speed, frequency and reliability of train services across Cheshire East. In addition, national proposals to build a High Speed railway line will encourage modal shift for long distance journeys, as well as releasing capacity on local rail networks (also see **Chapter 3: Business**).

**2.58** Manchester airport has developed as an important public transport hub, well connected by bus, road, rail and air. In addition, there are well developed proposals to extend the Manchester Metrolink service to the airport. However, rail services to the airport from Crewe require improvement to take full advantage of these interchange possibilities with Sunday services and weekday peak hour services of particular concern.

**2.59** Network Rail provides all rail infrastructure, while the specification of rail services is decided nationally by the Department for Transport, who periodically let franchises to rail operators to run services. The two main franchise agreements serving Cheshire East are due for renewal in the short term – including the West Coast Franchise (currently Virgin Trains) in 2012 and the Northern Franchise (currently Northern Trains) in 2013. The Council recognises the importance of influencing this process to achieve the best possible service provision and investment into the local rail network.

**2.60** Cheshire East's membership of national rail lobby groups (e.g. West Coast 250, North West Rail Campaign) helps to ensure that Cheshire East has a voice at a national lobbying level. The importance of working with sub-regional partners and stakeholders is also recognised, as well as the role of Community Rail Partnerships and local user groups in understanding local needs and developing grassroots initiatives.

**2.61** Through the consultation, local stakeholders expressed support for re-instating passenger services on railway lines, particularly the Northwich to Sandbach line which is currently freight only. Re-opening this line for passenger services would increase travel choice, improve accessibility and enable sustainable growth in Middlewich.

## PRIORITY POLICY

**Policy S4 Public Transport (Service Levels & Reliability)**: Work with passenger transport operators (bus, rail, community transport & taxis) to explore improvements to service levels and reliability.

### S4 Policy Initiatives

### Bus Services

2.62 **Supported services**: Consider the options for revised support criteria and aim to integrate transport assets to reduce duplication, achieve efficiencies and seek opportunities to improve service levels. Criteria may include whether services provide access to hospital, serve rural areas, elderly populations, or enable employment opportunities through evening and weekend services.

2.63 **New commercial opportunities**: Work with operators to explore opportunities for new commercially viable bus routes where there is likely to be a concentration of demand, particularly in relation to new development.

2.64 **Bus driver training**: Support the provision of additional training for drivers to improve the journey experience for users and reliability. This could include training on driving style, as well as general customer service.

### Rail Services

2.65 **Rail service specifications**: Work with strategic partners (e.g. GMPTE, Welsh Assembly Government) and rail investment lobby groups to influence rail service specifications and seek improvements to services levels and reliability.

2.66 **Reinstate passenger services**: Work with stakeholders to seek improvements to the local rail network, including support for the re-opening of the railway line from Sandbach to Northwich, enabling passengers to travel from Crewe to Manchester via Middlewich.

| S4 Related Initiatives | Policy |
|---|---|
| Rail Infrastructure (National) | B1 Strategic partnership for economic growth |
| Developer contributions | B2 Enabling development |
| Manage network disruption | B3 Network Management |
| Junction efficiency | B3 Network Management |
| Bus priority measures | B4 Network improvement |
| Highway capacity improvements | B4 Network Improvement |
| Community engagement | C1 Community |
| Community-led initiatives | C1 Community |
| Community groups | C1 Community |

## Information & Marketing

**2.67** 55% of National Highways & Transportation (NHT) survey respondents had used public transport information over the last 12 months. 67% used bus service timetables, 52% used bus stop displays, 28% used the internet, 22% used bus stop information and 18% used Traveline.

**2.68** The Council will develop an Information Strategy as part of the Passenger Transport Strategy to consider how new technologies will change the way in which public transport information and publicity is accessed and disseminated in the future. It is important to ensure that methods are consistent with people's lifestyles over the next 15 years.

**2.69** Promotional initiatives will aim to encourage greater use of bus and rail services in borough. To achieve this objective, the Council will work with commercial operators to increase the quantity, quality and accuracy of information provided in a variety of different formats.

**2.70** The Council will seek to support the commercial bus network through targeting promotion and publicity where it is needed most. For example, at marginal services which are 'at risk' of withdrawal and to relieve congestion in urban areas. The aim is to encourage modal shift and ensure that communities are aware of the services available.

**2.71** There are also opportunities to utilise personalised journey planning techniques that provide individualised travel advice to people based on their journey making characteristics, with the aim of achieving modal shift.

**2.72** Initiatives to extend the coverage of real-time information at bus stops (and via mobile devices) to educate car drivers about the true cost of their journey, in terms of both carbon emissions and financial cost (e.g. fuel, tax, maintenance, depreciation), and promote public transport alternatives will be explored.

### POLICY

**Policy S5 Public Transport (Information & Marketing)**: Work with passenger transport operators to promote the use of public transport through improved information and marketing.

### S5 Policy Initiatives

**2.73** **Targeted promotion:** Support initiatives to target information and marketing towards commercial services which are 'at risk', services with the greatest potential for mode change, high frequency routes and new or amended services (fixed route or flexible). This could include the 'branding' of public transport routes and publication of positive reliability data.

## 2 Ensure a Sustainable Future

**2.74** **Multi-media information:** Promote the use of public transport and communicate with passengers through a variety of channels, including traditional time tables, real time information, mobile phones and other media as they emerge. This could also include a multi-modal travel website providing a “one-stop-shop” for travel information. Implementation of this initiative will ensure user groups are involved making non-staffed information points as accessible as possible to disadvantaged groups. Information for visitors needs to be available at key points of entry into Cheshire East and be available for specific events while offering a consistent and warm welcome.

**2.75** **Community transport:** Support initiatives to improve networking and coordination of community transport providers to help small providers meet demand for services and tackle "fragmentation" of providers across sectors. Seek to provide a computerised booking system for flexible transport services to improve the efficiency and facilitate scheduling of services.

| S5 Related Initiative | Policy |
|---|---|
| Travel plan initiatives | B7 Business innovation |

## CASE STUDY

**Beartown Bus**

A simplified and co-ordinated network of services, introducing new wheelchair accessible buses has been introduced on town services within Congleton. The "Beartown Bus" theme was used and developed providing a high profile and strong link with the town's history. Infrastructure improvements have also been made to maximise the impact of the accessible buses.




"Beartown Bus" has consistently achieved a progressive increase of the number of passenger trips, peaking at over 100% in comparison to the number recorded prior to its introduction in August 2007. "Beartown Bus" has also generated a significant increase in bus fare revenue.

## Fares & Ticketing

**2.76** Issues relating to the cost of travel by public transport are identified as a significant barrier to greater use of bus and rail services, particularly for young people. It is often cited as the reason why many people choose to travel by private vehicle.

**2.77** In seeking to reduce carbon emissions associated with transport and encouraging increased use of more sustainable modes, there is a need to tackle the actual and perceived barriers to use. This may include educating users on the cost of travel by public transport relative to the total cost of travelling by car.

**2.78** A high level of support was shown to a number of fare and ticketing initiatives. Stakeholders expressed the greatest support for developing cross-boundary, multi-operator and multi-modal ticketing solutions to reduce the cost and journey

times of public transport. This is a particular issue in the north of the borough where there are a significant number of commuters travelling to and from Manchester.

2.79 In terms of multi-operator ticketing issues, in 2010 there were approximately 50 operators of registered bus services in Cheshire East. Passengers often find that they cannot take advantage of return and day tickets because their best return or onward journey is by a different operator.

2.80 The disparity in the cost of rail fares between the area served by the Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Executive (GMPTE) and areas geographically close to the border in Cheshire East has been identified as an issue. Through a local levy on constituent local authorities and higher council tax the GMPTE area is able to offer reduced rate rail fares. A consequence of this is 'rail heading' – whereby many commuters from outside the GMPTE area travel to the closest rail station within the reduced price ticketing zone – often passing closer local stations on the way, travelling further by car and adding to local congestion and carbon emissions.

## POLICY

**Policy S6 Public Transport (Fares & Ticketing)**: Work with passenger transport operators to develop fare initiatives and simpler ticketing solutions.

### S6 Policy Initiatives

2.81 **Intelligent ticketing solutions:** Work with public transport operators and cross boundary partners (e.g. GMPTE) to investigate the potential to develop multi-operator, multi-modal, cross boundary ticketing, tourist/visitor passes and packages. This will include developing smart card initiatives and exploring opportunities to expand the functionality of smart cards to include car parks,

2.82 **Monitor and review the fare structure:** Undertake a review of public transport fares to identify any issues associated with the cost of travel by public transport (e.g. cost of access to hospital) – where appropriate support initiatives to overcome any identified issues.

| S6 Related Initiatives | Policy |
|---|---|
| Concessionary bus travel | C3 Access for all |
| Concessionary rail cards | C3 Access for all |
| Fare and ticketing initiatives | Y2 Young People |

## Walking

**2.83** The 2009 National Highways & Transportation (NHT) survey found that public satisfaction with walking facilities in Cheshire East is low compared with other authorities[e]. The most notable issue discouraging travel on foot was the lack of provision of footways (paved areas alongside roads) where they are needed.

**2.84** Only 43% of respondents were satisfied with the footways provided within their local area, which was the lowest level of satisfaction across all local authorities[f]. The provision of footways was felt most acutely in village locations, with HGV movements found to further discourage pedestrian movement due to safety concerns.



**2.85** The condition of the footways was also considered to be poor compared to other local authorities[g]. However, the perception of the overall condition of the public rights of way network was much higher[h], highlighting that significant variation exists between the quality and condition of footways alongside roads and off-road footpaths commonly associated with the public rights of way network; although it should be recognised that respondents may have distinguished between utilitarian and leisure uses of the two types of facility, and have different expectations of quality.

**2.86** Clarity of warning and direction signs, particularly for pedestrians, has also been identified as an issue, alongside a lack of safe crossing points on the highway network and the quality of walking routes near hospitals.

**2.87** An increase in the number of shorter journeys made by foot will contribute towards sustainability by reducing carbon emissions, as well as being beneficial for health and tackling congestion. The policy on walking is also included as a policy within the Rights of Way Implementation Plan (ROWIP) and will be jointly delivered across the ROWIP and LTP.

### POLICY

**Policy S7 Walking:** Work with stakeholders to improve facilities for walking so that it is attractive for shorter journeys.

**S7 Policy Initiatives**

**2.88** **Footway and footpath improvements:** Promote improvements to the condition of highway footways, footpaths and public rights of way. In particular, support the development, on safety grounds, of low cost

measures, such as verge improvements. Consideration will also be given to resurfacing, removal of litter and other environmental health issues, provision of lighting and seating, where appropriate, and the removal of barriers and obstacles to open up more routes for more people, particularly those with pushchairs and disabled people. This initiative will also recognise the environmental and biodiversity benefits of creating attractive green spaces alongside walkways and cycleways through appropriate planting of trees and shrubs.

2.89 **New walking routes:** Support the development of new routes where required but not currently provided and support initiatives to connect up the highway footway and public rights of way networks for greater pedestrian movement, including links to the canal system.

2.90 **Pedestrian crossing points:** Support the provision of safe crossing points, wide pavements, dropped kerbs and other facilities where necessary to encourage travel on foot, improve perceptions of safety along routes and make routes more accessible to disabled people.

2.91 **Route signing:** Promote the signing of dedicated on- and off-road pedestrian routes to encourage greater use by pedestrians. Initiatives will include the provision of signs relaying destination, distance and time information.

| S7 Related Initiatives | Policy |
|---|---|
| Developer contributions | B2 Enabling Development |
| Sustainable infrastructure in new development | B2 Enabling Development |
| Highway clutter | B3 Network Management |
| Transport Asset Management Plan | B8 Maintenance |
| Local minor infrastructure improvements | C1 Community |
| Promote opportunities and facilities | H2 Promotion of active travel & healthy activities |
| Organised walks, rides and activities | H2 Promotion of active travel & healthy activities |
| Encourage sustainable travel | Y1 Travel to Education |
| Safer routes to schools | Y1 Travel to Education |

## CASE STUDY

**Footpath Improvements**

During the year 2009/10, the Council resurfaced a number of routes within the town of Macclesfield. The before and after photos speak for themselves in demonstrating the improvements made which make footpaths much more attractive to users.





Footpaths in Macclesfield before and after improvement works.

## Cycling

**2.92** Cycling is an ideal mode of transport for short local trips, particularly in urban areas. Encouraging increased levels of cycling will support many of the policy objectives within the LTP, including reduced congestion, better air quality, lower carbon emissions and improved health and wellbeing.

**2.93** The 2009 National Highways & Transportation (NHT) survey suggested that the availability of cycling routes was the area with the greatest potential for improvement when compared with other local authorities. In addition, provision of cycle signage was also identified as an issue with potential for improvement.



## 2 Ensure a Sustainable Future

**2.94** On-road cycling facilities within the borough are limited, yet the highway network is extensively used for cycling. The stakeholder consultation identified the lack of dedicated cycle crossing facilities at road junctions and traffic signals as a barrier to greater use of bicycles, leading to safety concerns for cyclists.

**2.95** A small number of off-road cycle routes exist within the borough, such as the Crewe to Nantwich Greenway developed as part of the Connect 2 initiative. Although these routes provide a good level of facilities along their length, the lack of connectivity between the routes restricts their use for longer journeys. This may, in part, explain why a low percentage[i] of respondents are satisfied with the quality and provision of cycle ways and cycle routes within the borough.

**2.96** At present, 3.4% of the borough's population travel to work by bicycle, increasing to 8.2% of residents in Crewe. A lack of cycling facilities at employment destinations may be contributing towards this low cycling rate[j].

**2.97** Concerns regarding safety and perceptions of safety were identified in a North West behavioural change study as a barrier to additional cycling demand[k]. This issue is partly due to the lack of dedicated cycling infrastructure. Cycle training can also play a role, with estimates suggesting that the cost benefit ratio achieved through cycle training can be as much as 7:1 [l].

**2.98** The aim will be to improve facilities for cycling to make routes and destinations as attractive as possible to users. This means developing routes which will usefully link destinations and services (e.g. routes to hospitals),removing obstacles which may act as a barrier to users and providing signage to give confidence of direction, destination and journey time or distance. All funding opportunities will be investigated to help deliver improvements to the cycle network (e.g. Sustainable Transport Fund, developer funding etc.)

**2.99** The policy on cycling is also included as a policy within the Rights of Way Implementation Plan and will be jointly delivered across the ROWIP and LTP.

**PRIORITY POLICY**

**Policy S8 Cycling**: Work with stakeholders to improve facilities for cycling so that it is attractive for shorter journeys.

**S8 Policy Initiatives**

**2.100** **New cycle routes:** Seek to provide appropriate highway improvements (e.g. on-road cycle lanes or wide nearside lanes) and off-road routes to make commuter cycling a safe and quick alternative to car use. Focus will be on creating a network of joined-up routes catering for a range of cycle skill levels and will capitalise on the potential of the canal system for cyclists.

2.101 **Junction and route improvements for cyclists:** Promote the provision of filter lanes, advanced stop lines and toucan crossings, where applicable, to prioritise and enhance the safety of cyclists at junctions. Undertake surfacing and lighting improvements on existing key links. Such measures will be incorporated into the design of new or amended highways, as well as retrospectively to existing road junctions, where possible.

2.102 **Cycling facilities:** Work to provide greater access to cycling facilities (e.g. cycle parking, changing facilities, showers) in town centres, at community facilities (e.g. libraries), service and employment locations. Also support hire & ride schemes.



2.103 **Route signing:** Greater uptake of cycling can be encouraged through the provision of route signs which state the destination, distance and journey time to selected destinations, to complement other sources of information (see **Chapter 4: Health**).

| S8 Related Initiatives | Policy |
|---|---|
| Developer contributions | B2 Enabling Development |
| Sustainable infrastructure in new development | B2 Enabling Development |
| Transport Asset Management Plan | B8 Maintenance |
| Travel plan initiatives | B7 Business Innovation |
| Promote opportunities and facilities | H2 Promotion of Active Travel & Healthy Activities |
| Encourage sustainable travel | Y1 Travel to Education |
| Safer routes to schools | Y1 Travel to Education |

## CASE STUDY

**Connect2 Crewe to Nantwich Greenway**

Working together with Sustrans, Cheshire East is developing a traffic-free cycle route between Crewe and Nantwich. Under the Connect2 initiative, external funding was secured to improve existing paths and create new paths. The route will offer cyclists and walkers a safe route between the two towns whilst avoiding the congested Nantwich Road in Crewe. Part of the route is also available to horse riders. A stakeholder group of local representatives was formed to monitor the project.




**Connect2 Sign**

## Technology & Energy Efficiency

**2.104** Innovations in vehicle manufacturing such as new materials, more efficient engines and hybrid technology are helping to reduce CO2 emissions, as are alternative fuels. There are a number of alternative fuels available now and on the horizon which can help to reduce vehicle emissions.

**2.105** However, their contribution to reducing CO2 can vary widely depending on where they are sourced from and how they are manufactured. For example, biodiesel, LPG, electric vehicles and the hydrogen fuel cell are currently available and in development.

**2.106** By making changes to Council practices related to transport (such as fleet procurement, street lighting and traffic signals) and being actively involved in business and community initiatives to save energy, the Council can reduce the carbon foot print of the authority.

**2.107** The aim of this policy is to make it clear that the Council is fully supportive of wider changes in transport that make it possible to reduce carbon emissions by technology and energy efficiency initiatives.

## POLICY

**Policy S9 Technology & Energy Efficiency:** Encourage technological development in transport services in partnership with operators and will improve energy efficiency of transport infrastructure.

### S9 Policy Initiatives

2.108 **Hybrid and electric vehicles:** Investigate hybrid and electric vehicle options for fleet vehicles and seek to promote their use more widely in Cheshire East, including provision of charging points where possible, particularly in new developments.

2.109 **Street Lighting:** Investigate the dimming or removal of unnecessary street lights at certain times to help reduce the Council's carbon emissions.

2.110 **Low energy technology:** Reduce the level of energy required by our street furniture (e.g. replace traditional illuminated bollards with reflective technology).

2.111 **Sustainable Materials:** Utilise materials from sustainable and recycled sources. For example, aggregates in highway maintenance projects.

| S9 Related Initiatives | Policy |
|---|---|
| Junction efficiency | B3 Network Management & Improvement |
| Transport Asset Management Plan | B8 Maintenance |
| Broadband infrastructure | B7 Business Innovation |
| Council travel | B7 Business Innovation |

## End Notes

a. JMP Review of Corporate Business Travel, 2009
b. DECC website
c. DECC website
d. The Station Champions report 2008 ranked Crewe Station as the 3rd worst in the Country.
e. NHT ranking for CE satisfaction with pavements and footways was 70th out of 76 local authorities
f. NHT score for the existing pavement network was 60.66 out of 100, ranking it 76th out of 76 local authorities
g. NHT Survey allocated a score of 46.05 out of 100 to the condition of footways, ranking it 71 out of 76 local authorities.
h. NHT Survey allocated a score of scored 55.37, ranking it 33rd out of 76.
i. The Community Survey 2008 identified that 32% of respondents were either very or fairly satisfied with the quality and provision of cycle ways and cycle routes within the borough.
j. IHT ranking for the provision of cycling facilities at employment destinations was 61 out of 76.
k. 4NW Behavioural Change Study (June 2010) Evidence Review – 2nd Edition
l. Cycling Demonstration Towns – Development of Benefit-Cost Ratios; DfT February 2010 / The Effects of Smarter Choices Programmes in the Sustainable Travel Towns; DfT February 2010 / Valuing the benefits of cycling – SQW / Cycling England (2007).

# 3 Create Conditions for Business Growth

## Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) Priorities

**3.1** The SCS has identified four priorities for action to create the conditions for business growth in Cheshire East. These are:

- Harness emerging growth opportunities
- Provide a leading broadband infrastructure
- Make the most of our tourism, heritage and natural assets
- Create a climate attractive to business investment

**3.2** The SCS explores how transport can, in part, help to deliver these priorities – for example; by ensuring that employment sites are well connected with good transport links and that there is a good standard of accessibility for people to get to work. Also through supporting sustainable access to key visitor attractions, adequate maintenance of the highway network and providing the targeted relief of congestion. These aspects of the LTP recognise the importance of the visitor economy (particularly in market towns).

**3.3** Cheshire East's emerging Local Development Framework (LDF) sets out a strategy to deliver the Council's ambitious plans for growth to deliver economic prosperity. It will also provide a framework for the Council's Economic Development Strategy (EDS).

**3.4** The draft EDS sets out the local determinants for economic growth, along with the key transport requirements. It also highlights the principal towns of Crewe and Macclesfield as spatial priorities alongside a focus on "Sustainable Towns".

**3.5** The EDS and LDF will require a locally responsive approach to transport in the principal towns and keys service centres/market towns. The LTP will enable this responsive approach by setting out a process to deliver a series of "Transport Frameworks for Towns" – full details of this process are discussed in **Chapter 8: Towns.**

## Evidence Overview

**3.6** Good transport is fundamental to the success of the Cheshire East economy. For example it:

- Supports business interaction and access
- Creates the conditions for the formation of new companies and inward investment
- Connects people to jobs and widens the labour market
- Opens up new markets for existing companies
- Increases competition leading to higher levels of business productivity

# 3 Create Conditions for Business Growth

**3.7** The Cheshire East economy is worth £7.8 billion per annum (2007 data) with Cheshire accounting for some 18% of the productivity of the entire North West Region[a]. The area's key strengths are its knowledge economy, a high quality of life, its geographical location with train journey times of under two hours to London from its key towns, as well as good connections to international airports and the key centres of Manchester & Liverpool.

**3.8** The Connecting Cities: Northwest study (2010)[b] identified Cheshire East as the third most significant employment centre within the North West, after Manchester and Liverpool. It also identifies Cheshire East as a preferred location for highly-skilled labour to live. Many of these employees do not live locally to their place of work, putting pressure on the demand for housing and transport within and between local authority areas.

**3.9** The towns of Crewe and Macclesfield combined account for almost 66% of all employment opportunities within the borough. The towns of Wilmslow, Congleton, Knutsford, Nantwich, Sandbach, Handforth and Middlewich between them supplied a further 23.5% of the available employment[c]. The borough is also home to regionally significant employment sites such as Alderley Park and Basford.

**3.10** The visitor economy is an important contributor to businesses and communities within Cheshire East, generating over £600 million per annum for the local economy. The majority of the borough's visitor attractions are located in rural areas with the result that public transport access is often poor.

## Stakeholder Opinion

**3.11** Attendees at the final stakeholder consultation workshop identified creating the conditions for business growth as one of the two key priority themes, alongside the need to create a sustainable future.

**3.12** They also identified the following priority policy areas:

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

**3.13** In workshop discussions of the transport challenges related to **creating the conditions for business growth**, stakeholders made numerous suggestions as to the possible initiatives the Council and its partners could introduce to meet these challenges. These ranged from road capacity improvements and bypasses, through to development planning policy, working with neighbouring

authorities and improving co-ordination of utilities companies and highway works. Policies and initiatives included in the LTP reflect this consultation feedback wherever possible.

**3.14** Overall, there was consistently strong stakeholder support for improving highway maintenance, tackling congestion, improving the accessibility of employment sites, and improving cross-boundary linkages.

**3.15** The recent approval by the Government of the Cheshire and Warrington Local Economic Partnership (LEP) has created an impetus for prioritising sub-regional partnership working and the consultation process for the LTP led to the following additional priority to create the conditions for business growth:

- Strategic Partnerships for Economic Growth - Work with neighbouring authorities, appropriate regional/sub-regional organisations, public transport operators and providers to enhance cross-boundary and strategic investment opportunities in transport.

## LTP Objectives

RELEVANT OBJECTIVES

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

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

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

**Objective 6 (Environment): Protect and enhance the local and global natural environment (including environmental assets such as biodiversity, geodiversity, soils and protected landscapes).**

## Sustainability Appraisal

**3.16** Policies and initiatives within this chapter will very often help ensure a sustainable future by encouraging more efficient use of the highway networks for public transport and encouraging business innovation. Equally the policies from the sustainability chapter will often help deliver business growth. However, there are some policy areas that will need detailed consideration of environmental impacts at the implementation stage to ensure that LTP Objective 6 (Environment) to "protect and enhance the local and global natural environment (including environmental assets such as biodiversity, geodiversity, soils and protected landscapes)" is fully addressed.

# 3 Create Conditions for Business Growth

**3.17** The Sustainability Appraisal of policies within this chapter found beneficial effects across a number of sustainability objectives. At least one positive effect was predicted for each individual policy across the following sustainability objectives:

- 1 Biodiversity, habitats, geology…
- 3 Minimise need to travel & sustainable modes…
- 5 Pollution & climate change…
- 6 Resources & green infrastructure…
- 7 Energy…
- 8 Design…
- 9 Towns & local centres…
- 10 Economy & access to employment skills…
- 11 Safety…
- 12 Quality of life…
- 13 Access to leisure countryside…

**3.18** Two sustainability objectives were not associated with any beneficial policy effects, these were:

- 2 Flooding…
- 4 Heritage & landscape…

**3.19** Although there were no negative effects identified, there was more uncertainty regarding the effects of business growth policies on sustainability objectives compared to other SCS themes (sustainability, health, communties etc). The effect of many of the policies in this chapter will be dependent on the means of implementation. For example, where policy seeks to enable new development through infrastructure improvements, the impact on the environment will be dependent on the scale and location of infrastructure proposals. This means that the environmental effects of proposals will need to be assessed fully when the scheme details are known and options for alternatives, mitigation or compensation investigated where appropriate.

**3.20** The Sustainability Appraisal particularly flagged the need to duly consider the approach to implementation of the following policies as these had more uncertain effects identified:

- B1 Strategic Partnerships for Economic Growth
- B2 Enabling Development
- B4 Network Improvement

**3.21** The sustainability appraisal process helped ensure that both key themes for business growth and sustainablity were given equal priority for the LTP.

## Transport Challenges & Policy Solutions

## Strategic Partnerships

**3.22** The objectives of the LTP can be supported by a wide range of partnership working, both existing and potential. Discussion here is centred on partnership working to support strategic connectivity and business growth – on the strategic road and rail network, air travel through Manchester Airport, and across administrative boundaries.

**3.23** Other specific areas of partnership working are covered in the related chapter – for example, partnerships for road safety are discussed in **Chapter 4: Health**.

**Strategic road and rail network**

**3.24** The Highways Agency is responsible for the management of the strategic road network in the UK, including most motorways and trunk roads. The key routes through Cheshire East are the M6, M56 and A556 (T) between M6 J19 and M56 J8.

**3.25** The M6 and M56 are the most heavily trafficked routes in Cheshire East and experienced a growth of between 6 and 7% between 2005 and 2009. Congestion along these routes causes disruptions to freight, business, commuter and visitor travel, and may pose a threat to the future economic growth of the borough. Much of this growth originates beyond the borough and the Council needs to work with strategic partners to influence the management of traffic along these routes.

**3.26** There are existing issues around road safety and congestion at the interface of the Highway Agency's network with the local authority road network. Junction 17 at Sandbach is of particular concern.

**3.27** The A556 (T) between the M6 and M56 has been identified as a key congestion corridor in the Connecting Cities: Northwest study (2010) resulting in poor air quality (at Mere Crossroads) and noise issues for local residents. The Highways Agency has identified this link as a priority in its investment programme and is currently developing proposals for the upgrade of the road subject to funding availability.

**3.28** The provision of additional housing and employment in Cheshire East will lead to further pressure at these key junctions and links.

**3.29** Some local communities are calling for new road links to connect to the existing motorway network (e.g. Macclesfield) or for bypasses/ring roads (e.g. Poynton, Congleton) to improve the ease and speed of road travel, or improve the quality of town centres. The Council and strategic partners, such as the Highways Agency and major employers, will need to investigate costs and benefits of community requests through LTP policies for **B2: Enabling Development** or **B4: Network Improvement**.

# 3 Create Conditions for Business Growth

**3.30** The number of passengers carried by rail services serving Cheshire East continues to show strong growth. For example Alderley Edge, Sandbach, Holmes Chapel, Chelford, and Disley stations have all seen passenger numbers grow by over 30% in the past two years. Currently a number of rail lines through Cheshire East are operating at or over capacity, including the West Coast Main Line, the Crewe to Manchester line and the Buxton to Manchester line.

**3.31** Government proposals to build a high speed railway line from Birmingham to London, and then onto Manchester and the North, will be a catalyst for economic growth and encouraging modal shift for long distance journeys, as well as releasing capacity on local rail networks. Studies show that an hourly high speed service calling at Crewe would result in a direct boost of £17m to the local economy with a further £20m of wider economic benefits generated[d]. On the other hand, there will inevitably be environmental impacts of the scheme which will have to be effectively mitigated.

**3.32** There are clear economic benefits associated with increased rail connectivity and capacity both within the North West and with other parts of the country. Dealing with congestion and limited capacity in central Manchester (through the Northern Hub proposals) will be important to unlock improvements in the speed, frequency and reliability of train services across Cheshire East[e].

**3.33** Other areas of collaboration on rail connectivity include investigation into tram-train opportunities in the north of the Borough, particularly Park & Ride sites from the strategic road network into the city.

**Manchester Airport and aviation**

**3.34** Manchester Airport is an important international gateway for Cheshire East's businesses. In 2009 the airport facilitated over 215,000 business trips and 570,000 leisure trips that originated in Cheshire East. Additionally, almost 10% of the airports employees live in the borough[f].

**3.35** Manchester Airport is a major hub for international freight traffic; its World Freight Terminal accommodates 170,000 tonnes of cargo per year, making it the UK's fourth-largest airport in terms of flown cargo volume. By 2015, the volume of freight traffic through Manchester Airport is expected to increase to 250,000 tonnes per annum – an increase of 47%[g].

**3.36** Whilst acknowledged as an economic driver for the area, the growth of the airport must be carefully measured against wider criteria, including environmental concerns and the impact of congestion and freight on the borough's roads. Proposals for the expansion of the airports facilities are currently being considered within the Manchester LDF.

**Cross-boundary**

**3.37** Cheshire East has strong travel to work links with neighbouring authorities (particularly with Greater Manchester) and it is important for the Council to examine transport across all modes without the constraints of administrative boundaries.

**3.38** The South East Manchester Multi Modal Study (known as SEMMMS) examined the key cross boundary movements between Cheshire East and Greater Manchester.

**3.39** The area of the study contains a large proportion of high-skilled labour, commuting to high-productivity jobs in Manchester and along the south Manchester corridor between Cheshire East, Stockport and Manchester Airport. The congestion that occurs lengthens the effective distance between labour markets and businesses, placing a limitation on the skills available, increasing cost and reducing the potential for business-to-business activity.

**3.40** The study concluded that reducing congestion in and around the study area is an integral component for unlocking economic growth. This includes congestion on the A6 through Disley and local road links in Wilmslow and Handforth. A further recommendation of the wider SEMMMS strategy was the provision of a bypass for Poynton which, along with improvements to the A523, will be crucial in improving north-south links to/from the Macclesfield area.

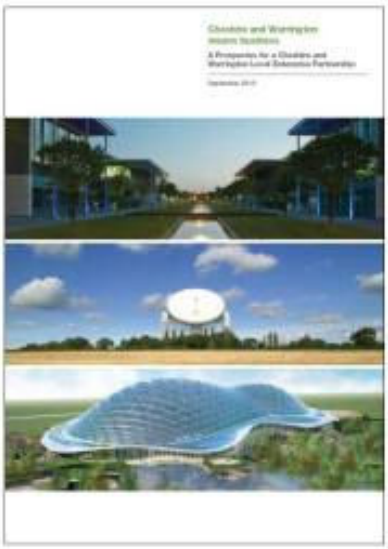
**3.41** One of the barriers to improving public transport access within the study area is the heavy congestion causing lengthy and unreliable journey times on the local road network.

**3.42** The study recommended the construction of new road capacity to relieve congestion and allow existing road space to be re-allocated for sustainable modes such as public transport. Work to date has concentrated on the provision of a new relief road linking the A6 at Hazel Grove to the M56 Manchester Airport Spur (the SEMMMS major road scheme).

**3.43** This scheme would improve access to Manchester Airport from the east and south, enhance access to jobs and opportunities and remove congestion – particularly in Poynton, Handforth and Wilmslow. It would also remove unnecessary freight traffic from local roads, improve public transport operations, reliability and services, and facilitate the future provision of a bypass for Poynton.

# 3 Create Conditions for Business Growth

**3.44** An assessment of the wider economic benefits of the scheme predicts that the scheme would generate an additional £10m of value to the Cheshire East economy.



**3.45** Other important cross-boundary partnerships will develop through the emerging Local Enterprise Partnerships. These will be important in securing inward investment into key infrastructure projects that unlock economic growth. For example, significant opportunities for private sector led sustainable economic growth in the Liverpool-Manchester corridor (of which Cheshire East forms a significant part), through the delivery of the proposals collectively branded as "Atlantic Gateway". These seek to drive international trade; create a globally connected gateway; create sustainable infrastructure for a less carbon intensive economy; attract and retain talent; and create new green infrastructure. Better links to Liverpool and Manchester Airport are complementary to the "Altantic Gateway" proposals an will also require effective cross-boundary partnerships.

**3.46** The Economic Development Strategy and Visitor Strategy will be essential in guiding the LTP implementation plans and areas of focus for cross-boundary initiatives.

**3.47** Working with public transport operators across the borough will also be important to ensure that opportunities to link areas of high job growth with areas of high unemployment are not missed. Public transport operations are discussed in **Chapter 2: Sustainability**.

## PRIORITY POLICY

**Policy B1 Strategic Partnerships for Economic Growth:** Work with neighbouring authorities, appropriate regional/sub-regional organisations, public transport operators and providers to enhance cross-boundary and strategic investment opportunities in transport.

### B1 Policy Initiatives

**3.48** **Strategic road network**: Work with the Highways Agency to improve the management of traffic on the motorway and trunk road network in Cheshire East through supporting proposals for 'Active Traffic Management' and

by taking a partnership approach to solving safety and congestion problems at motorway junctions. Also seek to ensure that the local communities concerns are captured and reflected in the Highways Agency's designs (e.g. for the proposed improvements to the A556 (T)).

**3.49** **Strategic rail infrastructure**: Support national initiatives to improve rail connectivity. This includes the Northern Hub capacity improvement scheme and a high speed rail network serving the North West. Explore with Government and scheme promoters the opportunities for high speed services to call at principal Cheshire East stations. Also work with Association of Greater Manchester Authorities (AGMA) to carry out feasibility studies of tram-train opportunities in the north of the Borough, particularly Park & Ride sites from the strategic road network into the city centre.




**3.50** **South East Manchester Multi Modal Study (SEMMMS)**: Continue to work with local authority partners to investigate affordable ways of delivering the SEMMMS major road scheme.

**3.51** **Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEP)**: Seek to gain support through the Cheshire & Warrington LEP for its emerging transport priorities that unlock economic growth, such as the Crewe Green Link Road scheme and Middlewich Eastern Bypass and Middlewich railway proposals. Crewe Green Link Road has been identified by stakeholders as a potential strategic priority for the LEP.

**3.52** **Manchester Airport Group (MAG)**: Co-ordinate ongoing liaison and partnership working with MAG to agree areas of common interest. This will include the airport's Ground Transport Strategy (including any proposals for demand responsive transport or new conventional bus services) and its emerging role as a transport hub.

**3.53** **Visitor economy partnerships**: Work with partners such as the Peak District National Park Authority, Visit Peak District, Peak Connections, and the Visit Chester and Cheshire Tourist Board to develop and promote sustainable transport options for accessing the borough's tourist attractions.

# 3 Create Conditions for Business Growth

Visitor travel planning, website improvements, visitor passes and package tickets for large events will all benefit visitor destinations and help encourage public transport use.

| B1 Related Initiatives | Policy |
|---|---|
| Transport assessment of strategic site proposals | S1 Spatial Planning |
| Neighbouring authority developments | S1 Spatial Planning |
| Strategic joint working | S2 Climate Change – Mitigation & Adaptation |
| Partnership working (public transport) | S3 Public Transport (Integration & Facilities) |
| Rail service specifications | S4 Public Transport (Service Levels & Reliability) |
| Reinstate passenger services | S4 Public Transport (Service Levels & Reliability) |

## Enabling Strategic Development

**3.54** Housing, employment sites and infrastructure have vital roles to play in supporting economic growth. The capacity and suitability of transport links (in relation to housing demand and access to markets and labour) will be important factors for investment choice. As such, in order for economic development aspirations to be achieved, it is equally important for the Council to fully understand the transport implications of proposed strategic site allocations.

**3.55** The long term spatial development of the borough will be defined within the LDF and – as described in **Chapter 2: Sustainability**, Policy S1 Spatial Planning – the Council will seek to minimise the future need to travel by focusing most new developments in locations where there is a good range of housing, jobs, shops and services already accessible by public transport, cycling and walking. The LDF will also need to consider the future vitality of market towns and villages and consider the need for new development and population increase to support jobs and services – in these circumstances the LTP will support development in the most sustainable rural locations and will be used to ensure that developers contribute to appropriate transport infrastructure to help support sustainable transport options.

**3.56** The majority of new employment and housing developments will require new transport infrastructure (ranging from new road links and improved junctions through to pedestrian or cycling facilities) to deliver them sustainably and avoid causing traffic problems on the highway network.

**3.57** A small number of strategic sites will require significant major scheme infrastructure improvements to unlock the full potential of the sites. For example, Crewe's "Strategic Framework for Economic Growth 2010-2030" identifies as a priority measures to unlock the full potential of the Basford East strategic development site. The provision of the Crewe Green Link Road Scheme and capacity improvements to Crewe Green Roundabout and the A500 Barthomley link will be necessary to achieve this, along with improvements in public transport provision. Similarly, proposals for the South Macclesfield Development Area will also require significant infrastructure investment to fully release their potential.

**3.58** In certain locations, research has identified strategic need for new infrastructure - for example, following extensive modelling of Crewe town centre traffic flows as part of a major town centre redevelopment proposal it was identified that a new road link between the east / west Dunwoody Way and Flag Lane in the town centre would relieve several junctions that currently experience congestion. Part of this link has been constructed through private funding, however, its partially complete status severely restricts any further growth within the town centre.

**3.59** In the past, development sites have been assessed on their individual impact on the transport network. This can leave smaller developments contributing very little to the upgrade of the transport network – though the cumulative impact of many small developments over time will be significant. To address this issue, a new approach is needed that enables the Council to understand the cumulative impact of all development across a defined area and adopt appropriate contributions (dependent on the development size, location etc.) that enable the overall costs of improved accessibility and connectivity to be fairly shared between developers.

**3.60** To complement Policy S1 *Spatial Planning,* developers are often required to prepare and implement travel plans. These aim to demonstrate how the impact of a development can be reduced by encouraging individuals to travel in a more sustainable way – such as by car sharing, using public transport, walking and cycling.

**3.61** The development plans of neighbouring local authorities also need to be fully understood – to consider and plan for the transport impact of developments that may be outside the Cheshire East boundary.

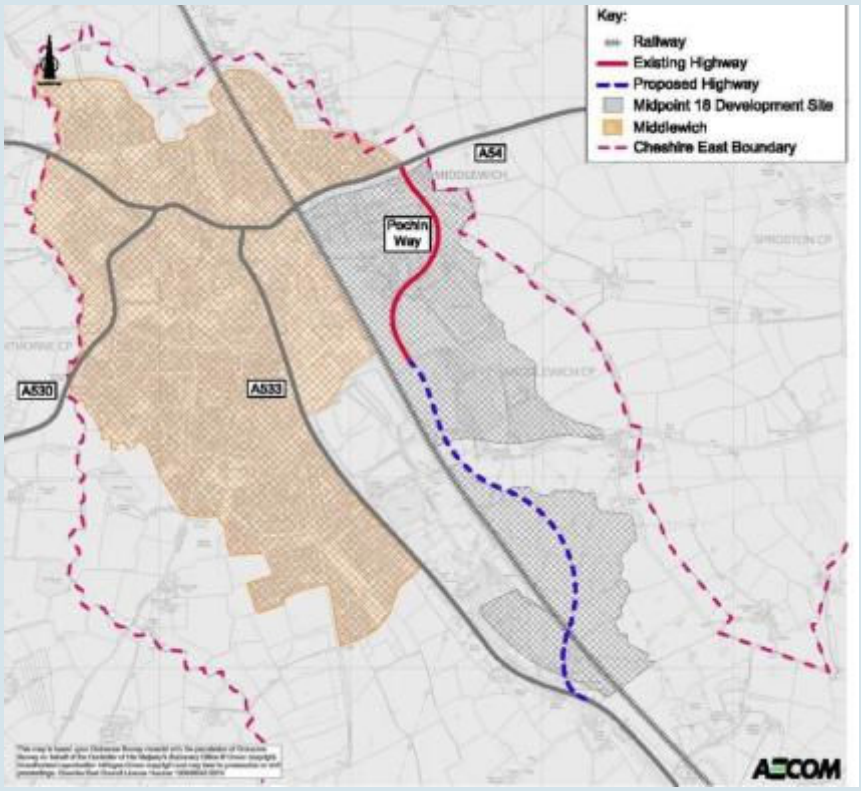
**3.62** The LDF will consider the options for appropriate development opportunities and ensure that the transport implications are assessed. LTP policy will support this process, not least with an assessment of the impact of new development on transport infrastructure. Key considerations will include those listed as congestion "hotspots" in the Network Management & Improvement paragraphs and the issues raised in the Transport Frameworks for towns.

# 3 Create Conditions for Business Growth

## CASE STUDY

**Enabling Development: Middlewich Eastern Bypass**

Midpoint 18 is a 320 hectare sub-regional employment site located to the east of Middlewich town centre. A development brief and supplementary planning guidance have been adopted by the Council to guide the future development of the area. The Council commissioned an Appraisal and Delivery Strategy for the site in 2009.




**Middlewich Eastern Bypass**

The development site would be accessed via an extension to Pochin Way as a 2.2 km section of road passing through the site extending to Booth Lane to the South.

The scheme would provide economic and transport benefits to Middlewich and the wider area, including:

- Creation of 143,000m2 of business development and around 2800 jobs
- Environmental benefits as traffic routes away from Middlewich Town Centre, improving conditions for residents and visitors and enhancing the retail experience
- Reduction in congestion on sections of the A54

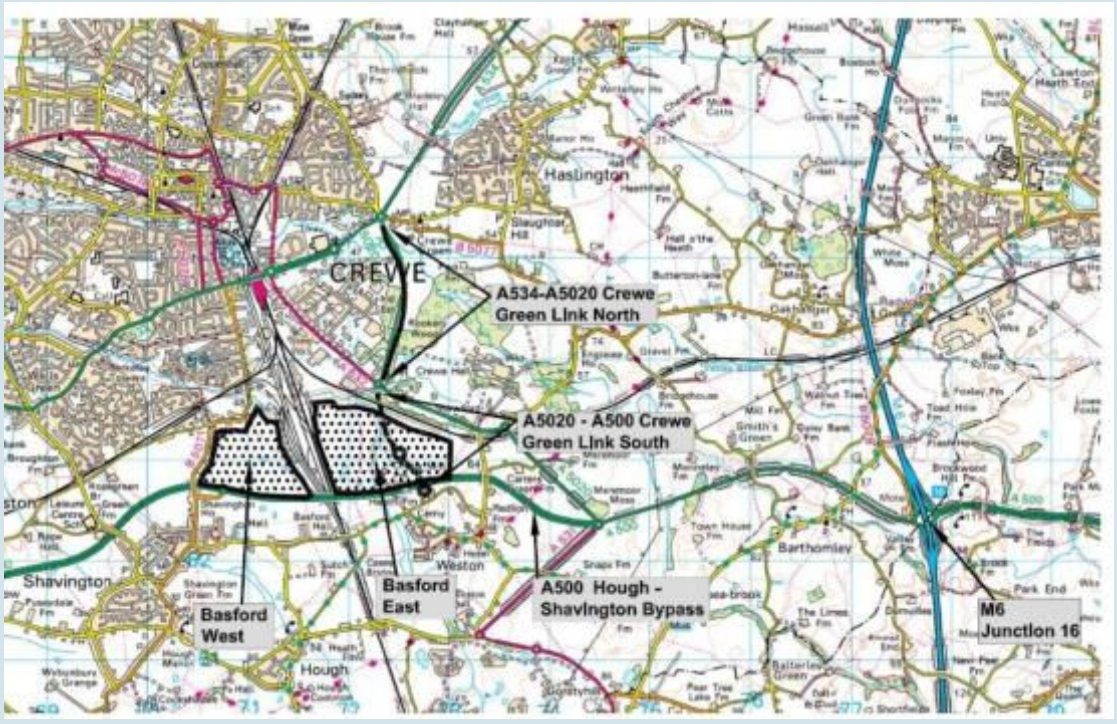
The scheme is important to the delivery of the economic growth of Middlewich as a sustainable town and key service centre.

## CASE STUDY

**Enabling Development: Crewe Green Link Road (South)**

For the full strategic potential of the Basford Strategic Regional Site to be realised, the completion of the Crewe Green Link Road (CGLR) will be necessary. The first phase (North) was completed in 2004 and has played an important role in facilitating employment growth east of the town centre. Completion of CGLR South is an important component in delivering Crewe's vision for economic growth to 2030 - the aim of which is to see Basford East firmly established as one of the UK's largest science-focused business parks.

Basford Strategic Regional Site & Crewe Green Link Road proposals:




**Basford East and Crewe Green Link Road**

The CGLR South will support sustainable economic growth and ensure that Crewe has the infrastructure needed as a key regional transport gateway. It will provide a link between areas of deprivation to the north of Crewe and employment opportunities to the south east. It will reduce traffic congestion, increase freight efficiency and reduce the impact of traffic on the local environment and local community.

# 3 Create Conditions for Business Growth

**PRIORITY POLICY**

**Policy B2 Enabling Development:** Seek to enable appropriate new development by supporting transport infrastructure, regeneration and/or behaviour change initiatives that will mitigate the potential impact of development proposals.

## B2 Policy Initiatives

**3.63** **Facilitate sustainable development:** Provision for walking, cycling, public transport and recharging points for hybrid or electric vehicles will be encouraged for large new developments in order to reduce carbon emissions. This will be complemented by requiring developers to produce, implement and monitor travel plans.

**3.64** **Developer contributions:** Develop an appropriate approach to developer contributions that enables improvements to both local and strategic transport provision. The approach will consider highways, public transport, walking, cycling, rights of way, air quality and noise implications. It will be linked to an assessment of likely traffic and transport impact of strategic site proposals and the estimation of cost of transport infrastructure/initiatives required to mitigate impact. The process of developing the tariff will also consider the economic viability of development and the amount of contributions that will be sought for this and other requirements - such as affordable housing and community facilities.

**3.65** **Major infrastructure for new development:** Work with developers, land owners and funding bodies to deliver the infrastructure that unlocks new development opportunities. Current infrastructure requirements include the Crewe Green Link Road, capacity improvements on the A500 Barthomley link, Crewe Green Roundabout and the provision of Middlewich Eastern Bypass, along with a suitable highway link between the A536 and A523 to open up the South Macclesfield Development Area. Infrastructure schemes of this scale will require full detailed assessment of environmental impact and will only proceed where impact on the environment, biodiversity, agricultural land, landscape etc. can be avoided, adequately mitigated or appropriate compensation agreed.

**3.66** **Transport & regeneration:** Consideration of transport initiatives that would help support proposals for area improvement and regeneration as set out in the LDF, such as upgraded transport facilities and public realm improvements.

| B2 Related Initiatives | Policy |
|---|---|
| Transport assessment of strategic site proposals | S1 Spatial Planning |
| Influencing travel behaviour | S2 Climate Change – Mitigation & Adaptation |
| Bus stop condition | S3 Public Transport (Integration & Facilities) |
| New commercial opportunities | S4 Public Transport (Service Levels & Reliability) |
| Footway and footpath improvements | S7 Walking |
| New walking routes | S7 Walking |
| Pedestrian crossing points | S7 Walking |
| New cycle routes | S8 Cycling |
| Junction and route improvements for cyclists | S8 Cycling |

## Network Management & Improvement

**3.67** If Cheshire East is to grow its economy sustainably and improve productivity, it will be important to ensure that places are well connected and that the transport network operates as efficiently as possible. The Traffic Management Act 2004 places a network management duty on local authorities to ensure the expeditious movement of traffic, and to co-operate with other authorities to the same end.

**3.68** In order to consider the requirements for network management and network improvement, an understanding of how the network functions in terms of commuting, congestion, roadworks and risk is needed.

### Commuting Patterns

**3.69** Data extracted from the 2001 Census gives an understanding of the key travel to work movements within and outside of the borough. Data will be reviewed when the outputs of the 2011 Census become available.

**3.70** At the time of 2001 census, Cheshire East experienced a net outward flow of over 7,500 trips per day[h], with the most common employment destinations outside of the borough being Manchester centre, Manchester Airport, Stockport centre and Stoke-on-Trent.

**3.71** Of those travelling into the borough to work, the most common origins were Northwich and Winsford, Stockport and Newcastle-under-Lyme. There were significant two-way flows to Cheshire West and Chester, Newcastle-under-Lyme and Stoke-on-Trent, whilst Cheshire East offered significant employment opportunities to the population of Staffordshire Moorlands.

**3.72** Within Cheshire East, journeys between Congleton and Macclesfield, and Nantwich and Crewe key centres had the greatest number of movements. A number of significant employment sites also generated a high number of 'local' commuting trips, though many also have wide employee catchment areas. Astra Zeneca at Alderley Edge, for example, draws high numbers of employees from Macclesfield, Wilmslow, Handforth and Congleton.

**3.73** Access by car is particularly important from rural areas to reach key services such as retail, leisure, employment and healthcare.

**Congestion**

**3.74** The 2001 Census indicated that car ownership in Cheshire East was high, with 89% of households having access to at least one vehicle and 12% of households having access to three or more vehicles. It also identified that the most common mode of transport to employment was the private car (either as the driver or passenger).

**3.75** The number of vehicles using the boroughs roads has remained relatively stable since 2004. However, the majority of the road network was not designed to accommodate the current number of vehicles competing for its use and congestion occurs when the demand for road space exceeds supply – particularly within town centres. In addition, parts of the borough suffer from limited route and mode choice.

**3.76** Public perception of road congestion in Cheshire East is high. However, the degree of congestion is far less than that experienced elsewhere, with an average delay (during the morning peak period) of approximately 2 minutes. This is a global figure and masks a small number of congestion 'hotspots' within the borough.

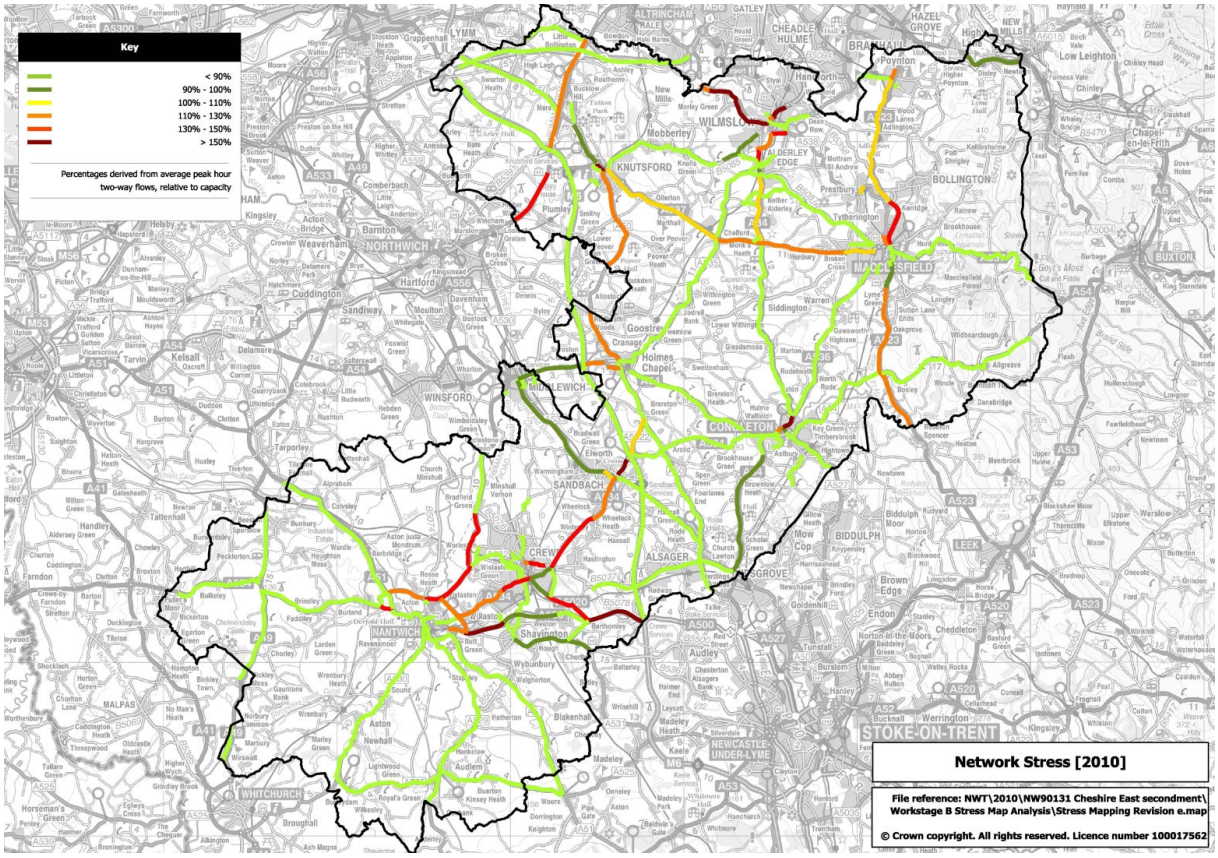
**3.77** The level of 'stress' on the road network is a measure of how much traffic a road is carrying compared to its maximum capacity. As roads approach and exceed their capacity, the reliability of journeys decrease and the number of accidents and delays increase. Network stress generally occurs between the 8-9am and 5-6pm peak commuting hours, however, major events in the tourism calendar can also cause congestion on the road network – such as the RHS Flower Show at Tatton Park or the Cheshire Show at Tabley.

**2010 Highway Network Stress in Cheshire East**

**3.78** Evidence shows that that the most congested parts of the road network are in the town centres. However, notable key 'hotspots' on the inter-urban network include:

- Crewe Green Roundabout, Crewe
- A500 Barthomley Link, Crewe
- Parts of the A530, including Alvanley Roundabout
- Parts of the A523 from the end of the Silk Road through to Poynton
- The A34 (Clayton Bypass) around Congleton

**3.79** Town centre congestion and options for tackling issues will be addressed at a local level through the development of a series of Transport Frameworks for towns, as set out in **Chapter 8: Towns**. The transport frameworks for towns will also help identify strategic schemes of particular local importance.




**Network Stress**

**3.80** Congestion results in people spending 'unproductive' time queuing; it has a real impact on business efficiency and productivity, and causes unreliability and poor performance of public transport. Furthermore, congestion has been shown to increase the levels of pollutants emitted by vehicles, and can have life-threatening effects near hospitals on ambulance routes.

**3.81** Before new highway capacity is created there is a need to demonstrate that the existing highway network is operating as efficiently as possible through cost-effective improvements – for example, by altering traffic signal timings or instigating minor changes to the design of a junction. It will also be important to demonstrate that the level of demand for additional road capacity has been

minimised – for example by encouraging the use of public transport, car sharing, walking or cycling - and that environmental considerations have been assessed (e.g. Impact on agricultural land, green belt, biodiversity, etc.).

**3.82** Changes to the highway network, however minor, have the potential to cause, or to exacerbate air quality and noise issues associated with transport. In particular, any changes which affect traffic volumes, traffic patterns, or increase congestion could have an impact.

**Management of roadworks and traffic**

**3.83** The New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 (NRSWA) places a duty on local authorities to co-ordinate works on the highway, with the aim of minimising disruption to traffic. This is currently achieved through a system of "Street Works Notices" whereby the utility companies inform the Council of their intention to work, and the Council then responds to co-ordinate their works accordingly.

**3.84** The Council also works to ensure that users of the highway are informed about forthcoming roadworks (i.e. through an internet based mapping tool which provides users with a graphical display of current and planned works on the highway network) and that strategic diversion routes are agreed in advance with the Highways Agency and emergency services (e.g. alternative local road routes to be used when there are incidents on the motorway).



**Road resurfacing**

**3.85** Across the Borough in 2009/10, our records show that there were 596 'Emergency Works' and 2,626 'Urgent Works' undertaken by Utility companies. This accounts for approximately 1/3$^{rd}$ of all works that occur on our road network.

**3.86** Travel to work and freight flows on the highway network do not respect local authority highway boundaries and changes made on a route will only pay dividends if supported with complementary action by neighbouring local authorities. A route management approach, whereby local authorities together agree common strategies for key corridors, can overcome this problem (see case study).

## CASE STUDY

**Route Management**

In order for the 'Route Management' approach to be effective it is necessary that a standard approach to understanding and assessing the performance of highway corridors is followed by highway authorities, including methods for identifying any challenges to their current and future operation. To assist with this Cheshire East and Cheshire West and Chester Councils undertook a pilot study in 2009 to test and refine regional guidance on route management studies.

The focus of the study was the A51/A500 route, which links Chester to the north-west, at the junction with the A55, to the M6 Motorway in the south-east at Junction 16. The route is primarily rural and passes through or around a number of villages along its route, before passing Nantwich to its east and Crewe to the south.

The study concluded with identifying six route outcomes for which joint local authority action will be required over the coming years:

1. Improved understanding of existing travel on the route and the potential for change in the future
2. Reduced carbon emissions from the use of the route
3. Reduced collision rates and severity on the route
4. Improved management of freight movements on the route
5. Reduced congestion on and across the route
6. Reduced congestion on the Barthomley Link

**Network Risk**

**3.87** Projections show that by 2050, the Northwest region will have wetter and warmer winters and drier and warmer summers. This will require an element of pre-planning for the transport network in order to maintain effective network links. For example, there may be a need to review the materials and drainage systems required for the roads, or the type of fleet vehicles used on public transport routes (e.g. improved air conditioning or heating). Sections of the transport network already suffer from weather related issues. As routes become unavailable for the passage of vehicles, journeys are disrupted and the level of congestion on the wider network is increased. Existing locations at risk include:

# 3 Create Conditions for Business Growth

| Location | Weather related issue | Frequency |
|---|---|---|
| A51 Alpraham | Flash Flooding (river) | Once or twice per year on average. |
| A34 Scholar Green | Flash flooding (river) | Once per year on average |
| A537 Cat and Fiddle | Snow and Ice | Two or three times per year on average |
| A54 Wildboarclough | Snow and Ice | Two or three times per year on average |

**Locations of flash flooding, snow and ice risk**

**3.88** A separate risk issue relates to "road-rail incursions" – there are 12 locations identified in Cheshire East where there is a high risk of vehicles leaving the carriageway and entering the railway with potentially fatal consequences[i].

## PRIORITY POLICY

**Policy B3 Network Management:** Effectively manage the highway network to reduce the level of delay and provide for the needs of all road users including pedestrians, cyclists and motorists.

### B3 Policy Initiatives

**3.89** **Network and route planning:** Develop a functional hierarchy of roads based on road-user need (e.g. consider the requirements of emergency services, public transport, heavy goods vehicles (HGVs), commuters, pedestrians, cyclists, residents, etc.) to help determine priorities for network management; and work with neighbouring local authorities to ensure consistent cross-boundary "route management" of freight and commuter routes. Monitor the level of traffic and congestion on the network to inform development control policy and influence spatial planning. Engage with local communities regarding route management, network and route planning, directly and through the development of Transport Frameworks for Towns (see policy T1).

**3.90** **Junction efficiency:** Seek to improve the operation of existing signalised and un-signalised junctions to smooth traffic flow, enable provision for pedestrians and reduce CO2 impact of stop-start driving, through minor alternations to signal timings or junction geometry.

**3.91** **Manage network disruption:** Effectively co-ordinate and manage roadworks, minimise disruption from major events, and plan effective strategic diversion routes, in co-operation with the police, Highways Agency and neighbouring authorities. Arrangements for managing network disruption will be set out, in detail, within the Network Management Plan.

**3.92** **Highway clutter:** Undertake a review of existing highway signage and pedestrian guard railing across the borough with the aim to reduce the amount of unnecessary signage and associated clutter (particularly on routes through the Peak District National Park and other areas of heritage or landscape importance).

**3.93** **Driver information:** Seek to provide further functionality and continue to develop the range of information on roadwork's and delays that is provided electronically. Including making this information available to 3rd party developers to develop commercial software.

**3.94** **Road-rail incursion:** Develop a programme of remedial work at high risk sites across the borough and seek appropriate developer contributions where proposals are close to high risk sites.

**3.95** **Prepare for climate change:** Examine the elements of the highway network most susceptible to climate change (and extreme weather conditions) and develop suitable mitigation or contingency plans where possible, while avoiding negative impacts on the environment or biodiversity.

**POLICY**

**Policy B4 Network Improvement**: Work to improve the operation of the highway network for all users through provision of new and enhanced infrastructure.

**B4 Policy Initiatives**

**3.96** **Highway capacity improvements:** Investigate highway widening and new road building where alternative options are unable to deliver the aspirations of the community to alleviate traffic and congestion problems in key locations (for example, near hospitals or industrial estates). This may include working with the private sector to offset the cost of providing new infrastructure against the value of new developments and with the Highways Agency to offset the cost of solving existing junction problems. Large scale highway capacity improvement schemes will require full detailed assessment of environmental impact and will only proceed where impact on the environment, biodiversity, agricultural land, landscape etc. can be avoided, adequately mitigated or appropriate compensation agreed.

## 3 Create Conditions for Business Growth

**3.97** **Junction upgrades:** Investigate potential capacity enhancements and the need for upgraded facilities for pedestrians and cyclists at key junctions, both where design of junction is out-dated and where new developments will impose additional traffic pressure at junctions.

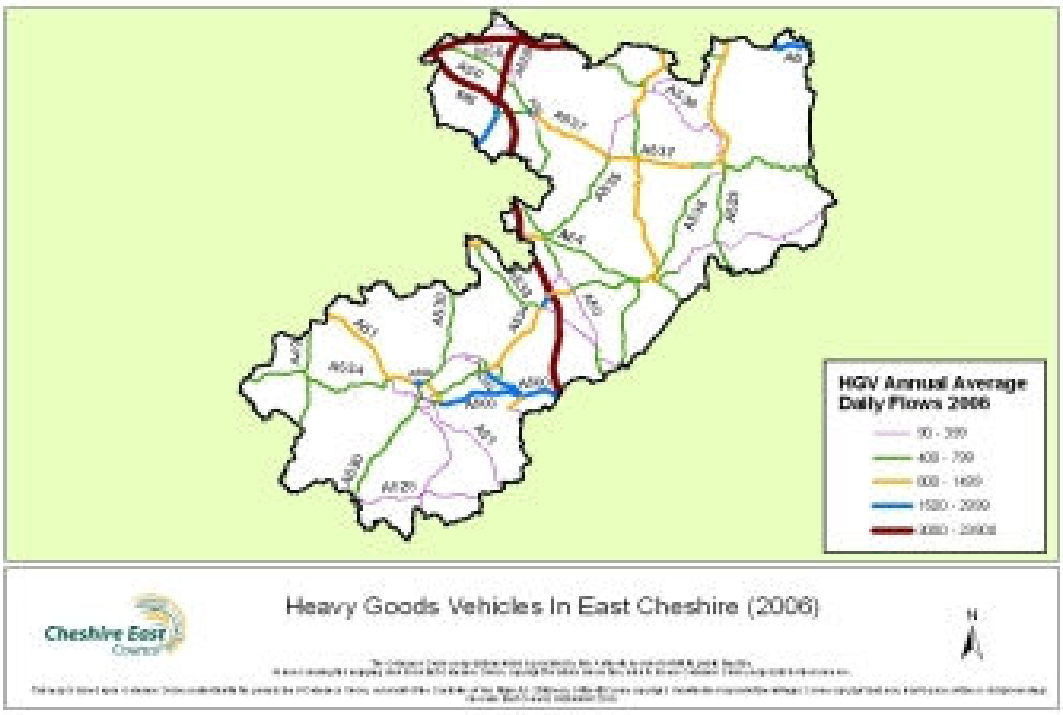
**3.98** **Bus priority measures:** Explore opportunities to develop bus priority measures on the highway network to reduce delays and improve reliability of services.

| B3 & B4 Related Initiatives | Policy |
|---|---|
| Multi-media information | S5 Public Transport (Information & Marketing) |
| Footway and footpath improvements | S7 Walking |
| New walking routes | S7 Walking |
| Pedestrian crossing points | S7 Walking |
| New cycle routes | S8 Cycling |
| Junction and route improvements for cyclists | S8 Cycling |
| Low energy technology | S9 Technology & Energy Efficiency |

## Freight

**3.99** For Cheshire East to continue to be an attractive place for business investment the ease by which freight traffic can move around the borough will be an important issue – however, freight traffic potentially has a negative impact on communities (poor air quality, noise, community severance and visual intrusion). An appropriate balance between quality of life issues and economic prosperity needs to be struck.

**3.100** The roads with the highest HGV flows in the borough are illustrated below:




**Routes with highest HGV flows**

# 3 Create Conditions for Business Growth

**3.101** Crewe acts as a major 'hub' for road freight traffic – this mirrors the recent economic development of Crewe as a major regional distribution centre (due, in part, to Crewe's excellent road links to the national transport network).

**3.102** In recent years there has been strong growth in the use of the rail network to transport freight. Transport of freight by rail is more sustainable than by road and can lead to a reduction in the total number of miles travelled by HGV. The potential exists to capitalise on the growth in rail freight and the rail connectivity of Crewe. Similar opportunities exist in Middlewich.

**3.103** Commercial operators are best placed to inform the Council of freight industry markets and logistics – partnership working is required to determine the most appropriate routing for HGVs whilst taking into consideration quality of life issues for residents.

**3.104** Many freight transport operators rely on satellite navigation systems to inform their route choices. These systems are fed information via digital datasets which contain details of all local highway authority roads and restrictions. The Council has a role to play to ensure that these navigation datasets are accurate.

**3.105** Levels of congestion are also a key issue for the road freight induction and – through its network management obligations – the Council is responsible for planning and implementing diversion routes in the event of an incident (e.g. motorway closure) or planned maintenance. As such a number of other policy areas within this chapter will be relevant for freight, particularly Policy B3 Network Management and Policy B4 Network Improvement.

## POLICY

**Policy B5 Freight:** Work with freight operators and organisations to establish appropriate freight routes, delivery routines and driver practices to minimise congestion and pollution.

### B5 Policy Initiatives

**3.106** **Freight partnership:** Set up and promote a freight partnership for road hauliers to address concerns around routing, driver behaviour and delivery times.

**3.107** **Freight routes and delivery access:** Ensure routes and access arrangements are appropriately maintained and signed.

**3.108** **Rail freight transfer:** Support initiatives by developers, businesses, Network Rail and operators, to promote integration of road and rail freight.

| B5 Related Initiatives | Policy |
|---|---|
| Strategic joint working | S2 Climate Change – Mitigation & Adaptation |
| National behavioural campaigns | H6 Road Safety (Education) |
| Driver technique | H4 Air Quality |

## Parking

**3.109** The Council operates and manages all on-street car parking and a large number of off-street car parks across the borough. In addition, there are a number of commercially operated car parks that have an important role in town centre provision.

**3.110** Parking policies can influence the prosperity of town centres by acting as an attractor, or deterrent, to car access for shopping, leisure, or employment. Town centres face increasing competition from out-of-town retail and business parks and other towns that offer high levels of free parking – this means that a careful balance has to be achieved with pricing and timing of parking policies to ensure that town centres continue to remain attractive.

**3.111** Effective management will help support a town's economy by ensuring efficient use and appropriate supply of car parking spaces; whereas, ineffective management or over-provision can exacerbate problems of town centre congestion. For example, excessive parking charges in town centres may result in motorists searching for free on-street parking in adjacent residential areas – resulting in increasing traffic circulation and problems for residents.

**3.112** From the perspective of the user, parking space availability is also related to the level of "turnover" achieved – i.e. the number of people who use the space during a day. Employees often require long-stay parking for the full duration of the day, whereas shoppers may only require parking for a few hours, and deliveries may only need the ability to park for 5 minutes. In many circumstances, the prime parking locations are those in the heart of the town centre, which means that the demand for parking spaces can be very high. The mechanisms used to regulate and balance these competing needs include parking restrictions, enforcement, time limits, and charges.

**3.113** Park and ride services may also have a role to play in locations where demand for parking is very high, space is limited, and where congestion is a factor.

**3.114** The national policy framework for the development of parking strategy recognises the need to move away from the current dependence upon the car and the importance of promoting alternative modes of travel, particularly walking, cycling and public transport. Parking management (availability, cost, and quality) is recognised as an important factor that influences mode and destination choice.

**3.115** The way in which parking control and management is provided needs to reflect the likely demand for parking in the centres and should follow a consistent methodology across the borough which considers issues such as traffic circulation, congestion and air quality.

**3.116** There are currently different approaches to the management of off street car parking associated with the three former borough councils – however, a LTP Parking Strategy "daughter document" is to be prepared in the first implementation plan period that will unify the Council's approach to parking.

**POLICY**

**Policy B6 Parking:** Adopt a consistent and structured approach to parking supply, management and tariffs, seeking to balance the issues of sustainability, quality of life and economic vitality.

**B6 Policy Initiatives**

**3.117** **Provision of high quality parking:** Invest in the quality, safety and security of off-street car parks in appropriate locations. Balance the needs of a range of users including local residents, disabled people, businesses and suppliers of goods and services.

**3.118** **Retail parking:** Maximise the availability of short-stay car parking spaces in central locations and encourage long-stay business parking in areas less crucial for retail customer access. A careful balance is required for car park pricing in towns to avoid impacting on town centre viability. Examine the potential for Park and Ride provision to reduce town centre congestion in the principle towns of Crewe and Macclesfield.

**3.119** **Resident parking:** Consider the needs of local residents and support the introduction of Residents Parking Zones, where appropriate. Parking solutions for residents may also help address wider issues associated with car parking management at businesses, schools and in town centres.

**3.120** **Parking management:** Ensure a consistent charging and enforcement framework across the borough which includes flexibility to reflect local pressures (e.g. congestion or air quality) and which encourages sustainable travel choices (e.g. public transport, walking and cycling).

| B6 Related Initiatives | Policy |
|---|---|
| Facilities at public transport hubs | S3 Public Transport (Integration & Facilities) |
| Intelligent ticketing solutions | S6 Public Transport (Fares & Ticketing) |
| Low energy technology | S9 Technology & Energy Efficiency |
| Accessibility audits | C3 Access for All |
| Car park security | C4 Crime& Terrorism |

## Business Innovation

**3.121** Businesses rely on efficient access to suppliers, markets and workforce. Travel is a fundamental aspect of operations within many organisations. Through business innovation, there are opportunities to realise financial, productivity and carbon efficiencies by reducing the need to travel and influencing the travel behaviour of employees.

**3.122** In Cheshire East the average distance travelled to work is 10.4km and between 59.6% and 69.3% of total trips to work are undertaken by car, illustrating significant scope to influence the travel behaviour of employees.

**3.123** The public sector has committed to be at the forefront of the transition to a low carbon economy and local authorities have a pivotal role to play. Cheshire East Council has committed to be a leader in reducing carbon emissions from its own operations, and business and staff commuting practices are a visible symbol of the Councils commitment to achieving these aims.

**3.124** Travel plans provide a mechanism to manage both business travel and commuting. A travel plan is a strategy to manage access in a sustainable way and seek opportunities to reduce the need to travel. Measures might include car share schemes, improvements to cycling facilities and promoting flexible working practices, such as remote access and video conferencing. Successful travel plan uptake and monitoring of implementation following planning applications can be achieved through dedicated staff resource - proposals for staff resource funding may be considered as a basis for a funding bid through the sustainable transport fund.

**3.125** Global companies view access to high-speed telecommunications as a critical factor in determining new investment. The opportunity cost of businesses failing to effectively deploy ICT in the North West is estimated to be 3% of GVA per annum, between £3 billion and £4 billion per annum.

### POLICY

**Policy B7 Business Innovation:** Support businesses to reduce carbon emissions from transport and minimise car use.

# 3 Create Conditions for Business Growth

### B7 Policy Initiatives

**3.126** **Broadband infrastructure:** Work in partnership with the private sector to promote next generation broadband throughout all parts of the borough so that it is easier to do business anywhere and provide a greater range of services on-line.

**3.127** **Travel plan initiatives:** Work to encourage existing employers to develop travel plans to encourage more sustainable business and staff commuting practices. This may include working with neighbouring organisations to develop area-wide initiatives (e.g. business parks).

**3.128** **Council travel:** Set an example to other large employers by developing initiatives to reduce the need to travel and influence the travel behaviour of employees for both business travel and the journey to work.

| B7 Related Initiatives | Policy |
|---|---|
| Strategic joint working | S2 Climate Change – Mitigation & Adaptation |
| Influencing travel behaviour | S2 Climate Change – Mitigation & Adaptation |
| Access to employment, skills and education | C2 Accessibility of services |

## Maintenance

**3.129** The highway network underpins the safety, efficiency and reliability of movement of goods and people. The SCS recognises the importance of the condition of the highway network by promoting the production of a Transport Asset Management Plan.

**3.130** The highways network in Cheshire East is an asset worth more than £2.2 billion. The network encompasses 1,686 miles of roads, 494 bridge structures, 28,000 signs and 37,000 street lights.

**3.131** The Council has a legal duty to maintain and repair the condition of the highway network and it undertakes this duty across two broad areas:



**Street light maintenance**

- Structural maintenance – concerned with preserving the integrity of the infrastructure and improving it to meet changing demands.
- Operational maintenance – a more reactive response focussed on maintaining the highway in a safe and sound condition suitable for the use of vehicles, cyclists, pedestrian, equestrians and all other road users; and

to ensure that the highway is kept in an acceptable condition environmentally.

**3.132** The current maintenance backlog inherited from the former Cheshire County Council is put at £88m for roads and £22m for footways. Based on current funding levels, roads in Cheshire East can be expected to be renewed every 122 years and footpaths every 277 years.

**3.133** The condition of the road network relates closely to the level of damage and injury compensation claims the Council is liable for. The number of successful compensation claims will increase as the network deteriorates resulting in even less finance to invest in the network. In 2009/10 the council received 546 claims relating to highway condition. Typically, 90% of these claims are successfully defended by the council.

**3.134** In additional to regular network inspections, the Council's response to public reporting of 'defects' to the highway network is important for good customer service, to reduce accidents and to reduce the number of successful compensation claims against the authority. The Council has developed an online system to make reporting of highway defects easier.

**3.135** The durability of reactive and temporary road repairs to 'potholes' is often poor. The Council has recently trialled the use of a 'jet patching' technique to provide a more cost effective and longer lasting solution.

**PRIORITY POLICY**

**Policy B8 Maintenance:** Adopt a robust and efficient approach to maintenance to minimise deterioration in the highway network and associated infrastructure assets (e.g. lighting, street furniture etc).

**B8 Policy Initiatives**

**3.136** **Transport Asset Management Plan:** Develop a 'whole' life cycle asset management plan approach to consider both the initial infrastructure cost and subsequent maintenance (based on the "Well Maintained Highways" National Code of Practice). The plan will apply to all of the key transport assets which the Council is responsible for including footways, cyclepaths, carriageways (including cycle lanes), highways drainage, street lighting, bridges, traffic signals, signs and public rights of way.

**3.137** **Defect reporting and response times:** Adopt relevant new technologies for the reporting of highway network defects and develop standards/policies to deliver a timely and effective response to defects, to reduce the number of claims and improve customer service.

**3.138** **Temporary road repairs:** Increase the durability and lifespan of temporary road repairs through the use of innovative technologies and materials.

## 3 Create Conditions for Business Growth

| B8 Related Initiatives | Policy |
|---|---|
| Sustainable materials | S9 Technology & Energy Efficiency |
| Quiet surfacing systems | H5 Noise |
| Street and footpath lighting | C4 Crime & Terrorism |
| Targeted access improvements | O1 Targeted Action for Older People |

## End Notes

a. Aecom & Ecogen, Connecting Cities Northwest, 2010
b. Aecom & Ecogen, Connecting Cities: Northwest, 2010
c. NOMIS Annual Business Enquiry 2008
d. Steer David Gleave, High Speed Rail Evidence Review and Implications for the Northwest, June 2010
e. Network Rail, The Northern Hub Transforming Rail in the North March 2010.
f. Manchester Airport Employee data, 2008/9.
g. Atkins, A6 to Manchester Airport Relief Road, Major Scheme Business Case, September 2010.
h. Aecom & Ecogen, Connecting Cities: Northwest, 2010
i. Road Rail Incursion Report, 2010

# 4 Drive Out the Sources of Poor Health

## Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) Priorities

**4.1** The SCS highlights three priorities for action to improve the health of communities in Cheshire East:

- Target actions to reduce heart disease and cancer
- Tackle the impact of alcohol misuse on individuals and society
- Focus local actions on the wider determinants of health

**4.2** These priorities aim to tackle the main causes of poor health in Cheshire East. They seek to both address existing problems and develop preventative health solutions for the future.

**4.3** Transport can have a significant influence on residents' health, well-being and quality of life, by presenting opportunities to engage in healthy activity, minimise pollution levels and improve road safety.

**4.4** Accessibility of healthcare and leisure opportunities also has the potential to be a wider determinant of health (although it should be noted that accessibility issues are addressed in **Chapter 5: Communities**).

## Evidence Overview

**4.5** The SCS states that residents in Cheshire East have a higher life expectancy than the national average. Circulatory disease remains one of the main causes of premature death, accounting for 41% of deaths under 75 years old and there are health inequalities across the borough, with life expectancy being lowest in Crewe[a].

**4.6** A clear link between a lack of exercise and certain diseases has been identified – those people with an 'unhealthy' lifestyle being more at risk from heart disease and cancer[b]. Estimates suggest that physical activity reduces the risk of premature death by 20-30% and gives up to a 50% reduced risk of major chronic diseases, such as heart disease, cancer, stroke and type 2 diabetes[c].

**4.7** The Department of Health have estimated that the average cost to each existing Primary Care Trust (PCT) area of treatment for long-term illnesses is £5 million per annum. The cost of absenteeism, premature death and treatment nationally is between £8 and 10 billion[d].

**4.8** Data collected through the National Travel Survey 2006, concluded that the distance that people walk and cycle has declined significantly in the last 3 decades[e]. Reversing this trend will help to achieve the priorities of the SCS in terms of health, wellbeing, and community cohesion.

**4.9** The Chief Medical Officer for England stated that "for most people, the easiest and most acceptable forms of physical activity are those that can be incorporated into everyday life. Examples include walking or cycling instead of travelling by

car"[f]. This is supported by a Health Select Committee report which concluded that "of these lifestyle changes, perhaps the single most important concerns transport"[g].

**4.10** Air pollution harms human health, particularly in those already vulnerable because of their age (young or old) or existing health problems[h]. In some areas of Cheshire East, emissions from road traffic have been found to be above recommended levels, and a total of 12 Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) have been declared.

**4.11** Exposure to high levels of environmental noise has been shown to cause annoyance, stress, anxiety, sleep loss and has been linked to more serious conditions such as hypertension and cardio-vascular disease[i]. In addition to sites on the M6 and A556(T) (which are the responsibility of the Highways Agency), nine areas in Cheshire East have been identified as a priority for noise action, primarily along the most-heavily trafficked roads.

**4.12** The repercussions of road accidents on society also have to be considered. There are obvious health and well-being implications for individuals (physical, psychological and financial). There is also a direct cost to society in terms of healthcare provision related to long-term injury and loss in productivity to the economy as a whole. Tackling the causes of road accidents (such as reckless driving, alcohol impairment, and highway design) are therefore important aspects of transport and health improvement.

## Stakeholder Opinion

**4.13** Stakeholders identified the following key policy areas needed to support improved health:

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

**4.14** Strong stakeholder support was given to investments in public rights of way and green infrastructure to encourage active and healthy lifestyle choices. The most popular initiatives associated with this policy area were to improve routes that link to key services and seek appropriate financial contributions from developers to create quality infrastructure.

**4.15** Stakeholder support was also given to promoting active travel, focusing health improvement initiatives in areas of low life expectancy and concentrating preventative health services in deprived neighbourhoods.

# 4 Drive Out the Sources of Poor Health

**4.16** A "Road Safety Strategy" daughter document is being developed which will identify the key road safety challenges in the borough and examine the most effective measures to reduce casualties. This may result in re-assessment of policies in relation to this evidence. Analysis of the parish and town plans also indicated that road safety enforcement was a key issue in a number of communities.

## LTP Objectives

### RELEVANT OBJECTIVES

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

**Objective 6 (Environment): Protect and enhance the local and global natural environment (including environmental assets such as biodiversity, geodiversity, soils and protected landscapes).**

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

## H: Sustainability Appraisal

**4.17** The Sustainability Appraisal of policies within this chapter found beneficial effects across a number of sustainability objectives. At least two positive effects were predicted for each individual policy across the sustainability objectives below:

- 1 Biodiversity, habitats, geology…
- 3 Minimise need to travel & sustainable modes…
- 5 Pollution & climate change…
- 6 Resources & green infrastructure…
- 7 Energy…
- 11 Safety…
- 12 Quality of life…
- 13 Access to leisure countryside…

**4.18** Five sustainability objectives were not associated with any beneficial policy effects, these were:

- 2 Flooding…
- 4 Heritage & landscape…
- 8 Design…
- 9 Towns & local centres…
- 10 Economy & access to employment skills…

**4.19** These objectives were largely associated with neutral effects from health policies of this chapter. No negative effects were identified. In conclusion, the Sustainability Appraisal of the policies within this chapter highlighted either beneficial or neutral effects.

## Transport Challenges & Policy Solutions

**4.20** Many of the initiatives set out in the chapter – to target health action, promote active travel, enhance public rights of way and tackle air quality – will be beneficial to people of all ages and will be particularly applicable to **Chapter 6: Young People** and **Chapter 7: Older People.**

## Targeted Heath Action

**4.21** There is a need to target health action (geographically and/or demographically) to achieve the most effective outcomes.

**4.22** Geographically, the proportion of adult population classified as obese is higher in Crewe and Nantwich than both the North West and England averages. Whereas, Macclesfield had a lower level of obesity than both the North West and England averages.

**4.23** The life expectancy of both males and females was lowest in Crewe and evidence suggests that there is a large inequality gap in the rate of cardiovascular disease (when analysed by deprivation index or geographical areas) in Cheshire East, which contributes towards a wide gap in life expectancy. Cardiovascular disease accounts for 41% of deaths under 75 years old and is one of the main causes of premature death within the borough[j].

**4.24** Demographically, a target group for health action is the borough's increasingly older population. The incidence of disability increases with age[k], as do general restrictions in mobility. The main activity of relevance here will be walking, the importance of which for recreational purposes increases as age increases; for the 45-59 age bracket, 3 times as many people participate in walking than any other activity, rising to 5 ½ times in the over 70 age group.

**4.25** The level of childhood obesity in Cheshire East overall is lower than both the North West and England averages. Nevertheless, promotional activities are often particularly effective if targeted towards children as a means to attract a larger audience: "go back to the schools, talk to the children about the benefits, they'd go home and pester the parents…It's just getting them into it"[l]. Further, it is recognised that people who have been active during their working life are more likely to remain active after retirement[m].

**4.26** The health agencies can help with promotion to build active travel and healthy activity into everyday lives; Let's Get Moving research found that 84% of respondents thought that it was a 'fairly good' or 'very good' idea for GPs to prescribe outdoor exercise instead of prescription drugs if the GP thought the exercise would remedy the patient's condition.

# 4 Drive Out the Sources of Poor Health

**4.27** The Council and NHS (as organisations with statutory responsibility for public health) aim to tackle identified health problems through action targeted at specific groups of the population, to reduce the number of people in a poor state of health. Where possible, preventative action will be undertaken with the aim of overcoming health problems before they start.

**4.28** Through this targeted health action, the Council aims to improve the health of residents in Cheshire East and so contribute towards improvements in their quality of life, helping people to retain their independence, stay healthy and have access to good quality housing, transport, leisure, entertainment and to family and friends.

## POLICY

**Policy H1 Targeted Health Action:** Work with stakeholders to identify communities, groups or areas in most need; and seek to identify targeted solutions that lower obesity rates and increase physical activity.

### H1 Policy Initiatives

**4.29** **Health partnerships:** Support partner activities to improve the health and well-being of residents – e.g. work with NHS on health promotion and preventative measures, work with GPs to facilitate "prescriptions for walking".

**4.30** **Target high risk groups:** Focus activity (such as active travel promotion, provision of infrastructure, facilities and training, and infrastructure improvement) on high risk groups, namely: children and young people, older people, disabled people, and geographical areas of low life expectancy.

| H1 Related Initiatives | Policy |
|---|---|
| Transport assessment of strategic site proposals | S1 Spatial Planning |
| All initiatives within S7 Walking | S7 Walking |
| All initiatives within S8 Cycling | S8 Cycling |

## Promotion of Active Travel & Healthy Activity

**4.31** Across Cheshire East, 12.4% of adults undertake the recommended 30 minutes of activity at least 5 days a week[n]. Levels of activity differ across the borough, being highest in the Poynton Local Area Partnership and lowest in Crewe where 79.5% of adults take no regular exercise[o].

**4.32** Women are generally less active than men although again this varies geographically. There is a gradual reduction in participation rates with age. The differences in participation within Cheshire East's white and non-white populations are more evident than on a national level (although the small sample size in ethnic communities used in the assessment will have distorted these results).

**4.33** The Department of Health's *Choosing activity*[p] report asserts that a culture shift is needed if physical activity levels across the country are to increase. The promotion of active travel and other healthy activities will be needed to assist in that culture shift.

**4.34** Focus groups show that one of the major challenges limiting the use of the public rights of way network is lifestyle: one delegate commented "It's the way of life…people don't have the time, they come home from work and have to catch up with the jobs"[q]. The challenge is to encourage people to use walking and cycling as a daily alternative to travel by private vehicle, particularly for shorter journeys.

**4.35** The lack of cycle route information is identified, by consultees and through the NHT Survey (2009), as a barrier to greater uptake of cycling in Cheshire East. Equivalent route information is also needed to promote walking.

**4.36** Many people find the impetus they need by going on an organised walk, ride, volunteer conservation work or other event. Such activities are organised by the Ranger Service, through Greenleaves social enterprise, through the Walking for Health initiative, school walking buses, and community-led outings such as local rambling groups, the U3A and cycling groups.

**4.37** Promotional activities will also benefit the health of visitors from the North West region, as Cheshire East "represents the countryside on the doorstep of people living in the urban centres such as Manchester"[r]. At the same time such visitors will bring benefits to the visitor economy of Cheshire East. The visitor economy sector aims to attract 'non-traditional' and younger people to rural Cheshire[s], groups which are currently underrepresented in visitor numbers and therefore don't presently benefit from the healthy activities that the countryside can offer.

**4.38** Whilst considering promoting the number of people partaking in healthy activity, there is a need to consider how people get to where they will walk, cycle or horse ride. There is huge scope to reduce, through promotional work, the use of the car as a means to access the countryside. In doing so, the accessibility of green space to those without a car will also be improved. Promotional work can be undertaken with relatively small budgets and staff resources. Funding bids to the Sustainable Transport Fund, or other possible funding sources, should be developed in conjunction with PCT/NHS partners to capitalise on potential health benefits.

**4.39** In order to promote routes to the public, the Council needs to be certain that there are public rights to use those routes. The Council is required to keep the Definitive Map and Statement, which form the legal record of public rights of

way, under continuous review, updating them with changes. However, the Definitive Map and Statement have not been consolidated since they were first published after the 1949 National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act.

**4.40** The policy on promotion of active travel & healthy activities is also included as a policy within the Rights of Way Implementation Plan and will be jointly delivered across the ROWIP and LTP.

**PRIORITY POLICY**

**Policy H2 Promotion of Active Travel and Healthy Activities**: Work in partnership to promote walking, cycling and horse riding as active travel options and healthy activities.

**H2 Policy Initiatives**

**4.41** **Promote opportunities and facilities:** Highlight opportunities for active travel and healthy activity by promoting new and existing facilities using appropriate media such as signage, walking and cycling maps, leaflets, events, internet sites and other technologies. This will focus on routes and sites that are accessible by modes of active travel or public transport (such as important leisure routes or key employment locations) and will involve working with health agencies to promote active travel and other activities as a lifestyle choice for all ages amongst residents and visitors. Close working with the Peak District National Park Authority and other visitor organisations to provide helpful information and promote a consistent and warm welcome to visitor attractions.

**4.42** **Organised walks, rides and activities:** Undertake and support organised walks, rides and other activities which encourage people to partake in healthy activities that they may not otherwise have the confidence or knowledge to do.

**4.43** **Public information on the public rights of way network:** Enhance the accuracy of the Definitive Map and Statement and other records to provide up to date information in an accessible format.

| H2 Related Initiatives | Policy |
|---|---|
| Influencing travel behaviour | S2 Climate Change Mitigation & Adaptation |
| All initiatives within S7 Walking | S7 Walking |
| All initiatives within S8 Cycling | S8 Cycling |
| Facilitate sustainable development | B2 Enabling Development |
| Travel plan initiatives | B7 Business Innovation |
| Defect reporting and response times | B8 Maintenance |
| Community groups | C1 Community |
| Encourage sustainable travel | Y1 Travel to Education |

## CASE STUDY

**Walks for All Leaflet**

In May 2010, the Council published a new 'Walks for All' leaflet. The leaflet details 10 walking routes across the borough which are suitable for those with children, pushchairs, wheelchairs and those with limited mobility.

Details of path surfaces and gradients, gates and gaps, public transport, parking, toilets and refreshment facilities are provided for each walk.

The booklet was developed with the help of local groups and individuals who advised on the content and layout to ensure that the correct information is presented to the reader in a clear format so that they can decide if a route is suitable for them.






## Public Rights of Way & Green Infrastructure

**4.44** The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence note that "[i]t is unreasonable to expect people to change their behaviours when the environment discourages such changes"[t]. The World Health Organisation also noted that improvements to the environmental determinants of physical activity appear to have greater potential than interventions at a personal, primary care level[u].

**4.45** It is clear that there won't be a significant increase in active travel and people undertaking healthy activity if the infrastructure on which that can be done is not provided. In other words, the policy of promoting of walking, cycling and horse riding will only be effective if developed in tandem with improvements in the routes along which people will walk, cycle and horse ride. These routes

may be parts of the highway network used by pedestrians and cyclists (which are addressed more specifically in **Chapter 2: Sustainability**), but they will also often consist of Cheshire East's "green infrastructure" – which includes public rights of way, canal towpaths, other pathways, parks, the Peak district National Park, and the wider countryside. Green infrastructure is defined in the Local Development Framework as "a network of multi-functional green space, both new and existing, both rural and urban, which supports the natural and ecological processes and is integral to the health and quality of life of sustainable communities"[v].

**4.46** A major component of the borough's green infrastructure is the public rights of way network. In 2010, Cheshire East's network of public rights of way, shown in **Figure 4.1**, totalled 1935 km or 1202 miles, equivalent to nearly ¾ of the length of the road network.

**4.47** The network, however, offers a smaller proportion of routes available for horse riding and cycling than the national average.

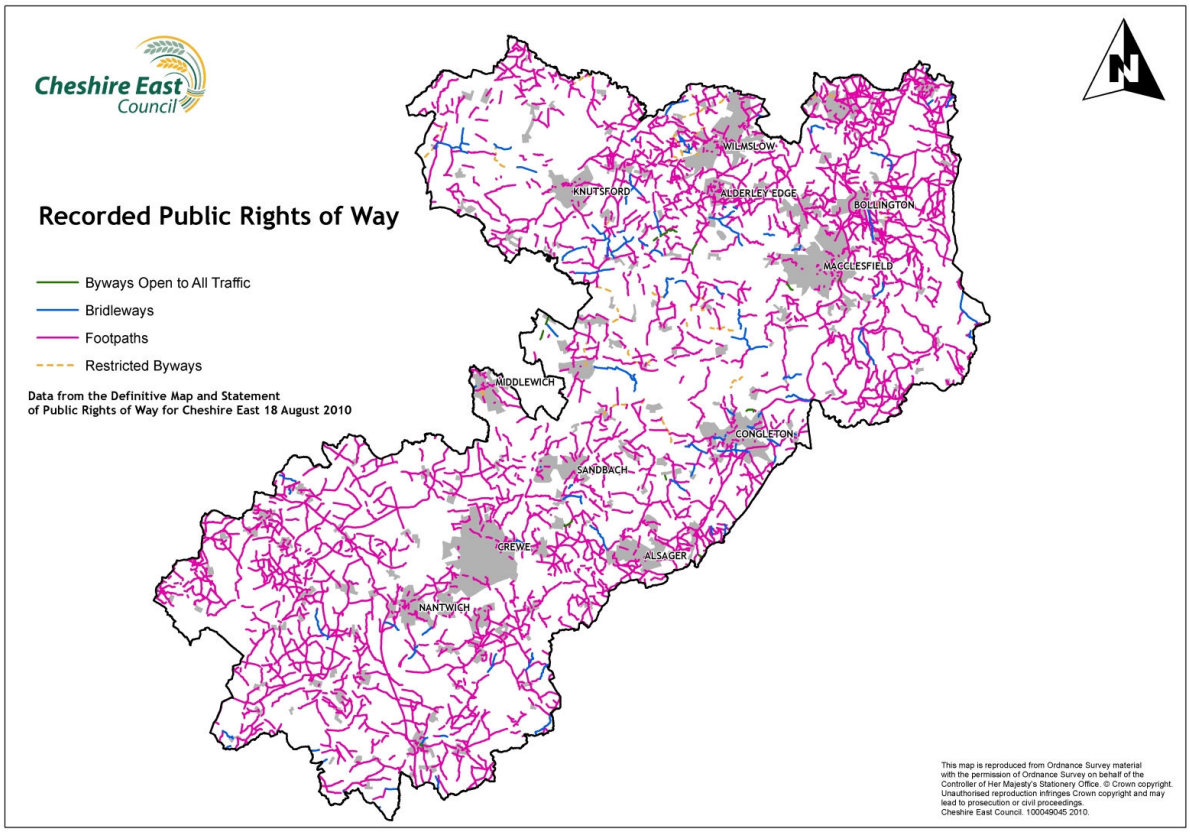



**Figure 4.1: Recorded public rights of way network in Cheshire East**

**4.48** Further, the provision of public rights of way is not even across the borough and specific areas have limited access, such as from the towns of Crewe, Macclesfield and Middlewich in to the surrounding countryside. Overall, public rights of way and green infrastructure are less concentrated in the south of Cheshire East than elsewhere in the borough.

## 4 Drive Out the Sources of Poor Health

**4.49** The Rights of Way Improvement Plan details further evidence of the existing network of public rights of way and green infrastructure. The degree to which the green infrastructure of the borough is accessible for disabled users is relatively unknown, however, but thought to be limited. Disabled people are recognised as amongst the 40% of the population who are 'missing visitors' to the countryside[w].

**4.50** It is estimated that 18% of the UK population have a disability[x], which equates to a population of 64,926 within Cheshire East[y]. Further, it has been estimated that one in every 3 people either has a disability or has a close relative or friend who is disabled[z]. When it is considered that outings to the countryside and green spaces are most often made in groups rather than alone, it is evident that a large proportion of the population could be excluded or dissuaded from using green infrastructure if it is inaccessible to disabled users. Further, improving access for disabled people brings benefits to all users, in particular those with pushchairs or young children, those who walk with dogs and the older population.

**4.51** The public rights of way network is recognised within the Cheshire East Draft Visitor Economy Strategic Framework as a valuable asset for the tourism industry[aa]. Future development of the network needs to be undertaken sympathetically, taking account of location and local community aspirations.

**4.52** A use and demand survey for the Countryside Agency[ab] found that only 4% of people going into the countryside used public transport to get to a site or route whereas the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) recommends that managers of green infrastructure should "[e]nsure public open spaces and public paths can be reached on foot, by bicycle and using other modes of transport involving physical activity. They should also be accessible by public transport".

**4.53** The perception of safety and security has an influence on whether people use green infrastructure. It is important that the design of new and improved infrastructure takes into accounts such concerns.

**4.54** Future planning for green infrastructure needs to be delivered in line with policies and everyday decisions made across the Council, in planning (through the Local Development Framework and Open Space Strategy) and in highway design. Existing green infrastructure must be protected; while new green infrastructure must be well designed and strategically planned so that it is integrated into the urban and rural environments. All routes should be maintained to a reasonable standard to encourage on-going use of the infrastructure.

**4.55** The aim of this policy is to maintain and improve the provision of green infrastructure, the connectivity of the network, to improve the provision for off-road cyclists and horse riders and the network's accessibility for all users, including those with a disability. The development of routes to key destinations, including leisure and tourism sites, local services and access points to public

transport, should encourage residents to take advantage of healthy travel within their everyday lives, as well as contribute towards a reduction in air and noise pollution.

**4.56** Some projects will be based on land within the authority's ownership, others will involve working with other landowners. For example, Cheshire East boasts a network of canals that are managed by British Waterways and which offer green corridors. The towpaths of these canals are available for walking and cycling as both leisure activities and as transport options; many of the canals provide links within and between towns. The planning and delivery of projects will be undertaken in partnership with local community groups.

**4.57** The policy on public rights of way and green infrastructure is also included as a policy within the Rights of Way Implementation Plan (ROWIP) and will be jointly delivered across the ROWIP and LTP.

## PRIORITY POLICY

**Policy H3 Public Rights of Way & Green Infrastructure:** Protect and enhance public rights of way andgreen infrastructure and endeavour to create new links where beneficial for health, safety or access to green spaces.

### H3 Policy Initiatives

**4.58** **Sustainable access to green spaces:** Aim to improve access for all members of society, including disabled people, to and within green infrastructure, including the public rights of way network, town parks, public open space, the Peak District National Park and country parks.

**4.59** **Link key services:** Seek to improve links to key services (e.g. schools, community centres and tourism destinations) by routes and green infrastructure such as canal towpaths. Investments will include improving surfacing and signage and creating links where gaps exist in the network.

**4.60** **Leisure routes for cyclists, horse riders and walkers:** Endeavour to create and enhance leisure routes for cyclists, horse riders and walkers on the public rights of way network and highway network.

**4.61** **Litter, environmental health, safety and security:** Encourage users to reduce litter and improve environmental health, safety and other security concerns through education and clean-up campaigns.

**4.62** **Country parks, town parks and public open space:** Ensure adequate maintenance and improvements of land within the Council's ownership that is used for formal and informal public access and recreation, at a local level and sites which are tourism destinations.

# 4 Drive Out the Sources of Poor Health

| H3 Related Initiatives | Policy |
|---|---|
| Various initiatives within S7 Walking | S7 Walking |
| Various initiatives within S8 Cycling | S8 Cycling |
| Facilitate sustainable development | B2 Enabling development |
| Developer contributions | B2 Enabling Development |
| Defect reporting and response times | B8 Maintenance |
| Local minor infrastructure improvements | C1 Community |
| Community groups | C1 Community |

## CASE STUDY

**Nantwich Riverside Loop**

Together with British Waterways and a number of local community groups, the Council developed the Nantwich Riverside Loop; a 5 km (3 mile), waymarked, circular walk.

It is hoped that the Nantwich Riverside Loop will encourage both residents and visitors to explore on foot and cycle further than they previously would have done, progressing from urban park land in the Riverside to more open countryside. The Loop will introduce members of the public who would not normally use the public rights of way network or canal towpaths to the facilities that are freely available to them both in the local area and elsewhere in Cheshire East.



## Air Quality & Noise Pollution

### Air Quality

**4.63** Medical evidence shows that exposure to nitrogen dioxide has both long- and short-term health effects. Long term exposure to nitrogen dioxide has been shown to effect lung function and respiratory systems, and has been linked to asthma. Short term exposure to higher levels can irritate the eyes and lungs, cause shortness of breath. Health impacts are likely to be more severe in sensitive individuals (elderly, young and those with underlying health conditions). Other pollutants, such as particulates have been shown to have no safe threshold, and as such any reduction in exposure to these pollutants will potentially have health benefits for a wider population.

**4.64** It is therefore important to reduce air pollution in areas where exposure occurs, and provide high quality information to sensitive individuals allowing people to alter their lifestyles to reduce the effects of pollution.

**4.65** The Environment Act 1995 requires that Local Authorities undertake a regular assessment of air quality within their area. Ambient levels of seven key pollutants are assessed against health based objectives[ac].

**4.66** Where concentrations of pollutants are exceeding (or likely to exceed) these objectives, at locations where members of the public will be exposed, the Council is required to declare an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) and develop an Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) which outlines measures to reduce concentrations, and work towards meeting air quality objectives.

**4.67** Through the programme of Local Air Quality Management, the Council has determined the main pollutant of concern is Nitrogen Dioxide, generated primarily from road vehicles. In areas where people live in close proximity to busy, or congested roads, exposure to unacceptable levels of nitrogen dioxide has been found to occur, and as a result there are 12 AQMA's declared within the borough (2010) covering some areas along the following roads:

- A6 Disley
- A556 Mere
- A50 Knutsford
- A523 Macclesfield
- A34 Congleton (two areas)
- A54 Congleton
- M6 (Junction 18) Cranage
- A534 / A5022 Sandbach
- A534 Nantwich
- A534 Crewe
- A532 Crewe

**4.68** There are further areas where levels of nitrogen dioxide have been found to be of concern, and the Council is currently undertaking a more detailed assessment in these areas to determine if it is necessary to declare additional AQMA's.

**4.69** To address the specific air quality challenges, the Council will adopt a strategic approach to local air quality management aimed at improving air quality in AQMAs and across the borough. Preparing an Air Quality Strategy and Air Quality Action Plan as a complimentary "daughter document" to the LTP has a number of advantages:

- it embeds air quality into the transport planning process – recognising that the primary source of air pollution in the borough is road traffic and that actions to reduce air pollution are invariably focused on traffic;
- By adopting an exposure reduction approach to limit harmful effects on health; it ensures an integrated approach, where-benefits and risks are considered throughout land use and transport planning; and,
- Avoids any unintended impacts from one policy area to another.

**4.70** The Air Quality Action Plan will outline a suite of measures aimed at improving air quality, and will show on a cost-benefit basis the likely impact of measures designed to achieve improvements to air quality.

**4.71** Alongside the LTP process, the Council will also seek to manage the emission impacts of new development, and help deliver wider sustainable development goals, through the preparation and adoption of supplementary planning guidance on based on a Low Emission Strategy (LES). The guidance will aim to accelerate the uptake of low emission technologies and reduce transport related emissions from proposed development.

**Noise**

**4.72** Noise from road transport has been shown to rank highly as a source of annoyance. In addition, noise from vehicles on the highway is not subject to nuisance controls available to the Councils. Similarly to air quality, noise has the greatest impact at properties located closest to busy roads, however there can also be significant impacts further afield.

**4.73** The non-auditory health impacts of environmental noise are well documented. Noise annoyance has been shown to have an impact on overall health and wellbeing, in particular causing sleep disturbance, increased stress and anxiety. It is important to ensure that where exposure is excessive, steps are taken to mitigate the impact.

**4.74** When a new road is constructed, or existing roads substantially altered there is a requirement to assess the noise impact of that road, and provide noise insulation, or compensation to properties that qualify under the Noise Insulation Regulations 1975.

**4.75** On a broader scale, and in accordance with the Environmental Noise (England) Regulations 2006, noise maps have been produced for major roads, railways, airports industrial sites in large agglomerations (initially with populations greater than 250,000).

**4.76** For the second round of mapping, due to commence in 2012, in addition to re-mapping the areas covered in the first round, roads having more than 3 million vehicle passages per year and railways with more than 30,000 train passages per year are to be mapped. All agglomerations with a population of over 100,000 will also be mapped. The actual roads, railways and agglomerations to be mapped in the second round will be subject to confirmation based on the most up to date data available at the time.

**4.77** Cheshire East has 9 roads (non-Highways Agency) which have been identified as First Priority Locations through the first round mapping exercise:

- Middlewich – A54 eastern and western extents of town and towards Sproston Green.
- Crewe – A530 near Wistaston
- Plumley – A556 (various properties between Lostock Gralam and M6.
- Knutsford – A50 north of town
- Alderley Edge – A34 south of Harden Park
- Wilmslow – A538 north of town
- Macclesfield – A523 Gas Road
- Macclesfield – A523 near Butley
- Adlington – A523 (also railway priority).

**4.78** Following identification of priority locations on the M6, the Highways Authority is required to assess the areas, and consider what measures (if any) can be taken in each area to aid the management of noise.

**4.79** Transportation noise impacts will be managed through local implementation of the Environmental Noise Directive and the following measures:

- Implementation of national legislation which provides façade mitigation (e.g. double glazing, sound barriers, etc.) for qualifying properties; and
- The ongoing improvement to road surfaces with low noise surface technologies.

**Air quality & noise challenges**

**4.80** A number of key challenges have been identified which have an impact on air pollution and/or transport noise.

**4.81** One of the primary challenges within Cheshire East is the high volume of traffic on some of the roads, leading to increased emissions of vehicle related pollution. Cheshire has been shown to have a high proportion of car ownership

(82% in 2001 against a UK average of 72%), and an equally high proportion of families with more than one vehicle (40% in 2001 against a UK average of 29%).

**4.82** The predominant means of commuting in Cheshire East is the car, with only a small proportion of residents (4% in 2001) using public transport to commute to work.

**4.83** Tackling congestion is a key factor in reducing emissions. Free flowing traffic produces less pollution than "stop start", or stationary traffic. Many of the market towns within Cheshire East have narrow streets with residents living in very close proximity to the road, and traffic flow is often impeded by on street parking, goods vehicles servicing shops and other activities.

**4.84** Freight movements have an impact on air and noise quality and pollution within Cheshire East. "Source apportionment" undertaken as part of the Local Air Quality Management Process shows that, in a number of the Air Quality Management Areas, emissions of nitrogen dioxide from Heavy Goods Vehicles are disproportionately high when compared to emissions from other categories of roads user (cars for example).

**4.85** New development also has the potential to adversely affect both air quality and transport noise, partly from the development's own activities (for example boiler emissions, or manufacturing noise), but more often from increased road traffic, or changes to traffic patterns on the wider highway network as a result of the development.

**4.86** Specific policy initiatives to address noise and air quality are set out below. Initiatives relating to Public Transport, Freight, Network Management, Cycling, Walking and Climate Change are set out in **Chapter 2: Sustainability** and **Chapter 3: Business**. These policy initiatives are all likely to lead to benefits to local air quality.

**POLICY**

**Policy H4 Air Quality**: Work to improve air quality in the borough.

**POLICY**

**Policy H5 Noise**: Seek to reduce the impact of noise pollution from transport.

### H4 & H5 Policy Initiatives

**4.87** **Public information:** Work to raise awareness of air quality issues, and communicate the results of air quality monitoring through development of a web portal. Consider providing targeted, health based advice to sensitive individuals allowing them to adjust lifestyles according to air pollution forecasts.

**4.88** **Driver technique:** Undertake a series of sector specific campaigns aimed at better awareness of how improved driver technique can reduce vehicle emissions. Raise overall awareness of how driver technique can impact emissions through the website. Place signage at strategic areas where vehicle engine idling leads to increased emissions and explore the feasibility of adopting legislation to enforce the switching off of idling engines within AQMAs.

**4.89** **Vehicle emission testing:** Undertake roadside emission testing of vehicles to ensure they meet vehicle emission regulations.

**4.90** **New technology:** Continue to investigate innovative techniques and encourage adoption of new technology designed to improve local air quality – e.g. photo-catalytic paint.

**4.91** **Quiet surfacing systems:** Where necessary for environmental reasons utilise 'low noise' surfacing materials in its highway maintenance activities.

## 4 Drive Out the Sources of Poor Health

| H4 & H5 Related Initiatives | Policy |
|---|---|
| Transport assessment of strategic site proposals | S1 Spatial Planning |
| Strategic joint working | S2 Climate Change – Mitigation & Adaptation |
| Influence travel behaviour | S2 Climate Change – Mitigation & Adaptation |
| All initiatives within S3-6 Public Transport | S3-6 Public Transport |
| Hybrid and electric vehicles | S9 Technology & Energy Efficiency |
| Facilitate sustainable development | B2 Enabling Development |
| Developer contributions | B2 Enabling Development |
| Network and route planning | B3 Network Management |
| Junction efficiency | B3 Network Management |
| All initiatives within B5 Freight | B5 Freight |
| Parking management | B6 Parking |
| Transport Asset Management Plan | B8 Maintenance |

## CASE STUDY

**Application of Photo-Catalytic Paint**

Awareness has in recent years been steadily growing that titanium dioxide in the form of photo-catalytic products, appeared to be a promising technology for the removal of nitrogen dioxide from ambient air. It was deemed a suitable, interim mitigation option for Cheshire East where traditional methods or re-routing traffic may not be feasible, or whilst longer term measures are implemented.

A pilot study has been undertaken within an Air Quality Management Area in Congleton. Solution was applied to approximately 200m2 of paving, a number of residential properties and street furniture in late 2008.

Nitrogen dioxide concentrations were notably reduced following application of the solution, and there was a measured reduction of 34% over a 12-month period. The results of the study demonstrated that the use of photo-catalytic products may be an effective mitigation measure on reducing nitrogen dioxide concentrations within Air Quality Management Areas.

There are plans to undertake further studies within AQMA's of differing topography, and geography to enable further assessment of the impact.

The study has prompted interest amongst national and international air quality experts.



Photo: application of Photo-catalytic paint (left) and the area sprayed (Right) in West Road, Congleton

## Road Safety

**4.92** The Road Traffic Act 1988 places a duty on all local authorities to identify those road users most at-risk of death or injury and implement measures that are appropriate to reduce crashes.

# 4 Drive Out the Sources of Poor Health

**4.93** While the general health of people in Cheshire East is predominantly better than the national average; the number of road injuries and deaths in the area are significantly worse than the national average[ad]. The cost of road death and injury in 2009 alone is calculated at £105m[ae].

**4.94** The Community Survey 2008 identified that 68% of residents in Cheshire East had been involved in a road traffic crash or collision, of these accidents 18% had resulted in a minor injury and 9% had resulted in a more serious injury. Unlawful acts are contributory factors in almost half of road traffic collisions in Cheshire East, with one in five associated with alcohol impairment[af].

**4.95** An analysis of traffic accidents where people are killed or seriously injured (KSIs) in Cheshire East (2005-2009) identified an overall downward trend since 1998, however, more recently the rate of reduction has begun to level out. Moreover, a significant proportion of these reductions have been achieved on motorway and trunk roads. In their 2010 Cheshire East Profile Report, the Cheshire Safer Roads Partnership (CSRP) noted that when these roads are excluded, the average number of KSIs in Cheshire East has remained relatively constant, albeit with some year-on-year variations[ag].

**4.96** The CSRP has identified young adult road users (16 to 25 years) and powered-two-wheelers as the top two at risk road user groups. These groups accounted for 49% of all KSIs between 2005 and 2009[ah]. Key statistics include:

- 61% of all young adult road user KSIs during this period were car occupants (either as a driver or passenger), with males twice as likely to be killed or seriously injured[ai].
- In terms of all powered-two-wheeler KSIs, 50% of accidents can be attributed to 36-45 year old males riding 500cc+ motorbikes.
- Of the 266 KSIs on Cheshire East roads in 2009, only 28 were children although there is a steady rise in child KSIs over the last decade.
- Of all cyclist KSIs, 36-55 year olds contribute to almost half (48%) and the vast majority of these (80%) are male.

**4.97** By supporting greater road safety education and enforcement at high risk sites, the Council aims to reduce the overall rate of road traffic incidents in Cheshire East.

**4.98** The engineering of highways and junctions can also have a significant impact on the number of road traffic incidents experienced at these sites. Examples of positive action include rectifying sites with poor visibility, lighting or drainage, inappropriate crossing design, or below standard corner radius or road camber. Care needs to be taken in sensitive locations, such as the Peak District National Park, to avoid clutter, light pollution or schemes with a detrimental visual impact.

**POLICY**

**Policy H6 Road Safety (Education):** Work with partners to improve road safety through targeted education campaigns.

### H6 Policy Initiatives

4.99 **Target high risk groups:** Work with local and sub-regional partners including, the Police, Cheshire Fire and Rescue and other external organisations to provide education and training services to high risk groups (e.g. young adults, and motorcyclists). The Council will also undertake an evaluation of existing education and training campaigns to measure the impact they are having on the number of KSI incidents in the borough and ensure effective delivery.

4.100 **National behavioural campaigns:** Better inform all drivers and riders of the consequences of excessive speed, alcohol impairment and not wearing seatbelts, as well as improving observation skills through the use of national behavioural campaigns.

4.101 **Cyclist training**: Work with schools, employers and in local communities to provide road safety training to cyclists identified as having a high level of risk in the borough and promote the use of active travel.

**POLICY**

**Policy H7 Road Safety (Enforcement)**: Work with partners to improve road safety through targeted enforcement in high risk areas.

### H7 Policy Initiatives

4.102 **Speed cameras:** Support the use of existing speed cameras at high risk sites to encourage drivers and riders to abide by speed limits. Undertake an evaluation of the impact of installing average speed cameras on roads identified as having a particularly high level of collisions for at-risk road user groups.

4.103 **Innovative enforcement schemes:** Support targeted innovative enforcement schemes to enhance road safety in towns and villages and on rural roads. For example, using peak time collision data to target specific at-risk groups, considering temporary introduction of Speed Indication Devices (SIDs) or assistance with informal community speed camera enforcement schemes.

# 4 Drive Out the Sources of Poor Health

| H7 Related Initiative | Policy |
|---|---|
| Community-led initiatives | C1 Community |

**PRIORITY POLICY**

**Policy H8 Road Safety (Engineering):** The Council will improve road safety through highway design improvements at collision blackspots.

**H8 Policy Initiatives**

**4.104** **Local safety schemes:** Contribute towards the reduction in the number of road traffic incidents by undertaking appropriate highway design improvements where evidence identifies a collision of casualty problem – then undertake appropriate evaluation to ensure future effectiveness.

**4.105** **Vulnerable road users:** Take account of the needs of vulnerable road users (e.g. pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders) and the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 when undertaking highway design. The Network Management Plan will set out a road user hierarchy to identify the circumstances where pedestrians and cyclist will be given priority on the highway network and consider where reduced speed limits would be appropriate (e.g. 20s Plenty campaign for residential areas) – see **Chapter 3: Business** for details.

**4.106** **Quiet lanes:** Consider the viability of introducing 'Quiet Lanes' in villages to enhance pedestrian and cycling road safety using appropriate best practice guidance.

| H8 Related Initiative | Policy |
|---|---|
| Safer routes to school | Y1 Travel to Education |

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# 5 Nurture Strong Communities

## Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) Priorities

**5.1** Over the next 15 years the SCS seeks to ensure that local people will be actively involved in shaping the future of where they live. The SCS has identified four priorities for action in nurturing strong communities in Cheshire East. These are:

- Let local voices take the lead
- Support the community to support itself
- Deliver services as locally as possible
- Ensure communities feel safe

**5.2** Communities depend on local transport to get to work, to school, to the hospital, shops or GP surgery. However, the ease of access to services is not just about transport, it is also about how key services are planned and delivered. The aim is to work with partner organisations, town & parish councils and community & voluntary groups to identify solutions that will improve the way in which local communities can access services now and in the future.

## Evidence Overview

**5.3** The 2008 Community Survey found that 93% of respondents liked living in the area and 61% felt that they belonged to a community. Cheshire East has a strong town and parish council network, pro-active town partnerships, neighbourhood action groups and a strong volunteer force. Residents are proud of the levels of community activity and see this as one of the strengths of the area. There are many examples of community-led solutions to transport problems, such as community car schemes and informal car sharing.

**5.4** Cheshire East contains a diverse mixture of urban and rural areas with approximately 39% of the population living in rural areas and 61% in towns, suburbs and larger villages. The ease with which people can access services such as work, healthcare, education and shopping is an important and challenging issue, particularly for rural communities.

**5.5** The profile report for each Local Area Partnership (LAP) has identified the proportion of households located within 2km of a range of key services. The results indicate that access to services across each LAP varies. Nantwich and Knutsford have a lower than average access across a range of services. However, Congleton, Crewe, Wilmslow and to a lesser extent Macclesfield experience higher-than-average access to most services. This constitutes a benefit of the more urban composition of these LAP areas.

**5.6** There are some neighbourhoods in Cheshire East which are classified as being in the 20% most deprived nationally. The majority (10 out of 14) of these neighbourhoods are in Crewe town, with the rest in Macclesfield and Congleton

towns, and the Wilmslow-Handforth conurbation. A greater proportion of households in these areas do not have access to a car and many rely on public transport to access key services.

## Stakeholder Opinion

**5.7** Stakeholders recognised the important role that transport can play in supporting communities – in particular, stakeholders identified accessibility to services from rural areas as a key issue – however, nurture strong communities was not identified as a priority theme for transport.

**5.8** Reducing the need to travel by providing services locally or remotely, better partnership working and working with existing networks/community groups to facilitate a better understanding of local transport needs were seen to be important and applicable to all the SCS themes.

**5.9** In terms of possible initiatives, members of the LAPs expressed greatest support for increasing the role of taxi services to meet community needs and providing practical support for community groups in meeting community transport needs (e.g. lift services organised by communities).

**5.10** Stakeholders also recommended a range of other opportunities to nurture strong communities including: joined-up service delivery to address loss of local services (e.g. post office closures); communication to understand community needs; and supporting local community groups and local councils to ensure that town and parish plans are at the heart of local decision making. Stakeholder suggestions are reflected in the draft policies wherever possible.

## LTP Objectives

### RELEVANT OBJECTIVES

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

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

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

## C: Sustainability Appraisal

**5.11** The Sustainability Appraisal of policies within this chapter found beneficial effects across a number of sustainability objectives. At least three positive effects were predicted for each individual policy across the sustainability objectives below:

- 3 Minimise need to travel & sustainable modes…
- 5 Pollution & climate change…
- 9 Towns & local centres…
- 10 Economy & access to employment skills…
- 11 Safety…
- 12 Quality of life…
- 13 Access to leisure and countryside…

**5.12** Six sustainability objectives were not associated with any beneficial policy effects from this chapter, these were:

- 1 Biodiversity, habitats, geology…
- 2 Flooding…
- 4 Heritage & landscape…
- 6 Resources & green infrastructure…
- 7 Energy…
- 8 Design…

**5.13** These objectives were all associated with neutral effects from communities policies of this chapter. No negative effects were identified. In conclusion, the Sustainability Appraisal of the policies within this chapter highlighted either beneficial or neutral effects.

## Transport Challenges & Policy Solutions

## Community

**5.14** Cohesive, empowered and active communities in which people can influence the decisions that affect their locality is at the heart of the SCS for Cheshire East. Local services which are tailored to the needs of local communities will help to maintain the distinctiveness of towns and villages.

**5.15** It is recognised that local communities are often best placed to identify their own transport needs and to develop local transport solutions. Many communities across the borough have a history of self help and coming up with innovative ways of serving local people, whether it be giving someone a lift to a doctor's appointment, or saving a post office by relocating it to the local pub. This is particularly important in rural areas where access to mainstream services is more difficult.

**5.16** There is a need to assess the extent to which transport and accessibility issues contribute to deprivation, particularly in the areas which are classified as being in the 20% most deprived nationally. The Council will work in partnership with communities to understand the complex range of transport needs at a local level and support where possible community-led solutions.

**5.17** Local Area Partnerships (LAPs) bring together the key agencies within localities to ensure engagement with communities, provide empowerment opportunities and improve service delivery through the development of robust, evidence

based Area Delivery Plans. The Council will work with the LAPs, town & parish councils and community & voluntary groups to facilitate a better understanding of transport and accessibility needs and work together to explore potential solutions.

**5.18** In order to empower local communities, the Council are exploring opportunities to transfer and devolve functions within localities. The purpose of this devolution is to improve local services by involving town and parish councils in service delivery and promoting local ownership of services. The transport-related services which may be devolved include maintenance of bus shelters, maintenance of footpaths and street name plates, bridleways and road sweeping.

**5.19** In developing the range of LTP policies, a full assessment of each town and parish plan has been undertaken to ensure that appropriate policies for Cheshire East are adopted. This assessment will feed into the development of transport frameworks for each principal town and key service centre during the first implementation plan period (for more details see **Chapter 8: Towns**).

**5.20** There are opportunities to nurture the development of grass roots initiatives and empower local people to develop a range of community-led solutions.

**PRIORITY POLICY**

**Policy C1 Community:** Work in partnership with local communities to support community-led solutions that improve accessibility to key services (employment, education, health, shopping and leisure).

### C1 Policy Initiatives

**5.21** **Community engagement:** Encourage communities to identify and prioritise transport and accessibility issues relevant to their community – town and parish plans, LAP "Area Delivery Plans" and Transport Frameworks for Towns may help facilitate this process.

**5.22** **Community-led initiatives:** Adopt a flexible and open approach to community identified initiatives and support local people to develop a range of community-led solutions, such as voluntary car schemes, car share schemes and community speed reduction initiatives. Such schemes may be developed for inclusion as a Sustainable Transport Fund bid option in collaboration with communities and other stakeholders.

**5.23** **Local service delivery:** Support initiatives to provide access to services locally, including mobile service delivery (e.g. libraries) and local delivery hubs. This may include the provision of some services by town and parish councils.

**5.24** **Local minor infrastructure improvements:** Implement small-scale improvements to local transport facilities and services identified in town and parish plans and other community plans (e.g. LAP “Area Delivery Plans”).

**5.25** **Community groups:** Utilise the knowledge and expertise of specialist interest groups, such as Cheshire East Cycling Forum, Community Rail Partnerships and Low Carbon Communities (LCC).

## CASE STUDY

**Rural Accessibility - Audlem**

As part of a North West Accessibility & Regeneration Study, Audlem was selected as a case study to explore access to services in a rural settlement with close ties to larger neighbouring employment and service areas.

The study found that the changing nature of village life towards commuting to urban centres has had a number of positive and negative impacts on Audlem village. The demand for local services has reduced as car ownership has risen, and access to employment and key services by car has resulted in more people travelling further.

One of the key successes found in Audlem was the role of the local community in bringing people together, providing voluntary support, and representing local opinion in an effective manner. The Parish Plan, Village Design Statement, Audlem Online and the range of community events are just some of the positive messages.

The case study found that many people who live in Audlem feel the advantage of living in a rural village is that people look out for each other. For example, it was identified through the focus groups that Audlem has a group of volunteers who offer a taxi service for people wanting to access Leighton Hospital. The service enables local residents with transport problems to attend hospital, dentist, chiropody and surgery appointments.



This local support network is evidence that people living in Audlem recognise the issues faced by local people and work together to support people within their village. The Audlem community have a strong culture of self help and coming up with innovative ways of serving local people. The success of community initiatives to tackle rural accessibility problems should be an important lesson for other areas across Cheshire East.

## Accessibility of Services

**5.26** Many people in Cheshire East have good access to services; however, there are a significant number of people for whom accessing key services is a real challenge. This section outlines the 'places' where access to services can be challenging and the 'people' who experience accessibility problems which may also be linked to issues of deprivation and social exclusion.

**5.27** The national indices of deprivation suggest that several of Cheshire East's rural communities experience significant levels of deprivation in terms of geographical barriers to services. The most affected communities are located in the area covered by the Nantwich Local Area Partnership.

**5.28** In addition, local accessibility mapping has identified the rural communities with limited access to conventional fixed route public transport services (albeit excluding 'demand responsive' solutions such as Dial-a-ride, which cannot easily be mapped). The challenges to rural accessibility include greater distances to travel, topography, less concentrated levels of demand for public transport and the increasing loss of local service provision.

**5.29** However, living in a rural area does not necessarily translate to a problem of access to services, as many of these communities have high car ownership and often do not consider themselves to be experiencing difficulties. Therefore, activities to address rural accessibility must be targeted at the people for whom accessing essential services is a real challenge.

**5.30** Consultation with rural communities has found that older people often experience accessibility problems as they may become less mobile and less inclined to drive as they get older (see **Chapter 7: Older people**). Young people can also experience accessibility problems linked to availability and affordability of transport (see **Chapter 6: Young people**).

**5.31** Research by Cheshire Community Action has found that transport which is flexible and responsive to local needs is a top priority for rural communities. Community transport initiatives, such as dial-a-ride and community car schemes, were highly valued in providing journeys for older people and disabled passengers to a range of essential key services.

**5.32** Many people are concerned about the loss of local services and the potential for isolation and disadvantage as many village shops, post offices and pubs continue to close. Community buildings can host numerous other services and with 144 village halls in Cheshire East there is a significant physical resource of buildings in which more localised services can be provided.

**5.33** People without regular access to a car often experience difficulties in accessing key services. The lowest levels of car ownership are concentrated in the areas classified as being in the 20% most deprived nationally. 40% of households in West Coppenhall & Grosvenor in Crewe have no access to a car, which was the highest percentage in Cheshire East.

**5.34** However, Crewe has an extensive commercial bus network with good availability of services during peak hours of the day. The accessibility problems experienced by these communities are often more closely associated with affordability of travel and off peak journeys, particularly for shift workers (early mornings and late evenings).

**5.35** In addressing deprivation there is a need to consider a range of issues and potential solutions to reduce the inequalities in household incomes (access to work), educational attainment (access to schools & colleges) and health (access to hospitals & GP surgery). This may include assessing the location of services, safety and security concerns at transport interchanges and people's travel horizons (e.g. confidence to travel longer distances), as well as the availability and cost of transport.

**5.36** An increasing number of retailers and service providers make their goods and services available online, reducing the need to travel to service outlets. The majority of households in Cheshire East can access broadband with the exception of a small number of areas (often referred to as 'blindspots'), which are concentrated in the rural parts of the borough. In addition, the diversity of service providers and speed of the connection is weaker in rural areas.

**5.37** In order to improve access to goods and services it is important for all areas of Cheshire East to have access to high quality broadband infrastructure. The aim is to reduce the digital divide and ensure that there is parity in the provision of broadband services for those that live and work in rural areas with that available in nearby towns.

**5.38** However, it is also recognised that the affordability of broadband may be an issue in low income households, particularly in deprived neighbourhoods in the urban areas of the borough. Promoting outlets which offer community access to internet services, such as libraries and internet cafés could be targeted to areas of deprivation.

**5.39** In summary, the Council will seek to improve accessibility through a combination of effective transport links and working with partners to explore new ways of service provision. This will include effective use of technology and making better use of local facilities (such as village halls and community centres) to deliver joined-up services. It is essential that communities have a strong voice in determining decisions that are made, so that services are responsive to the needs of local communities.

**PRIORITY POLICY**

**Policy C2 Accessibility of Services:** Work with partner organisations and local communities to make key services easier to access with a particular focus on disadvantaged groups and areas, including people living in rural areas, older people, young people and those without access to a car.

### C2 Policy Initiatives

**5.40** **Key service location:** Work with service providers (NHS, schools, colleges, leisure centres) to ensure that changes to service location do not have a detrimental impact on accessibility for vulnerable groups and isolated people.

**5.41** **Multi-use premises:** Work with service providers to explore the opportunity to utilise existing community facilities to provide a wider range of services locally (e.g. village halls & community centres).

**5.42** **Rural taxi services:** Further utilise the role of taxis and private hire vehicles by investigating innovative taxi-sharing initiatives serving rural areas, and ensuring adequate availability of taxi services covering such areas.

**5.43** **Access to employment, skills and education:** Work with employers and education providers to ensure that future and (where possible) existing sites are as accessible as possible to local communities, particularly young people from areas of deprivation.

**5.44** **Sustainable communities:** Encourage communities to "live local, work local, buy local" to support the viability of local services, promote home delivery of goods which cannot be purchased locally and increase the availability of allotments to facilitate access to affordable healthy food.

| C2 Related Initiatives | Policy |
|---|---|
| Broadband infrastructure | B7 Business Innovation |
| Supported services | S4 Public Transport (Service Levels & Reliability) |
| New commercial opportunities | S4 Public Transport (Service Levels & Reliability) |
| Multi-media information | S5 Public Transport (Information & Marketing) |
| Various initiatives within S7 Walking | S7 Walking |
| Various initiatives within S8 Cycling | S8 Cycling |

## CASE STUDY

**Community Transport - Gawsworth**

The village of Gawsworth is situated approximately two miles outside the town of Macclesfield. The financial cost of maintaining a Tuesday only local bus service for the village of Gawsworth was unsustainable, yet this service provided essential accessibility to shopping, personal business and other needs of those residents using this service.

In response to this, a community transport service was introduced. By changing the day of operation to Friday, it was possible to use existing community transport resources, therefore the service could be provided at marginal additional cost, which is met by fare income. Close engagement with service users was necessary, particularly as the new service required residents to register and pre book their journeys. However, this has subsequently proven to be successful, with service users accepting and understanding how the new service works for them.

The LTP will seek further opportunities to rationalise services and increase sustainable accessibility for rural residents.

## Access for All

**5.45** People with mobility problems and disabled people often experience difficulties in using the transport system to access key services. Transport policy and planning should influence the effective location and delivery of services, such that they are as accessible as possible to all users.

**5.46** In addition, improvements in the physical accessibility of public transport will go some way towards better meeting the needs of all users within 'mainstream' transport. The provision of accessible buses is important to ensure that older people, disabled people, wheelchair users and people with pushchairs are afforded equal access to bus transport.

**5.47** The English National Concessionary Travel Scheme (ENCTS) enables free bus travel after 9.30am to all eligible older people and disabled people. The concession provides greater freedom and independence to some of the most vulnerable people in our society, representing a major step forward in tackling social exclusion.

**5.48** The Council currently operates a number of discretionary enhancements to the scheme, such as half fare travel before 9.30am and the ability to use the pass on Dial-a-Ride services. The enhancements extend the advantages of the scheme, particularly for those who live in areas with limited bus services.

**5.49** As part of the concessionary travel scheme, the Council currently offers both the Senior Railcard and Disabled Persons Railcard to eligible residents at a discounted price through the power of bulk buying directly from National Rail.

**5.50** In terms of adult social care, the Council currently provide a total of 1,200 journeys each day. The majority of these customers are aged over 60. The service provides access to a range of facilities including day-care centres and healthcare. However, the provision of transport is set to change as part of the social care redesign programme.

**5.51** The introduction of the personalisation agenda and devolved care budgets mean that clients will in future be allocated an allowance for transport costs. People will be given freedom in how they spend this budget, how much they spend on transport and indeed, how they choose to travel. This will result in a demand led and demand responsive approach to transport.

**5.52** Disabled people in receipt of the higher rate mobility component of Disability Living Allowance are eligible for a number of concessions including the Blue Badge scheme, which enables mobility impaired people to park on the street close to key services where there are no waiting restrictions in place.

**5.53** 'Shopmobility' schemes assist people with mobility problems to access local shops and services by providing wheelchairs and electric scooters that are made available for hire in local town centres. 'Shopmobility' forms an integral part of the journey for a person with mobility problems, enabling them to retain a level of independence.

**5.54** Currently there are four Shopmobility centres around the borough (Macclesfield, Crewe, Nantwich and Wilmslow), with a fifth (Congleton) in progress. This will expand the access of Shopmobility schemes and provision for mobility vehicles and enable more people to access the scheme.



**5.55** In addition, Independent Travel Training supports people with disabilities and learning difficulties to gain the essential skills they need to access 'mainstream' public transport services. The training has been highly valued by users helping them to gain independence and greater social inclusion.

**5.56** The Council will work with users to better understand the diverse range of needs (e.g. visual impairment, learning difficulties, wheelchair users) and develop initiatives to support access to public transport for all.

# 5 Nurture Strong Communities

**PRIORITY POLICY**

**Policy C3 Access for all:** Consider the diverse range of needs concerning disabled people and other groups who experience difficulties using the transport system.

**C3 Policy Initiatives**

**5.57** **Accessibility audits:** Undertake regular assessments of key transport infrastructure, such as railway stations and bus interchanges, to ensure that they are accessible for those with mobility constraints and disabled people.

**5.58** **Accessible vehicles:** Encourage operators to replace older bus and rail vehicles with high quality fully accessible buses or carriages that enable easy access and provide a comfortable journey for all users.

**5.59** **Accessible information:** Support the provision of transport information in a range of formats to increase access to this information (e.g. for partially sighted or disabled people).

**5.60** **Independent travel training:** Support people with disabilities and learning difficulties to gain the essential skills they need (e.g. confidence) to access 'mainstream' public transport services.

**5.61** **Social care transport options:** Facilitate informed choices and decision-making through easier access to information on travel options for accessing facilities (e.g. day care centres), particularly in relation to the social care redesign programme and independent travel budgets.

**5.62** **Concessionary bus travel:** Review current criteria to ensure it offers value for money and supports broader policy objectives. Additional discretionary elements to consider will include introduction of companion bus passes and/or taxi vouchers.

**5.63** **Concessionary rail cards:** Promote the national scheme offered to older people and people with disabilities.



| C3 Related Initiatives | Policy |
|---|---|
| Access to green spaces | H3 Public Rights of Way & Green Infrastructure |
| Bus driver training | S4 Public Transport (Service Levels & Reliability) |
| Computerised booking systems | S5 Public Transport (Information & Publicity) |
| Footpath & footway improvements | S7 Walking |

## CASE STUDY

**Independent Travel Training**

Independent Travel Training supports people with disabilities and learning difficulties to gain the essential skills they need to access mainstream public transport services gaining independence, helping achievement of greater social inclusion.

A pilot scheme has been set up in Cheshire East to assist students attending local schools and colleges. Students from these educational establishments have benefited by improving their access to further education, training and employment and reduced their dependency on specialist or personalised transport arrangements provided by the Council.

Students at Reaseheath College who have participated in the travel training course have thoroughly enjoyed the process. One student called his first day of using the college bus his 'independence day' as he has spent most of his school life travelling by taxi and this was his first step towards adulthood.

# 5 Nurture Strong Communities

## Crime & Terrorism

**5.64** Despite the reduction in the number of actual crimes committed within Cheshire East, fear of crime remains high. A considerable number of respondents to locally conducted surveys in the former District Council areas indicated that they felt very (Macclesfield: 12%; Crewe and Nantwich: 14% and Congleton 11%) or quite (Macclesfield: 55%; Crewe and Nantwich: 49% and Congleton 39%) worried about being a victim of crime.

**5.65** Criminal damage, theft and violence were the most common types of crime experienced in Cheshire East. Macclesfield, Haslington, Knutsford and Handforth experience a relatively high level of violence – defined as violent crime rates higher than 10 per 1,000 population, with Disley, Prestbury, Bunbury and Holmes Chapel experiencing very low levels of violent crime.

**5.66** The Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report identified that women value personal security more greatly than men, although security is often an issue of perception rather than reality, particularly when travelling at night. Issues of street lighting and security at public transport stops, stations and interchanges are often a concern.

**5.67** Actual and perceived levels of safety and security have been highlighted as a barrier to using public transport. The issues of concern include isolated bus stops, badly lit waiting areas and intimidating atmosphere on-board, which can generate feelings of insecurity. The walking and waiting parts of the journey can be where passengers feel most at risk, particularly at night. Older people, more than any other age group, need to be assured of their personal security and safety.

**5.68** The Council will work with the Safer Cheshire East Partnership and public transport operators to jointly address problems of crime and safety in and around the transport network.

### POLICY

**Policy C4 Crime & Terrorism**: Work with partners to reduce crime, fear of crime and anti-social behaviour on the transport network.

### C4 Policy Initiatives

**5.69** **Targeted safety improvements:** Reduce the incidence of crime and anti-social behaviour on the transport network.

**5.70** **Security of stations and bus stops:** Improve the waiting and interchange facilities, including installation of CCTV, to improve the actual and perceived levels of safety of security.

**5.71** **Car park security:** Enhance the security of car parks, particularly those close to public transport interchanges not owned or operated by the Council.

**5.72** **Street & Footpath Lighting:** Ensure appropriate provision of lighting to enhance actual and perceived safety on footways and footpaths.

| C4 Related Initiatives | Policy |
|---|---|
| Railway station improvements | S3 Public Transport (Integration & Facilities) |
| Bus stop condition | S3 Public Transport (Integration & Facilities) |
| Provision of high quality parking | B6 Parking |

# 6 Support our Children & Young People

## Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) Priorities

**6.1** The SCS aims to ensure that children and young people are helped to fulfil their potential by providing opportunities, support and giving young people a voice in shaping their future. The priorities for action over the next 15 years are:

- Ensure good transitions (e.g. education to employment) and skills for the future
- Improve support and facilities for children and young people
- Strengthen the voice of children and young people
- Improve the health of children and young people

**6.2** The Cheshire East Children & Young People's Interim Plan (2010/11) further defines this commitment by setting out immediate priorities, targets and actions, as well as setting the direction of travel for services for a 2-5 year period.

**6.3** Transport has a supporting role to play in delivering these priorities, particularly when considering the needs of children and young people in accessing education and employment. Children and young people's safety will feature in transport policy through road safety initiatives to reduce the number of young people killed or seriously injured (KSI) on Cheshire East's roads.

**6.4** There are also important linkages between transport and health, with opportunities to encourage young people to walk and cycle from an early age resulting in active, healthier lifestyles and reducing obesity in children.

## Evidence Overview

**6.5** There are just over 80,000 children and young people (aged 0-19) in Cheshire East. By the year 2027 there is forecast to be approximately 5% fewer children then there were in 2010, with the 5-10 year old population declining by 3% between 2007 and 2027 and the 11-15 year old population decreasing by 7%.

**6.6** Evidence suggests that while the majority of Cheshire East's children and young people are doing well and have improving prospects, a significant number, often living in the most disadvantaged areas, are not as fortunate[a].

**6.7** Around 6,500 children and young people live in areas that fall into the 20% most disadvantaged in the country. Estimates suggest that around 17% of all children and young people (0-19) in Cheshire East are 'at risk' of poor outcomes[b].

**6.8** Overall the proportion of Cheshire East's young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) is good compared to national levels. However, NEET rates remain significantly higher for some groups (e.g. cared for children) and NEET is a strong predictor of poor outcomes.

**6.9** A survey undertaken as part of the Cheshire East Youth Parliament Elections (11-18 year olds) found that from a list of 12 critical issues, transport costs were top, along with the way young people are presented by the media. The Tellus4 survey[c] identified that safe places to go and things to do are highly valued amongst children and young people. Safer streets, especially from cars that drive too fast, and safer places to cross roads were raised[d].

**6.10** Children account for 10.5% of all people killed or seriously injured (KSI) on Cheshire East roads. The majority of incidents involve children aged 11 to 15 as pedestrians and as passengers in a car. Single vehicle collisions are the most prevalent type of collision. The majority of car KSI collisions occur on A and C class 60mph rural roads; pedal cycle collisions occur on 30mph or 60mph roads; and pedestrian KSI collisions occur close to pedestrian crossings.

**6.11** In 2009/10, method of travel to school data found that 47.1% of school attendees travelled on foot, a third (33.6%) travelled by car and 14.7% travel by public transport. Younger children (aged 5 to 10) were more likely to travel by car, whilst children aged 10-15 were more likely to travel by public transport or walk.

**6.12** Levels of cycling to school have remained low and relatively static over recent years at around 2.7-2.9% of 10 to 15 year olds. When comparing this against the national figures, Cheshire East has a higher percentage of children travelling to school by car. All Cheshire East schools now have a travel plan to help facilitate sustainable access to schools.

**6.13** Within Cheshire East obesity levels in adults are not significantly higher than the England average. However, childhood obesity is steady increasing and this will lead to more cases of early onset diabetes type 2 and other associated health problems[e].

## Stakeholder Opinion

**6.14** In exploring the transport challenges relating to **supporting children & young people**; stakeholders identified road safety for young adults as a key cross-cutting issue. There was support for initiatives focused on young adults road safety education and training as part of the SCS aspiration to improve health.

**6.15** Other challenges raised by stakeholders included encouraging more active forms of travel for the 'school run' and minimising car use, as well as improving access to employment, education and training for young people. Overall, it was considered that the needs of children and young people would need to be considered specifically (such as direct work with schools to support active travel) and also within other policy areas (such as public transport, walking and cycling). This understanding contributed to stakeholder prioritisation of SCS theme to **create a sustainable future**.

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## LTP Objectives

RELEVANT OBJECTIVES

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

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

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

## Y: Sustainability Appraisal

**6.16** The Sustainability Appraisal of policies within this chapter found beneficial effects across a number of sustainability objectives. At least four positive effects were predicted for each individual policy across the sustainability objectives below:

- 3 Minimise need to travel & sustainable modes…
- 5 Pollution & climate change…
- 6 Resources & green infrastructure…
- 10 Economy & access to employment skills…
- 12 Quality of life…
- 13 Access to leisure and countryside…

**6.17** Seven sustainability objectives were not associated with any beneficial policy effects from this chapter, these were:

- 1 Biodiversity, habitats, geology…
- 2 Flooding…
- 4 Heritage & landscape…
- 7 Energy…
- 8 Design…
- 9 Towns & local centres…
- 11 Safety…

**6.18** These objectives were all associated with neutral effects from policies of this chapter. No negative effects were identified. It should be noted that beneficial effects were measured against the policies within this chapter, not for children and young people generally. As such, a number of benefits were registered within other chapters that would be relevant to children and young people (e.g. safety policies of the health chapter).

**6.19** In conclusion, the Sustainability Appraisal of the policies within this chapter highlighted either beneficial or neutral effects.

## Transport Challenges & Policy Solutions

### Travel to Education

**6.20** Although over the last few years there has been a small decrease in the proportion of pupils travelling to school by car, there are trends in education delivery that would suggest that future demand for longer-distance travel to education may increase during the next 15 years.

**6.21** The factors influencing this trend include school reorganisation driven by falling pupil numbers, changes in the 14-19 education system introducing choice and personalisation, and increasing numbers of tertiary education students travelling from home rather than living on-campus.

**6.22** Transport has a key role to play in the 'choice agenda', which allows children to travel to their preferred school or college. Difficulties with transport can prevent young people from participating in learning, or restrict the choice of learning that they attend.

**6.23** In order to respond positively to changes in education delivery, the Council will work with education providers and bus operators to identify where transport barriers may restrict access to education and, in conjunction with partners, consider ways in which these could be overcome. In future there may be a need for more complex demand responsive arrangements.

**6.24** Local surveys show that most children and parents would like travel to school to be by sustainable modes of transport, but they encounter difficulty in doing so for a number of reasons. For example, some parents drop their children off on their way to work, whilst others find that the distance is too far to walk. In addition, there are parents who use their car because they feel the roads are unsafe for walking and cycling – there are still a few children who are driven to school when they only live 'around the corner'.

**6.25** Perceived cost can also be a barrier to using local and school bus services (where students are not eligible for support), and anti-social behaviour on public transport can also be a deterrent. The lack of lockers, safe cycle routes and cycle parking facilities are the main factors in preventing secondary school students from cycling to school.

**6.26** These issues present significant challenges to encouraging sustainable modes of transport for the journey to school. Overcoming these barriers would support the delivery of wider transport policy objectives, including reducing congestion, reducing carbon emissions and improving road safety at the school gate.

#### Home to School Transport

**6.27** Local authorities have a statutory obligation to provide transport for children of compulsory school age who either live over the statutory walking distance (over 2 miles for children under the age of 8 years, or aged 8-16 and from a low-income family (attending one of the three nearest schools), and over 3

miles for children aged 8-11 years), or have to walk along a hazardous route and are attending their nearest suitable school. Children eligible for assistance may choose to travel by bike instead of using the bus and in these cases a cycle allowance is paid.

**6.28** The Council currently provide a number of discretionary enhancements to the statutory minimum. For example, provision of transport to attend a school on the grounds of religion or belief, transporting children placed in the care of foster families and transport of children aged between 8 and 11 who live within 2-3 miles of the nearest suitable school.

**6.29** The Council also has a duty to provide special educational needs (SEN) transport for children who exhibit needs that are above those of a typical child. Children with complex special needs may qualify for transport provision either on grounds of distance, or on the basis of their needs.

**6.30** As part of the Passenger Transport Strategy, a review will be undertaken of home to school transport policy. This will include a cost benefit analysis of discretionary enhancements to ensure that policies are meeting priority needs cost effectively. In addition, travel to education policy must react to changes in the delivery of education.

**6.31** Where children do not qualify for assisted transport, children living in areas with limited or no public services can purchase spare seat places on education contracts where capacity exists and these are currently allocated on a first come first served basis. There is an opportunity to review the marketing policy / pricing of this initiative with a view to providing additional capacity in future.

**6.32** There are also opportunities to support groups of parents who wish to procure their own transport arrangements for taking their children to school – this could include taxi sharing or minibus contracts. The Council could provide advice and develop a set of quality standards for such initiatives.

**6.33** In addition to the delivery of statutory minimum service levels, a range of initiatives have been identified to support and help deliver the policy aspiration for travel to education.

### POLICY

**Policy Y1 Travel to Education:** The Council will work with schools and colleges to enable sustainable travel to education, including appropriate provision for those eligible for free or assisted transport.

**Y1 Policy Initiatives**

**6.34** **Review home to school transport policy:** Review the discretionary elements of the eligibility criteria, the policy and pricing structure for selling spare seats and initiatives to address anti-social behaviour and bullying

on school buses, as well as driver training. Ensure that stakeholders are fully engaged in tthe process and where services are altered ensure that alternatives are widely communicated.

6.35 **Safer routes to school:** Encourage schools to identify potential safety improvements on key routes to schools through travel plans and address issues identified, and develop 'invest to save' initiatives where some capital investment can remedy the unsafe sections of a "hazardous route" (thereby reducing eligibility of home to school transport).



6.36 **Encourage sustainable travel:** Explore a range of initiatives to promote and encourage increased levels of walking and cycling. For example, school travel plans, walking schemes (Walking Buses), cycling schemes, and "how to get to campus" maps.

6.37 **Respond positively to changes in education delivery:** Work with partners to constantly review the Council's response to emerging issues in the field of travel to education (e.g. 14-19 diploma) to meet the transport needs of children and young people.

6.38 **Sharing arrangements:** Work with schools and parents to encourage sharing arrangements for travel to education. For example, car share, park and stride, taxi sharing and minibus contracts.

| Y1 Related Initiatives | Policy |
|---|---|
| Supported services | S4 Public Transport (Service Levels & Reliability) |
| Vulnerable road users | H8 Road Safety (Engineering) |
| Key service location | C2 Accessibility of Services |

## CASE STUDY

**School Minibus**

Pott Shrigley Primary is situated in a rural location which means that the majority of children had always been driven to school. Their School Travel Plan identified that an increase in the number of pupils attending the school had also led to an increase in traffic and parking problems on the roads around the school. This had triggered some minor disputes with neighbours who found their driveways blocked by parent or staff cars.

In 2007, the school put in a bid to loan one of the School Travel Team's minibuses which had been funded through the Local Transport Plan.

The successful bid has meant that the school can use the minibus on the school run as well as for school trips, sporting and educational outings. The minibus is also used by local community groups including the Scouts, Brownies and church groups.

On the school run, the minibus is driven by a teaching assistant with up to 12 children regularly using the minibus to get to and from school rather than travelling by car.

Over the last two years the number of children being driven to school by car has dropped from 96% to 68%.

The School view the minibus as a much valued resource and now with the federation with Bollington St John's Primary, the minibus will be extremely useful transporting pupils between the two sites.

## CASE STUDY

**Goostrey Primary School**

Goostrey Primary School is a semi rural school with a wide catchment area. At the start of the travel plan process the school were sceptical about how they could impact on the travel mode of their pupils and whether they would be able to find the time to put in the necessary work. However, as the plan progressed they found that the work not only complimented their existing curriculum but that it made a real difference. The school has a long list of initiatives of which just a few are listed below:

• Walking activities in classes linked to activity afternoon

• Walking bus.

• Road safety initiatives

• Local pubs allowing parking for parents cars

• Liaison with Parish Council to match fund improvements to a hand rail on steps.



• Staff monitoring of cars parked inconsiderately by parents and leafleting

• Information on healthy ways to school for new starters. And

• Praise and rewards for pupils who participate in travel to school schemes

The below figures show the continuing impact the school have had on reducing the number of children travelling to school by car over the past 4 years.

| Mode Of Travel | Walk | Cycle | Car | Car Share | Taxi |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2007 | 16% | 1% | 80% | 2% | 1% |
| 2008 | 31% | 4% | 61% | 3% | 1% |
| 2009 | 33% | 6% | 58% | 3% | 1% |
| 2010 | 37% | 10% | 49% | 3% | 1% |

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## Cross-Cutting Challenges for Children & Young People

**6.39** The SCS identified that local people are concerned about the lack of facilities available for young people. The 2008 Community Survey found that 'activities for teenagers' was the second highest priority for improvement and at the Local Area Partnership (LAP) level it was the top priority in both Congleton and Macclesfield.

**6.40** In addition, a North West accessibility study[f] identified that young people in rural areas experienced a heavy reliance on travel by private vehicle. Without access to a vehicle, young people felt they were isolated from high street shops, leisure and entertainment facilities. The challenge is therefore to improve access to a wide range of interesting, challenging and engaging activities outside of school (e.g. sports and leisure activities, cinema and after-school clubs).

**6.41** In 2009, 5.8% of young people aged 16-18 were not in employment, education or training (NEET). Many of these people are concentrated in the urban areas of deprivation in the borough, particularly in Crewe. Initiatives to improve access to schools, colleges and employment opportunities are particularly relevant to this group. This may include innovative transport solutions where lack of transport is a barrier to employment (e.g. Crewe Flexi Rider).

**6.42** The cost of transport has been identified as an issue for children and young people. Exploring ways of providing incentives for young people to use public transport to encourage them to make it a life-time habit will be another challenge reliant on close cooperation with commercial operators.

### POLICY

**Policy Y2 Targeted Action for Children and Young People**: Work with stakeholders to ensure that transport provision and facilities meet the needs of children and young people.

### Y2 Policy Initiatives

**6.43** **Fare and ticketing incentives:** Promote the services which offer fare reductions for young people. Explore ways of providing incentives for young people to use public transport.

**6.44** **Transport linkages from areas of deprivation:** Identify where transport is a barrier to employment, education and training, particularly for young people aged 16-18, and explore innovative solutions in conjunction with partners.

| Y2 Related Initiatives | Policy |
|---|---|
| Multi-media information | S5 Public Transport (Information & Marketing) |
| Cycling facilities | S8 Cycling |
| Target high risk groups | H1 Targeted Health Action |
| All initiatives within H2 Promotion of Active Travel and Healthy Activities | H2 Promotion of Active Travel & Healthy Activities |
| Key service locations | C2: Accessibility of Services |
| Access to employment, skills and education | C2: Accessibility of Services |

## Children, Young People & Road Safety

**6.45** Over the last decade there has been a slight upward trend in the number of children aged 0-15 killed or seriously injured (KSI) within Cheshire East, which is inconsistent with the reductions achieved nationally.

**6.46** 51% of child KSIs are pedestrians. They account for almost one-third (31%) of all pedestrian KSIs in Cheshire East. 95% of these were injured on a road with a 30mph limit in place[g].

**6.47** Children account for almost one-quarter (22%) of all pedal cyclist casualties. Almost all of these (92%) were males with just over two-thirds (69%) between the ages of 12 and 16 years of age[h].



**6.48** Failing to look properly and being careless, reckless or in a hurry were the highest contributory factors in all child pedestrian and pedal cyclist KSIs. These are preventable through education and training.

**6.49** Young adults (16-25) account for 29% of all KSIs on Cheshire Safer Roads Partnership (CSRP) roads. Of that, 61% are car occupants and 17% are riding powered two wheelers under 125cc. A further 7% are riders of powered-two wheelers over 125cc[i].

**6.50** The biggest contributory factors involving young adult KSIs are travelling too fast for the condition, careless / reckless / in a hurry, impaired by alcohol, exceeding the speed limit and aggressive driving[j]. Each of these factors result in increased severity of injury but are preventable through education and enforcement[k].

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**6.51** A combination of engineering, enforcement and education campaigns targeting children and young people identified as at-risk of death or injury from road traffic incidents can be effective in reducing the overall number of KSI incidents.

**6.52** The challenges/problems associated with children, young people and road safety will be addressed in the road safety sections of **Chapter 6: Health**. As such, there is no specific policy for children and young people relating to road safety in this chapter, however, the most relevant initiatives are set out in the table below:

| Related initiative | Policy |
|---|---|
| Target high risk groups | H4 Road Safety (Education): |
| Cyclist training | H5 Road Safety (Enforcement) |

## End Notes

a. Cheshire East Children and Young Peoples Trust Interim Plan 2010/11
b. Based on Profile of vulnerable young people living in Cheshire Aug 2007 DAAT
c. Department of Education, Tellus4, Cheshire East survey results, 2009.
d. Cheshire East Children & Young People's Interim Plan (2010/11)
e. Central and Eastern Cheshire NHS Primary Care Trust & Cheshire East Council, Joint Strategic Needs Assessment – First Look Report, 2008.
f. Delivering a Sustainable Transport System (DaSTS) North West Regional Study 5: Accessibility & Regeneration
g. Cheshire Safer Roads Partnership, June 2010, Cheshire East: Road Traffic Collision Casualties 2005-2009 Profile Report.
h. Ibid
i. Cheshire Safer Roads Partnership, May 2010, Young Adult (16-25y) Road User Problem Profile
j. Ibid
k. Ibid

# 7 Prepare for an Increasingly Older Population

## Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) Priorities

**7.1** Over the next 15 years the number of people aged over 65 will increase dramatically. The SCS identifies two priorities for action in preparing for an increasingly older population in Cheshire East. These are:

- Help people stay fit and active for longer
- Improve care and support for those who need it

**7.2** An Ageing Strategy for Cheshire East will be published in April 2011 linked to the priorities for action within the SCS. The strategy will seek to maximise the opportunities for older people to stay fit for longer, remain within their own home and communities, as well as the opportunity to participate in hobbies, volunteering, employment and learning.

**7.3** Transport provides an essential link to friends and family, as well as access to key services – a vital lifeline to maintaining independence. Lack of mobility can prevent older people from participating in social activities and lead to low morale, depression and loneliness[a]. It is acknowledged that older people represent an enormous resource in terms of talent, experience and knowledge.

## Evidence Overview

**7.4** Cheshire East has an older age profile than the UK as a whole. Approximately 18.9% (68,400) of the population is over 65 compared to only 15.2% of UK residents. The percentage of people aged 85 and over is 2.6% (9,300) compared to 2.1% nationally.

**7.5** In addition, Cheshire East has the fastest growing older population in the North West. By 2016, the population aged 65+ will increase by 29% and the population aged 85+ by 41.5%. The 2008 Community Survey identified that planning for the ageing population was one the top priorities for a good quality of life.

**7.6** There are variations across the borough in the geographic distribution of the age of the population. For example, over 65's make up approximately 14.3% of the population of Middlewich, whilst in Chelford 26.2% fall into the same age bracket. There are also variations in pensioner households living alone, ranging from almost 30% in the towns of Crewe and Macclesfield, to just over 10% in Middlewich.

**7.7** The dominant factor affecting older peoples transport use is health status, rather than age. The incidence of disability increases with age[b], as do general restrictions in mobility. Although increasing numbers of older people continue to drive for longer, the rising number of older people who prefer not to drive is likely to mean an increase in demand for accessible public transport to various destinations.

**7.8** Over the next 15 years more attention will need to be paid to removing physical barriers to accessing public transport (e.g. steps on older buses and at rail stations) and ensuring that town centres footways are well maintained and safe for walking. These issues are discussed in detail in **Chapter 2: Sustainability**.

**7.9** The increasingly older population will result in greater demand for healthcare and a key challenge for transport, in conjunction with service providers, will be making healthcare accessible. Indeed, another area where transport will play an increasingly important role will be on encouraging more physically active travel for health and fitness – this is examined in more detail in **Chapter 4: Health**.

## Stakeholder Opinion

**7.10** Stakeholder discussions of the transport issues associated with **preparing for an increasingly older population** were supportive of innovative ways of improving access to services and affordability of transport. The suggestions made were often cross-cutting to the other themes (e.g. public transport improvements, footway condition, promoting active lifestyles, etc.) and included the retention and possible expansion of the current discretionary elements of the concessionary travel scheme.

**7.11** Enabling independent living and encouraging an active lifestyle were common themes and it was recognised that a collaborative approach with healthcare providers would be needed to deliver services more locally. Aspects of the **nurture strong communities** theme were also reflected in the discussions; with an aspiration to support community groups to provide services/transport for older residents expressed.

**7.12** The targeted initiatives addressing the needs of the aging population were not specifically prioritised within the final workshop; however, the cross-cutting policy areas of community, accessibility of services and access for all were given prominence within the **nurture strong communities** theme and stakeholders felt that the needs of older people would be supported in these areas.

## LTP Objectives

### RELEVANT OBJECTIVES

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

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

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## O: Sustainability Appraisal

**7.13** This chapter only contains on policy which was found in the Sustainability Appraisal to have beneficial effects across the sustainability objectives below:

- 3 Minimise need to travel & sustainable modes…
- 10 Economy & access to employment skills…
- 12 Quality of life…
- 13 Access to leisure and countryside…

**7.14** The policy was found to have a neutral effect on nine sustainability objectives, these objectives were:

- 1 Biodiversity, habitats, geology…
- 2 Flooding…
- 4 Heritage & landscape…
- 5 Pollution & climate change…
- 6 Resources & green infrastructure…
- 7 Energy…
- 8 Design…
- 9 Towns & local centres…
- 11 Safety…

**7.15** No negative effects were identified. As with the policies within the children and young peoples chapter, a number of benefits were registered within other chapters that would be relevant to supporting our ageing population (e.g. public transport policies in the sustainability chapter).

**7.16** In conclusion, the Sustainability Appraisal of the policies within this chapter highlighted either beneficial or neutral effects.

## Transport Challenges & Policy Solutions

**7.17** Many of the transport challenges for older people are cross-cutting and relate to the policies and initiatives within other chapters of the LTP, particularly **Chapter 2: Sustainability** and **Chapter 5: Communities.**

**7.18** However, the sections below outline the particular issues for older people concerning the availability of transport, physical accessibility and safety, affordability of transport and accessibility of services.

### POLICY

**Policy O1 Targeted Action for Older People:** The Council will work with stakeholders to ensure that transport provision and facilities meet the needs of older people.

## Availability of Transport

**7.19** For many older people, driving or travelling as a passenger, can be a lifeline to maintaining their independence and preventing isolation. For the increasing proportion of older drivers, a number of measures could be implemented to assist older people. For example, driver assessment and training initiatives, as well as highly reflective road studs and road markings which can help with visibility, particularly in wet conditions.

**7.20** However, despite the number of older driving licence holders, declining driving ability and financial constraints mean that many motorists will have to adjust their driving practices and ultimately could have to give up their car.

**7.21** A high proportion of older people are dependent on public transport. The local bus network consists of fixed route services, complimented by flexible community transport solutions of both a general and specialised nature. Community transport is particularly valued by those unable to use conventional buses due to disability or mobility issues.

**7.22** National research has shown that awareness of transport schemes for older people (e.g. Dial-a-Ride and shopmobility) can be low. This can mean that those with the greatest need fail to benefit from services that have been specially implemented to help them[c].

### O1 Policy Initiative (Availability)

**7.23** **Travel options awareness:** Use targeted promotion and marketing to ensure that people aged 65+ are aware of, and know how to use, pre-booked transport options such as Dial-a-Ride. Promotional activities will be linked to initiatives that develop capacity of pre-booked services. Examine ways of delivering targeted training in computer skills to our older population to enable easy access to on-line travel information.

**7.24** **Older driver assessment and training initiatives:** Work with third party providers to promote and develop an older driver assessment and improvement scheme.

| O1 Related Initiatives | Policy |
|---|---|
| Provision of high quality parking | B6 Parking |
| Shopmobility | C3 Access for all |
| Community-led initiatives | C1 Community |
| Supported services | S4 Public transport (Service Levels & Reliability) |
| Social care transport options | C3 Access for all |

# 7 Prepare for an Increasingly Older Population

## Physical Accessibility & Safety

**7.25** Cheshire East's relatively fit and active population is something to celebrate, maintain and seek opportunities to improve. Encouraging older people to continue walking and cycling will contribute to a healthy older age and helping people to stay fit and active for longer.

**7.26** However, older people often experience barriers to mobility and physical difficulties associated with walking and accessing public transport. Common concerns include poor condition of footways, inadequate crossing facilities, boarding/ alighting buses and trains, and steps at railway stations[d] (also see **Chapter 5: Communities**).

**7.27** Research commissioned by Age Concern and Help the Aged shows that over 800 older people per day fall whilst travelling on a bus and nearly two million are concerned about falling due to abrupt stop/starting[e]. Other issues include moving off before passengers are seated, insufficient hand rails, overcrowding and erratic driving practices can increase the risk – and the perception of risk – of an accident. Such concerns can be addressed with improved driver training.

**7.28** "Building Society for all Ages" (2009) proposes a range of national initiatives to improve transport for the older population. These include, for example, requirements that by 2020 all rail vehicles will have to meet accessibility standards and that all buses and coaches used on local scheduled services must meet accessibility targets by 2017. 62% of buses have already been made accessible.



**Accessible bus**

**7.29** Older people can experience health issues that may weaken their ability to walk. Poorer vision and hearing, mobility difficulties, walking more slowly, problems with balance, reduced ability to make head and neck movements (affecting looking), reaction times and a reduced ability to change speed or direction quickly to avoid hazards.

**7.30** Each year, 35% of over 65's experience one or more falls. About 45% of people over 80 who live in the community fall each year. Between 10-25% of such fallers will sustain a serious injury[f].

**7.31** Pedestrians between the ages of 76 to 85 are at increased risk of death or injury per 1000 head of population than child pedestrians. However, the number of child pedestrian KSIs are greater[g]. It is known with some certainty that the number of people aged over 65 will increase dramatically over the next 15 years, so there is a risk that the number of older pedestrians being killed or seriously injured will increase.

**O1 Policy Initiative (Accessibility)**

7.32 **Targeted access improvements:** Improve the physical infrastructure most heavily used by our older population, such as provision of dropped kerbs, pedestrian crossing points and accessible bus stops. The focus will be on areas likely to make the greatest impact to the lives of older people, for example routes approaching community centres, care homes and healthcare centres. Furthermore, areas of the borough where the greatest mobility and disability problems exist will be targeted.

# 7 Prepare for an Increasingly Older Population

| O1 Related Initiatives | Policy |
|---|---|
| Bus driver training | S4 Public transport (Service Levels & Reliability) |
| Target high risk groups | H1 Targeted Health Action |
| Target high risk groups | H6 Road Safety (Education) |
| Accessibility audits | C3 Access for all |
| Accessible vehicles | C3 Access for all |

## Affordability

**7.33** In Cheshire East, around 4 million bus trips per year are undertaken by older people using concessionary fare discounts. Concessionary travel journeys now equate to 37% of all bus journeys undertaken in Cheshire East.

**7.34** The English National Concessionary Travel Scheme (ENCTS) enables free bus travel after 9.30am to all eligible older people and disabled people. The concession provides greater freedom and independence to some of the most vulnerable people in our society, representing a major step forward in tackling social exclusion.




**7.35** Cheshire East currently operate a number of discretionary enhancements to the scheme, such as half fare travel before 9.30am and the ability to use the pass on Dial-a-Ride services. The enhancements extend the advantages of the scheme, particularly for those who live in areas with limited bus services.

**7.36** However, carers of older people currently pay full price which may result in problems of affordability – a further discretionary enhancement could include companion bus passes for carers at a reduced rate. In addition, taxi vouchers could be provided to residents who live where there are no fixed route bus services.

**7.37** As part of the concessionary travel scheme, Cheshire East currently offers both the Senior Railcard and Disabled Persons Railcard to eligible residents at a discounted price through the power of bulk buying directly from National Rail.

**7.38** The Senior Railcard is available to anyone over 60 whilst the Disabled Persons Railcard is available to people who meet the National Rail Disabled Criteria. This card also entitles a companion to travel at the same discounted price.

| Y0 Related Initiatives | Policy |
|---|---|
| Monitor & review the fare structure | S4 Public transport (Fares & Ticketing) |
| Concessionary bus travel | C3 Access for all |
| Concessionary rail cards | C3 Access for all |

## Accessibility of Services

**7.39** The ease of access to key services (e.g. healthcare, food shops, employment and education) is an important factor influencing the quality of life of older people, although it should be noted that most accessibility issues are addressed in **Chapter 5: Communities**.

**7.40** The 2008 accessibility survey found that hospitals were the most difficult key service to access in Cheshire East, particularly for older people. There are large variations across the borough with regard to life expectancy factors, which will be a key consideration in service planning. The length of time people live with a limiting long term illness also varies considerably across the borough.

**7.41** The Council will seek to influence any changes in the delivery of healthcare in the future, by working with service providers to consider the location, design and delivery of healthcare services. Future reforms may also impact on commissioning of health-related transport, so the Council will need to influence and respond to changing circumstances.

**7.42** Many older people wish to maintain their independence when, for whatever reason, they feel unable to continue living in their own home. Extra Care Housing provides the opportunity to deliver this, with residents able to live independently with the backup of help and assistance if they require it. It is important that Extra Care Housing is located in areas with good access to services by walking, cycling and public transport.

### O1 Policy Initiative

**7.43** **Extra care housing:** Work with registered social landlords to guide and direct future developments of extra care housing provision in locations that are accessible to key services, families and friends by public transport, walking and cycling.

| Y0 Related Initiatives | Policy |
|---|---|
| Local service delivery | C1 Community |
| Key service location | C2 Accessibility of services |
| Multi-use premises | C2 Accessibility of services |

## End Notes

a. Older People: Their transport needs and requirements – Main report (Department for Transport)
b. Labour Force Survey, June 2005
c. Older People: Their transport needs and requirements – Main report (Department for Transport)
d. Older People: Their transport needs and requirements – Main report (Department for Transport)
e. Bus falls – Policy Update, Age Concern and Help the Aged, July 2009, Edition 114
f. Falls and fractures, developing a local joint strategic needs assessment, Department of Health
g. Cheshire Safer Roads Partnership, June 2010, Cheshire East: Road Traffic Collision Casualties 2005-2009 Profile Report

# 8 Unlock the Potential of Our Towns

## Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) Priorities

**8.1** The SCS identifies three priories for action to unlock the potential of towns within Cheshire East:

- Regenerate Crewe;
- Revitalise Macclesfield; and
- Deliver sustainable growth for our towns.

**8.2** Transport is fundamental to the success of towns – it supports the exchange of goods and services, it facilitates the participation in leisure, social and cultural activities, and it enables access to employment and education. Transport networks can therefore either help or hinder efforts to regenerate, revitalise or grow our towns. While the availability and quality of different modes of travel serving town will help determine whether growth can be sustainable for future generations.

**8.3** A heavily congested road network that causes delays accessing town centres will be a deterrent to both business investment and visitor appeal – particularly where no effective alternative means of access exists by rail, bus, cycling or walking. It is clear too that many town centre highway networks do not have the capacity to efficiently deal with current vehicle numbers during peak hours. A “tool kit” of highway network management techniques can be employed depending on the circumstances of congestion – these are outlined in **Chapter 3: Business** and they range from relatively inexpensive signal timing improvements and parking enforcement, through to enormously expensive town centre bypass schemes. This tool-kit can be employed alongside initiatives to encourage mode-shift – i.e. enabling more people to travel by train, bus, cycling and walking to reduce congestion.



# 8 Unlock the Potential of Our Towns

**8.4** Encouraging and enabling non-car access to town centres will not only help tackle congestion, but will also support access by the full spectrum of the community – from people with disabilities or mobility problems, young and older people who are unable or unwilling to drive, through to low income groups who are unable to afford car travel. Initiatives supporting non-car access to towns are set out in **Chapter 2: Sustainability**.

**8.5** Finally, transport is also an issue to consider in the planning of towns in terms of accessible land use decisions. This seeks to plan the future development in towns in a way that will minimise unnecessary car use, by providing appropriate facilities and residential areas in close proximity or in locations connected by established public transport links. Issues of accessibility are included in both **Chapter 5: Communities** and **Chapter 2: Sustainability**.

**8.6** One of the defining characteristics of Cheshire East is the distribution of settlements – with Crewe and Macclesfield being the largest developed areas in the borough and a series of vibrant market towns and smaller towns that offer a range of services. In addition, there are some major employment sites that are located outside these towns (e.g. Manchester Airport, Alderley Park and Pyms Lane) which provide an important employment function within the borough. This pattern of land use leads to a complex level of inter-dependency unlike many other local authority areas, which typically have one major urban area that serves as a focus for all activity (e.g. Warrington).

**8.7** For transport to play its role in delivering sustainable growth in our towns, it is important to recognise the interrelationships which exist between Cheshire East's principal towns, key service centres and the surrounding small towns, villages and rural communities. Transport plays an important role in unlocking the potential of towns and enabling future development in these locations.

## Stakeholder Opinion

**8.8** The stakeholder engagement process highlighted the diverse nature of Cheshire East. Stakeholders made it clear that a unique approach to the transport issues in each town would be required to enable responsive delivery of the SCS at a local level.

**8.9** In addition to discussion on the role of transport in towns to **create the conditions for business growth**, **create a sustainable future**, **nurture strong communities** and **improve health**, a range of specific issues were identified at key locations. These issues ranged from the need for improved traffic management through to requirements for drop-kerbs, dependent on local circumstances.

**8.10** This feedback from stakeholders resulted in the Transport Frameworks for Towns approach set out within the **Policy T1: Towns**.

## LTP Objectives

RELEVANT OBJECTIVES

**Objective 1 (Congestion):** Minimise congestion in our urban areas and on important routes and improve the overall efficiency of the highway network.

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

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

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

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

**Objective 6 (Environment): Protect and enhance the local and global natural environment (including environmental assets such as biodiversity, geodiversity, soils and protected landscapes).**

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

## Transport Challenges & Policy Solutions

**8.11** Each of the towns in Cheshire East will need a tailored approach to address local concerns. For example, in some towns the overriding problem will be traffic congestion, while in others the greatest priority might be the need to improve pedestrian links or cycle routes. As such, each of the policies set out within this LTP will need to be appropriately implemented at local level in accordance with locally agreed priorities.

**8.12** Communities and stakeholders often have strong views on the types of transportation intervention that would be most effective in their locality to solve local issues. This local knowledge is important to capture alongside the strategic concerns of the LTP, and in certain locations a large amount of consultation has already taken place (e.g. Crewe Vision and Macclesfield Town Centre Regeneration). The challenge is to deliver on local priorities in a way that complements and helps deliver the objectives for the borough as a whole.

**8.13** When considering the future of towns, the LDF process will identify suitable housing and employment land for development, which will have local and strategic implications on the demand for transport infrastructure and services. As such, a mechanism will be needed that is capable of both considering existing

problems locally and the potential new (or exacerbated) transport issues arising from new development – e.g. increased congestion at junctions, new rights of way required, or improved pedestrian environments.

**8.14** Many small towns and rural communities have strong connections to the nearest significant town as the main location to access vital services including schools, shopping, healthcare and employment services. As such, the policies implemented as priorities in each of the towns will also need to relate to the challenges and problems faced by nearby small towns and rural communities. Local communities may wish to develop walking and cycling network plans as part of this process.

**8.15** The LTP needs to support the SCS priorities to regeneration Crewe, revitalise Macclesfield and deliver sustainable growth in towns, it also needs to recognise the strategic important of links to the Airport in unlocking the potential of towns such as Crewe, Wilmslow and Handforth. The approach taken to **Policy T1: Towns** is therefore driven by the diverse individual characteristics of Cheshire East towns and the recognition that in order to deliver on the LTP objectives different approaches will be required in different communities.



**POLICY**

**Policy T1 Towns**: Work with stakeholders and the community to develop a local approach to transport issues that helps address local priorities and deliver the strategic objectives of the SCS and LTP.

**T1 Policy Initiative**

**8.16** **Transport Frameworks for Towns:** In order to ascertain local priorities and undertake locally specific discussion on transport issues, a series of Transport Frameworks will be prepared for each of the principal towns and key service centres (to be defined by the LDF).

**8.17** The aim of each document will be to provide an opportunity for people help define the transport priorities at a local level and set out these priorities in a structure consistent with the LTP. The document will also reflect any proposed land use changes arising from the LDF process. Locally defined priorities will then be used to guide implementation at a local level and seek to ensure delivery of the wider LTP objectives at a borough-wide level.

**8.18** Each document will consist of a prioritised list of LTP policies accompanied by an outline of how the LTP policy will be implemented locally. These documents will be "owned" by the local community and will be used to develop local initiatives in the second implementation plan (to be prepared by 2014). [*Please note: the first implementation plan is being prepared to accompany the LTP and will set out implementation activities for the forthcoming three-year spending period, in line with LTP objectives and identified ward priorities*].

**8.19** The aim will be to prepare all transport frameworks during years 1-3 of the LTP to help identify and prioritise initiatives within the second implementation plan. This will enable the framework documents to take account of proposed development implications and local community aspirations.

**8.20** A large amount of development work has already been undertaken in Crewe and a draft Framework for Crewe is attached in **Appendix A** to illustrate the approach that will be rolled-out across the borough in years 1-3 of the LTP.

# 8 Unlock the Potential of Our Towns

# Appendix A: Draft Transport Framework for Crewe

## Introduction

1 Crewe is one of the largest and most economically important places in Cheshire East. The town is home to one-third of Cheshire East's residents, around 5,000 businesses, and provides employment for some 60,000 people.

2 Crewe is well positioned with excellent strategic transport links provided by its close proximity to the M6 and density of train services serving Crewe station.

3 Crewe's "Strategic Framework for Economic Growth 2010-2030" describes the challenges for economic development and the role that transport needs to take to support the long-term prospects of Crewe's economy, businesses and community.

4 The strategic aim relating to accessibility in Crewe seeks to:

- Facilitate more sustainable transport movements within and around Crewe.
- Fully leverage Crewe's strategic transport gateway status.
- Establish a competitive and first rate Next Generation Broadband network across Crewe.
- Develop stronger economic links to neighbouring city-regions.

5 In terms of Crewe's physical development, liveability and local transport objectives, the strategic framework outlines aspirations to:

- Support significant population growth and enhancement of the area's housing offer through fully integrated urban extensions that are well served by public transport and mainstream service provision.
- Connect areas of opportunity with areas of need by developing effective local public transport networks.

## Transport Challenges for Crewe

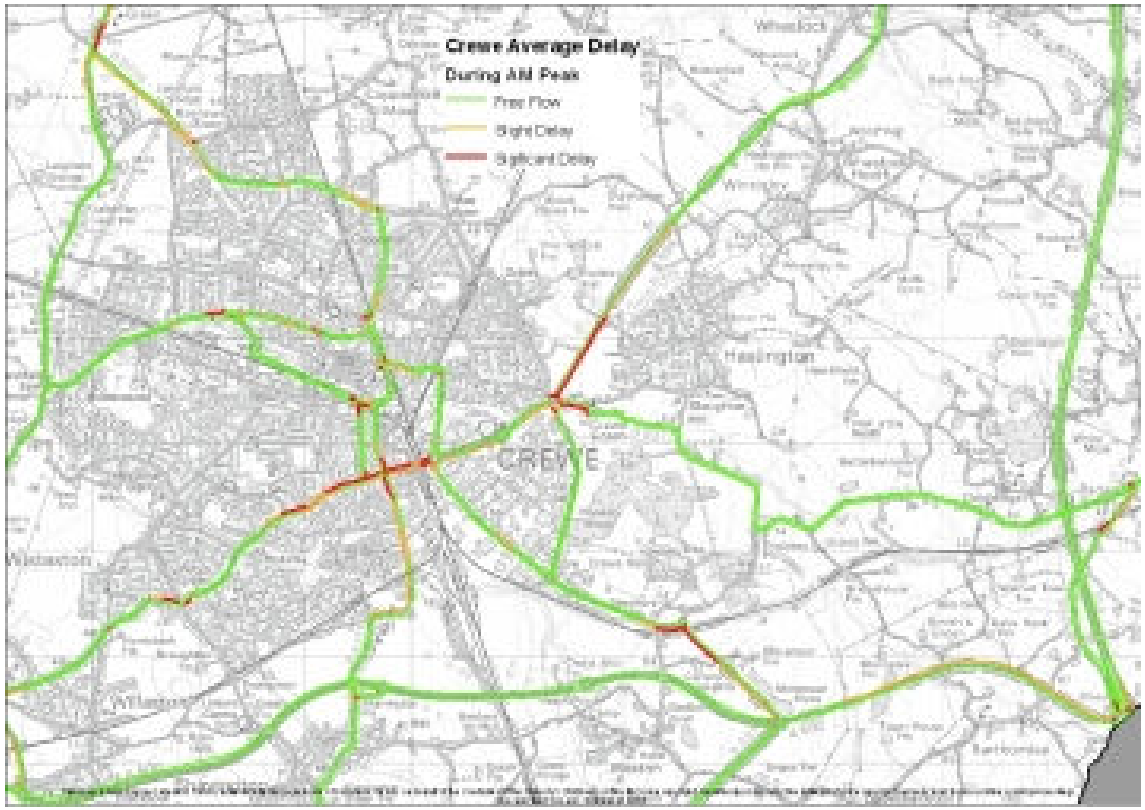
6 A number of underlying themes arise through the "vision" including tackling congestion, enhancing Crewe's role as a 'Gateway to the Northwest' , improving public transport and providing quality, sustainable transport infrastructure.

7 There is a heavy reliance on access by private vehicle in Cheshire East. However, in the 2001 Census, the Crewe LAP area demonstrated the lowest levels of car use for commuter travel and the highest levels of travel by bus, motorcycle and bicycle. The number of people who travel to work on foot was also high compared to most LAP areas. These patterns would suggest that there is great potential in Crewe to increase the uptake of public

transport and create substantial benefits from improvements in sustainable transport infrastructure provision.

8 Road and pavement repairs were identified as the issue most in need of improvement (and amongst the highest in terms of making Crewe a good place to live) for residents in Crewe LAP, while traffic congestion was ranked as the 4th most important priority for improvement[a]. Congestion and community severance in Crewe are compounded by the un-bridged railway lines which dissect the town, while poor quality footpaths and road surfacing are a problem in key locations.

9 The map of average delay in Crewe (2009 data) illustrates the points on the highway network where the volume of traffic limits both the movement of cars and buses, and affects the reliability of public transport services.



# Appendix A: Draft Transport Framework for Crewe




10 The A534 and A532 are of particular concern. Traffic on the A534 causes significant delay on Nantwich Road and around Crewe Railway Station (causing problems for bus-rail interchange reliability). The A532 runs close to Crewe town centre and experiences heavy traffic flow at peak times, limiting traffic circulation in the town centre.

11 There are also two Air Quality Management Areas in Crewe (Nantwich Road and Earl Street) that are directly linked to emissions from vehicles travelling along these roads. Policies to minimise congestion and reduce traffic levels along these routes will be important for improving air quality.

12 Life expectancy and the age at which people experience a difficulty or limiting long-term illness is lower in Crewe than all other LAP areas[b]. This is linked to higher rates of deprivation and a higher percentage of residents who select an unhealthy lifestyle. The creation of an environment that encourages active travel (such as cycling and walking) has the potential to improve health and wellbeing. Localised areas of poor health also occur in Haslington within the Crewe LAP area.

13 The crime rate in Crewe and Haslington is also marginally higher than elsewhere in Cheshire East (though still comparatively low); however, there is no evidence that this crime rate is particularly related to transport.

14 Crewe benefits from a prime location on the West Coast Main Line and the M6 Motorway and serves as a 'Gateway' for people travelling both north and south. However, the quality of the existing public transport gateways, including the railway station and town centre bus station, create a poor first impression for visitors and do little to encourage people to use sustainable transport modes.

15 Additionally, access to the M6 J16 (via the A500 Barthomley link) can be hampered by congestion and poor journey time reliability.

16 A number of sites in and around Crewe have planning permission or have been identified as having strong development potential in the Councils Economic Development Strategy. Such sites, when developed, are likely to generate a significant amount of additional traffic on the highway network. This could, if not properly managed, exacerbate congestion problems on the highway network in and around Crewe. The Crewe Strategic Framework report also identifies poor public transport links exist between job growth areas in the University Quadrant, Crewe Business Park, Crewe Industrial Park and the West End (where deprived areas are located), presenting a transport barrier to employment.

17 The implications of new development proposals on the public transport and highway networks will be examined in conjunction with the Local Development Framework and will be incorporated into the LTP Implementation Plan and LDF Local Infrastructure Plan. For example, Basford is one of the North West's Strategic Regional Sites, and its size and location presents a significant strategic opportunity as the gateway to the North West. Crewe's "Strategic Framework for Economic Growth 2010□2030" identifies the potential to create high value, high technology employment uses for the site. Measures to unlock this potential will include implementing the Crewe Green Link Road Scheme and capacity improvements to Crewe Green Roundabout and the A500 Barthomley link road.

## Objective Statement for Crewe

### RELEVANT OBJECTIVES

**Objective Statement for Crewe**: The Council will support agreed aspirations for economic growth and development in Crewe by seeking to strengthen national connectivity, reduce congestion and improve sustainable access to employment.

## Policy Interpretation Table - Sustainability

| SCS Theme | LTP Policy | Policy focus in Crewe | Delivery |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Sustainability** | **Policy S1 Spatial Planning**: Seek to minimises the future need to travel through a strategy in the Local Development Framework that focuses most new developments in locations where there are a good range of housing, jobs, shops and services already accessible by public transport, cycling and walking. | Implementation of planning policy in Crewe will be centred on fully understanding the transport implications of the Local Development Framework, influencing final strategic site selection around Crewe. Regard will also be taken of improving the links to the town centre by foot / bicycle from the railway station, along with the quality of streetscape. | Short-term |
| **Sustainability** | **Sustainability Policy S3 Public Transport (Integration & Facilities)**: Work with passenger transport providers (bus, rail and community transport) to improve public transport integration and facilities. | Public transport policy implementation will focus on partnership arrangements to secure significant transformational improvements to the quality of Crewe Railway Station and forecourt bus/taxi interchange.<br><br>Additional parking will be investigated at the railway station and Crewe Bus Interchange. | Medium linked with the West Coast re-franchising timescale. |

| SCS Theme | LTP Policy | Policy focus in Crewe | Delivery |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | New funding and partnership opportunities will be investigated to encourage private sector investment in public transport facilities, particularly where these will support economic regeneration, inward investment and carbon reduction targets.<br><br>Action will also be taken to support further rail electrification to improve services and reduce carbon emissions. Medium linked with the West Coast re-franchising timescale. | |
| **Sustainability** | **Policy S4 Public Transport (Service Levels & Reliability):** Work with passenger transport operators (bus, rail, community transport & taxis) to explore improvements to service levels and reliability. | Bus reliability issues in Crewe are a matter of concern and the implementation of this policy will focus on working with operators to improve timetable reliability. Bus service levels to the railway, town centre, MMU and business parks will also be reviewed alongside the potential for providing higher frequency evening services. | Short-medium term |
| **Sustainability** | **Policy S4 Public Transport (Service Levels & Reliability):** Work with passenger transport operators (bus, rail, community transport & taxis) to explore improvements to service levels and reliability. | Aspirations for re-opening the Middlewich rail line linking Crewe, Sandbach, Middlewich, Northwich and Knutsford will remain. A review of the latest business case will be undertaken if population, employment or travel patterns alter sufficiently to potentially influence the conclusions of this report. | Long term |
| **Sustainability** | **Policy S5 Public Transport (Information & Marketing):** Work with passenger transport operators to promote the use of | Focus on improved information displays and interpretation at Crewe bus station, with more timetables provided at bus stops. The use of public transport will | Short-term |

| SCS Theme | LTP Policy | Policy focus in Crewe | Delivery |
|---|---|---|---|
| | public transport through improved information and publicity. | also be promoted through the innovative and cost effective delivery of bus information to potential users. | |
| **Sustainability** | **Policy S7 Walking:** Work with stakeholders to improve facilities for walking so that it is attractive for shorter journeys. | Footway and footpath improvements are needed in a number of important locations including the town centre and links to the town centre from the railway station and Basford sites. This will include the provision of improved signage. | Short-term |
| **Sustainability** | **Policy S8 Cycling:** Work with stakeholders to improve facilities for cycling so that it is attractive for shorter journeys. | Crewe has great potential for increasing use of cycling due to its flat topography and existing levels of cycling. The implementation of a Cycling policy in Crewe will focus on ensuring new development provides cycle facilities and identifies opportunities to make cycling safer and more attractive than travel by car. | Medium-long term |
| **Sustainability** | **Policy S9 Technology & Energy Efficiency:** Encourage technological development in transport services in partnership with operators and will improve energy efficiency of transport infrastructure. | Work with providers to help ensure a competitive and first-rate broadband network across Crewe to support sustainable development and accessibility proposals. | Medium-term |

## Policy Interpretation Table - Business

| SCS Theme | LTP Policy | Policy Focus in Crewe | Delivery |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Business Growth** | **Policy B1 Strategic Partnerships for Economic Growth:** Work with neighbouring authorities, appropriate regional/sub-regional organisations, public transport operators and providers to enhance cross-boundary and strategic investment opportunities in transport. | The implementation of strategic partnership policy within Crewe will focus on developing partnerships with the Highways Agency, Network Rail and train operators to establish stronger linkages to neighbouring city-region networks (including science, technology, innovation and business).<br><br>The Highways Agency has an important role to play in promoting Crewe's location close to the M6 and as a North-South 'Gateway'. These connections and the effective management of the strategic road network will be vital in attracting future inward investment.<br><br>Reinforcing Crewe's role as a rail 'Gateway' will also be important, particularly in relation to High Speed Rail development proposals. A strong partnership between the Council, Network Rail and the Train Operating Companies will be necessary to support Northern Rail Hub proposals and improve rail access to the airport. | Short-term<br><br>Medium-term |
| **Business Growth** | **Policy B2 Enabling development:** Seek to enable appropriate new development by supporting transport infrastructure, | Identifying tailored transport and accessibility improvement solutions for final site allocations. Investigations will include assessing the local impact of development proposals on | Medium-term |

| SCS Theme | LTP Policy | Policy Focus in Crewe | Delivery |
|---|---|---|---|
| | regeneration and/or behaviour change initiatives that will mitigate the potential impact of new development. | the transport network and identifying need for improvement associated with potential sites. | |
| **Business Growth** | **Policy B2 Enabling development:** Seek to enable appropriate new development by supporting transport infrastructure, regeneration and/or behaviour change initiatives that will mitigate the potential impact of new development. | One component of the vision for Crewe is to enable high quality links between the railway station and the Basford development sites. The potential for 'Personal transport' (as seen at Heathrow airport) will be investigated. | Long-term |
| **Business Growth** | **Policy B3 Network Management:** Effectively manage the highway network to reduce the level of delay and provide for the needs of all road users including pedestrians, cyclists and motorists. | Implementation of network management policy in Crewe will focus on the congestion 'hotspots' and Air Quality Management Areas along Nantwich Road AQMA and Earl Street AQMA. | Short-term |
| **Business Growth** | **Policy B4 Network Improvement:** Work to improve the operation of the highway network for all users through provision of new and enhanced infrastructure. | Improvement to the highway network will also be delivered through the implementation of Crewe Green Link Road (South). This is identified as a cross-cutting initiative and is discussed in more detail the LTP. Short-medium term priority | Short / Medium term |
| **Business Growth** | **Policy B5 Freight:** Work with freight operators and organisations to establish appropriate freight routes, delivery routines and driver practices to minimise congestion and pollution. | The focus of freight policy implementation in Crewe will be on facilitating the development and use of rail-freight by Crewe-based businesses (Already a component of the agreed Basford West development.) | Medium-term |

| SCS Theme | LTP Policy | Policy Focus in Crewe | Delivery |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Business Growth** | **Policy B7 Business Innovation:**Support businesses to reduce carbon emissions from transport and minimise car use. | The business transport innovation policy for Crewe will be important both for securing a robust and nationally-competitive Next Generation Broadband (NGB) infrastructure that effectively supports large-scale homeworking, raises productivity levels within the local economy, helps to address local congestion issues as well as supporting mainstream service delivery improvements. | Medium-term |
| **Business Growth** | **Policy B8 Maintenance:** Adopt a robust and efficient approach to maintenance to minimise deterioration in the highway network and associated infrastructure assets (lighting, street furniture etc.) | Public perceptions of road and pavement repairs in Crewe is currently poor and the focus of the maintenance policy will be on improving pavement condition at priority locations within the town centre, near bus stops, shopping areas and around community centres. | Short-term |

## Policy Interpretation Table - Health

| SCS Theme | LTP Policy | Policy Focus in Crewe | Delivery |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Health** | **Policy H2 Promotion of Active Travel and Healthy Activities:** Work in partnership to promote walking, cycling and horse riding as active travel options and healthy activities. | Promoting cycling and walking as active and healthy forms of travel and as a means to reduce carbon emissions and to improve the health of Crewe's population. | Short-term |
| **Health** | **Policy H4 Air Quality:** Work to improve the quality of our air in Cheshire East. | Measures to improve air quality in the Air Quality Management Areas along Nantwich Road AQMA and Earl Street AQMA. | Medium-term |

## Policy Interpretation Table - Communities

| SCS Theme | LTP Policy | Policy Focus in Crewe | Delivery |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Communities** | **Policy C2 Accessibility of Services:** Work with partner organisations and local communities to make key services easier to access with a particular focus on disadvantaged groups and areas, including people living in rural areas, older people, young people and those without access to a car. | Access to work from areas of deprivation – particularly links to any new employment sites in Crewe – will be the focus of this policy in Crewe. | Medium term |

## Crewe Smarter Choices

18 Crewe Smarter Choices package will capitalise on Crewe's potential to become a more sustainable town by investigating the potential for modal shift to reduce car use in the town centre by promoting alternative modes of transport as part of a packaged approach. This will be implemented in parallel to initiatives to improve services and facilities where possible in a corridor approach along key routes.

## Major Scheme: Crewe Green Link Road (South)

19 For the full strategic potential of the Basford sites to be realised, the completion of the Crewe Green Link Road (CGLR) will be necessary. The first phase (North) was completed in 2004 and has played an important role in facilitating employment growth east of the town centre. Completion of CGLR South will facilitate the delivery of Crewe's vision for economic growth to 2030, which will see Basford East firmly established as one of the UK's largest science-focused business parks with over 800,000 square feet of grade A accommodation, housing multi-national companies, leading edge logistics firms, university spin-outs and a wide range of technology-rich enterprises.

## Basford Development Site & Crewe Green Link Road Proposals

20 The CGLR South will support sustainable economic growth and ensure that Crewe has the infrastructure needed as a key regional transport gateway. It will provide a link between areas of deprivation to the north of Crewe and employment opportunities to the south east. It will reduce traffic congestion, increase freight efficiency and reduce the impact of traffic on the local environment and local community.

21 Crewe Green Link Road South will help deliver a range of policy aspirations for Crewe including:

22 **S1 Spatial Planning** aspirations to provide well-connected accessible sites.

23 **S4 Public Transport (Service Levels & Reliability)** to minimise delay for buses by reducing congestion, particularly in the vicinity of the railway station, while also offering the potential for new routes linking to new employment opportunities.

24 **B3 Network Management & B4 Network Improvement** to tackle congestion and air quality issues in Crewe.

25 **B5 Freight** to facilitate appropriate route choice and capitalise on Crewe's "gateway" status.

**End Notes**

a. Cheshire Community Survey,2008
b. Health of the Population within Local Area Partnership Boards within Central and Eastern Cheshire, 2010

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This information is available in other formats on request

Agenda Item 8

# CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

## *REPORT TO:* Environment and Prosperity Scrutiny Committee

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**Date of Meeting:** 8th February 2011
**Report of:** Strategic Director - Places
**Subject/Title:** Transformation of Highways Services
**Portfolio Holder:** Cllr Rod Menlove / Cllr Macrae

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### 1.0 Report Summary

1.1 The procurement of the new '' Highway Maintenance Contract'' is a key work stream within the Total Transport Transformation Programme which is one of six major transformations projects supported by the Council.

1.2 Our roads are a corporate policy and their condition has been deteriorating for several years, consultation has also confirmed that most stakeholders recognise that they should be a priority for the Council.

1.3 As a customer-focused Council, the Council aims to transform the delivery of future highways services, including replacement of the current term maintenance contract, as appropriate to driving improvement in highway condition perception across Cheshire East.

1.4 This report provides the Environment and Prosperity Scrutiny Committee with an update on progress made on the Highways procurement project.

### 2.0 Decision Requested

2.1 Note progress.

### 3.0 Reasons for Recommendations

3.1 The Authority needs to have a new service provider in place by October 2011to undertake the delivery of the Highways Services.

3.2 To provide strategic input to the procurement process.

### 4.0 Wards Affected

4.1 All Wards are potentially affected by the proposal.

### 5.0 Local Ward Members

5.1 All Ward Members are potentially affected by the proposal.

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

6.1 The Total Transport Transformation programme is providing the framework for this project and will address major policy issues including climate change. One of the drivers for the new highways service will be to deliver cost efficiencies and to limit our carbon emissions.

6.2 Policy implications are one of the drivers within the identified Key Drivers for service.

**7.0 Financial Implications 2010/2011 and beyond (Authorised by the Borough Treasurer)**

7.1 Within the Places Directorate, there are significant resource requirements attached to moving towards the delivery of the preferred option for delivering Highway Services. It should be noted that this procurement exercise will require the use of staff input from the Places Directorate and other key services which will be supported by external professional advisors to ensure successful delivery project.

7.2 Additional consultancy services deployed on the project are being financed by approved use of the Council's Invest to Save reserve. Further use of Invest to Save monies may be called upon in 2011/12.

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

8.1 A procurement of this importance and size requires a significant investment of time and resource if it is to be a success. It is also important that the service delivery model and procurement route are the 'best fit' for the required outcomes.

8.2 External legal advisers (Bevan Brittan) have been engaged and have provided clear advice to procure using the competitive dialogue (CD) procedure. However, the timescale for doing this has had to be reduced by some months in order to deliver a new service to be mobilised in time for the cessation of the existing arrangements.

**9.0 Risk Management**

9.1 There are always risks, financial, safety and reputational in the procurement and delivery of Highways Services, particularly in relation to the level of customer focus, winter maintenance and managing road works. One of the benefits of exploring the options appraisal and selection process is to be transparent and to ensure there is a Member understanding of the different options.

9.2 Due to complexity of the proposed Highway procurement it is not best dealt with under the restricted procedure and there would be a very real risk that the Authority would end up with written Tenders that did not fully meet its requirements. The authority would have a much better chance of getting a highways contract that's meets its needs from conducting a competitive dialogue process, albeit a very tightly timetabled competitive dialogue.

9.3 One significant issue to consider going forward will be the transfer of risk and determining where best a risk should lie under the proposed new arrangements; this

will contribute significantly to the shape and nature of the client organisation as well as cost allocation.

9.4 The CD process would not normally be delivered in the timescale that is available. There is a risk associated with the timetable and that can only be mitigated by ensuring that the procurement is appropriately resourced. There is undoubtedly a mature market for this work, but it needs to be properly managed within a relatively slick process so that the outcome can be delivered on time.

**10.0 Background and Options**

10.1 A report was presented to Cabinet Sub Committee on the 20th December 2010 which updated the members on the current progress.

**11.0 Progress and Next Steps**

11.1 The bidders have submitted their Outline Solutions on the 3rd December.

11.2 The submissions are formed of the following:

- 12 method statements forming the qualitative information
- mark up of the contract
- % fee and local overhead cost

11.3 During the period between 6th December and 17th December the Outline Solutions were evaluated. The evaluation was undertaken by a number of CEC officers. Officers were allocated specific method statements to evaluate and marked them individually. On the 16th and 17th December officers met and agreed the score for each question. The financial evaluation and contract mark-up was also scored. The result of the exercise will be one overall score per bidder. The number of bidders was reduced from 5 to 3 and the bidders proceeding to Detailed Solutions stage are Amey, Atkins and Ringway Jacobs .

11.4 The proportion of marks for each area of the submission is as follows:

| ISOS stage | Score |
|---|---|
| Approach to service delivery | 70% |
| Financial | 15% |
| Legal and Commercial | 10% |
| Integrity and deliverability of proposals | 5% |

11.5 The project is now proceeding through detailed solutions stage and the bidders have met with the procurement team to further discuss their solutions. To a large extent the process mirrors that of the Outline Solutions stage, though a new set of method statements have been formulated. The proportion of marks for each area of the submission have been adjusted to increase the influence of price in the overall outcome. The proportion of marks per section is as follows:

| ISDS stage | Score |
|---|---|
| Approach to service delivery | 50% |
| Financial | 35% |
| Legal and Commercial | 10% |
| Integrity and deliverability of proposals | 5% |

**Payment and performance framework**

11.6 The proposed payment mechanism to be used is target cost. This approach allows changing budgets to be managed without having to pay compensation to the contractor.

11.7 The contractor's performance will be influenced by the performance indicators that are being developed. The strategy will be to have:

- Key Strategic Indicators (KSIs) – these are strategic performance measures will be used for determining accrual of Contract Extension Increments that may be deployed to earn contract extensions, and
- Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) – these are service performance measures that will be linked to payment (deductions or %profit).

11.8 A set of indicators are being developed which link to the objectives of the Highways Procurement to ensure that those issues of most concern to the Council are monitored. These will be supplemented with a paper on how and when contract extensions will be awarded. The key message for bidders is that the performance monitoring should be an integral part of the contract management and not an industry in itself.

**Staff Communications**

11.9 The staff stakeholder group has been formed and met a number of times to talk about the procurement process, thin client structure and TUPE issues. The group will visit the premises of the bidders and talk with the bidder's staff over the next few weeks.

11.10 Additionally there is an e-mail account for staff to post questions and concerns relating to the contract.

**Communicating with Members**

11.11 The Procurement team have taken the advice of the Scrutiny panel with respect to increased member involvement in the process. This has been addressed by the creation of the Overview group and on-going involvement of the Transformation of Highways Sub-Committee. A series of meetings have been planned with the two groups and the programme has been amended to ensure the Overview group and Sub-Committee's timely involvement.

11.12 The Overview Group met just before Christmas to discuss the evaluation of the Outline Submissions. The group then also met on the 31st January to discuss and develop the evaluation criteria for the Final Tender and performance management framework.

11.13 Bidders met with the Highways Sub Committee members (Cllrs Menlove, Macrae and Mason) on 24th January to discuss issues around localism, exemplar employer and stakeholder engagement.

**Programme**

11.14 The programme has been changed to allow a longer mobilisation period and member involvement. It remains very challenging. The key dates are as follows:

- Invitation to Submit Detailed Solutions stage: 6th December 2010 – 4th April 2011
- Call for final Tender: 1st March – 9th June 2011
- Notification of intent to award: 9th June 2011
- Contract start 6th October 2011.

## 12.0 Timetable

12.1 The timetable is challenging and a truncated process is not something that is normally undertaken and should not be taken on lightly. Therefore there must be some risk associated with this and it is very important to provide sufficient resources to delivery the procurement on time.

## 13.0 Resources

13.1 So far, external solicitors, Bevan Brittan, have been secured using a government Framework with competitive rates available and providing us with advisers that have considerable experience in this field. They will provide both legal and procurement expertise to supplement the in-house input.

13.2 The council has also secured the assistance of Happold Consulting – The council require support and advice throughout this transition process from the identification of contract scope and duration though to contract signature. It is the intention of Cheshire East Council to use the EU competitive dialogue procedure to select an appropriate service delivery contractor. Happold have been secured using a government framework and will support the Council in the development and delivery of a procurement and change programme for its highways services including:

- Development of procurement strategy
- Support during PQQ stages
- Support during competitive dialogue procurement stages
- Development of contract conditions
- Development of service level specifications
- Development of payment mechanism and performance management
- Tender evaluation and contract award
- Mobilisation and implementation of new arrangements

## 14.0 Overview of Year One and Term One Issues

None

**15.0 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: ENVIRONMENT AND PROSPERITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

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**Date of Meeting:** 8th February 2011
**Report of:** Head of Regeneration
**Subject/Title:** Highway Routine Maintenance Operational Policies
**Portfolio Holder:** Councillor Menlove

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### 1.0 Report Summary

1.1 That the Committee members provide comments on the proposed routine highway maintenance operational policies for:

- Highway Tree Maintenance and Inspections
- Highway Verge Maintenance
- Highway Weed Control
- Highway Hedge Maintenance
- Highway Surface Water

1.2 These routine maintenance activities are carried out by the Council for safety and serviceability purposes which in part contribute to the Council's statutory duty under the Highways Act 1980. These activities also contribute to the biodiversity and sustainability of the highway and surrounding environment.

### 2.0 Recommendations

**2.1 Members of the Committee are asked to provide comment on proposed Highway Routine Maintenance Operational Policies prior to the Policies being submitted to the Portfolio Holder for Environment for formal approval.**

### 3.0 Reasons for Recommendations

3.1 These routine maintenance policies are required so that highway users and stakeholders can be clear about the level of service the Council provides. They are also helpful in the event of claims for damages against the Council relating to the condition of the highway.

3.2 One of the issues the courts would look at would be the Council's stated policy, whether that policy was reasonable and importantly whether the Council carried out the level of service set out in the policy. The Council would have a defence against any claim brought against where it was able to show that its policies were reasonable in all the circumstances and that the policy was duly applied and carried out

**4.0 Wards Affected**

4.1 This report affects all wards equally.

**5.0 Local Ward Members**

5.1 This report affects all wards equally.

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

6.1 There are no human resources implications of the recommended option.

**7.0 Financial Implications (Authorised by the Borough Treasurer)**

7.1 The Strategic Director confirms that the costs of implementing this policy will be met from existing budgets.

7.2 The revenue budgets made available for discharging these policies for 2010/11 were

- Highway Tree Maintenance and Inspections £50,000
- Highway Verge Maintenance £818,377
- Highway Weed Control £256,520
- Highway Hedge Maintenance £196,100
- Highway Surface Water £1,039,267

For 2011/12, it is envisaged that operational budgets may change as a consequence of the new highways contract arrangements and expected efficiency savings forecast for 2011/12 and 2012/13.

7.3 It is envisaged that the proposed efficiency savings will not have a direct detrimental effect on the ability to achieve these standards of service level.

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

8.1 Section 41 of the Highway Act 1980 imposes a duty on the Highway Authority to maintain highways which are maintainable at the public expense. The duty requires the highway authority to maintain the highway in a fit state to accommodate the ordinary traffic which passes or maybe expected to pass along it.

8.2 The duty is owed to all users, whether using vehicles or on foot, of the highway whether pedestrians or vehicle users. Section 130 of the Highways Act 1980 imposes a further duty on the highway authority to assert and protect the rights of the public to the use and enjoyment of the highway. This leads to the Council dealing with any unlawful interference with the highway such as encroachment on and obstruction of the highway.

8.3 Section 58 of the Highways Act 1980 provides the Council with a statutory defence against claims where it can establish that it had taken such care as in all the circumstances was reasonable to ensure that the highway is kept safe.

The carrying out of regular inspections coupled with reasonable highway policies which are carried out provides that defence.

## 9.0 Risk Management

9.1 The Authority has a robust inspection and assessment regime which seeks to ensure that the road network is kept in a safe condition and that 'safety-related' defects are dealt with in a timely fashion. Maintenance works are planned and supervised to ensure safety for all affected parties and appropriate treatments are designed to minimise risks throughout the lifecycle of the asset.

9.2 Routine and cyclical maintenance operations play a key part in meeting the core objectives of highway maintenance which are to ensure network safety, serviceability and sustainability. The successful execution of regular, routine and cyclical maintenance works can contribute greatly to the visual appearance of the highway environment and street scene. Conversely, poor routine/cyclical maintenance practices and policies generally lead to highways appearing to be unkempt and badly maintained.

## 10.0 Background and Options

### 10.1 Highway Tree Maintenance and Inspections – Appendix A

10.1.1 This policy deals with the maintenance and inspection of highway trees. The objective is that highway trees are maintained in a healthy condition and do not pose a danger to users of the highway and or cause structural damage to private property or the highway itself.

10.1.2 The Council is responsible for all trees on the highway. Trees within falling distance of the highway are those in third party ownership on land adjacent to the highway which may cause damage to the highway or put users of the highway at risk from harm. Liability for these trees rests primarily with the owner or occupier of the land. The Council however has a duty of care to users of the highway with respect to these trees.

10.1.3 For the Council to fulfil its obligations for highway trees it requires a system of inspection by a competent person normally an arboriculturist. These inspections are carried out to find trees that may be diseased or have structural problems which may lead to putting highway users at risk of harm.

10.1.4 The Council is currently undertaking a review of its responsibilities for all trees within it ownership, schools, Tatton Park etc including trees on the highway. The review is assessing the regime needed for specialist arboreal inspections to enable the Council to discharge its obligations as a tree owner.

10.1.5 The default position is that each tree should be inspected by an arboriculturist every five years. However previous advice suggests that frequency between inspections of any one tree can be varied depending on the species of tree, age, its condition at the last inspection etc. In other

words, the frequency of inspection can be increased or decreased based on the risk that a particular tree poses.

10.1.6 The policy as set out includes for inspections by an arboriculturist with any work that is required as a result of such an inspection being carried out. Where trees adjacent to the highway are found, by report or inspection, to be in an unsafe condition, that may affect the highway or users of the highway, the Council will use its powers under Section 154 of the Highways Act 1980 to remedy the situation and recover from the owner any associated costs.

10.1.7 The reason for the tree or branch falling into the highway is fundamental. If it is because of a particularly bad storm then nobody is likely to be found liable. Where the reason is that the tree was diseased then, unless the owner has taken reasonable steps to examine the condition and had no reason to think it would fall over, the owner is liable for any damage caused.

10.1.8 Where a third party owned tree falls across the highway, the Council will seek to recover all the costs, from the owner of the tree, incurred in carrying out any work including any traffic management measures.

10.1.9 Highway trees generate a number of complaints each year regarding the blocking of light to various premises, interference with television and radio signals and general nuisance from trees dropping sap, leaves, fruiting bodies etc.

10.1.10 The right to light is an emotive area for people affected. Many people are aware of the ancient and prescriptive ‘right-to-light’, but this only relates to loss of light over a considerable period of time and in certain specific circumstances. Where trees are concerned, there is no ‘right-to-light’. The tree owner is not required or obliged in respect of any law to prune the tree for the benefit of his neighbour’s level of light.

10.1.11 The purchase of a television licence entitles the buyer to operate any equipment to receive a transmission. It is not a guarantee of any television reception, let alone a perfect reception. The Council (or indeed any tree owner) is not required to remove or prune trees for the benefit of television reception. To expect the Council to take responsibility for the quality of television reception is unrealistic and unsustainable, and there is no basis in law for that expectation.

10.1.12 Being living, growing organisms some trees have certain characteristics that are not always compatible with the expectations of some residents. In particular, sporadic complaints are received with regard to problems such as leaf-fall, fruiting bodies, sap and bird fouling.

10.1.13 These are natural and seasonal processes and there is little the Council can, or indeed would wish do to alleviate them. The Council does not accept liability for damage as a result of such natural deposits from trees and there is no decided case law holding that these secretions are a legal nuisance.

### 10.2 Highway Verge Maintenance – Appendix B

10.2.1 Highway Verge Maintenance is carried out for both safety and amenity purposes to:

- maintain visibility at junctions and bends
- prevent signs and bollards becoming obscured
- provide a refuge for pedestrians and road users where no footway exists
- prevent the encroachment of grass on to paved areas
- prevent the spread of weeds
- maintain and enhance the biodiversity of road side without compromising road safety

Appearance is a high priority for urban verges whereas in rural areas conservation is given a greater importance.

10.2.2 The policy provides for a performance specification for urban verges, roads with a speed limit of 40 mph or less, and a set number of cuts for rural verges, roads with a speed limit above 40 mph, with additional cut should safety needs dictate. Additionally the policy deals with the cutting of vegetation around obstructions in verges to ensure a good appearance.

10.2.3 The urban performance specification requires that the height of the vegetation is kept between 25mm and 100mm throughout the year. Whilst the rural verges are cut to a height of below 100mm.

### 10.3 Highway Weed Control – Appendix C

10.3.1 Highway weed control is carried out for a number of reasons. Weed infestation if left unchecked can interfere with visibility for road users, cause structural damage to the highway, block road side gullies and affect drainage systems.

10.3.2 There is also an amenity value in that weed growth on the highway looks unsightly. Further there is a statutory duty on the council as highway authority to control injurious and noxious weeds as defined in the Weeds Act 1959 and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

10.3.3 The policy provides for the routine weed spraying of paved areas, kerbs and channels etc. to safeguard the structural integrity of the highway and for amenity. The policy also deals with the Council's responsibilities to control injurious and noxious weeds.

### 10.4 Highway Hedge Maintenance – Appendix D

10.4.1 The Council as Highway Authority is not usually the owner of hedges that form the boundary of the highway and is therefore not responsible for their maintenance. The responsibility for the maintenance of such hedges normally lies with the adjacent landowner or occupier.

10.4.2 Where the Council is the owner of a hedge then it will be maintained so as not to cause a nuisance or obstruction to highway users.

10.4.3 The policy takes account of the Council's responsibilities under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and sets out the times of the year that hedges may be cut and trimmed. Any cutting and trimming of hedges for safety purposes may be carried out at other times.

10.4.4 The Highways Act 1980 (Section 154) empowers the Council, as Highway Authority, to protect the safety of highway users by ensuring that owners and occupiers of land adjacent to highways carry out their legal duties in respect of roadside hedges impacting on highway safety.

10.4.5 The policy also deals with issues regarding impacting on highway safety. Where this occurs a notice will be served on the landowner or occupier under section 154 of the Highways Act 1980. This gives the landowner 14 days to undertake the necessary maintenance work. In the event that the maintenance is not carried out the Council will carry out the work and recharge the landowner or occupier.

**10.5 Highway Surface Water – Appendix E**

10.5.1 The efficient operation of highway drainage systems plays a major role in maintaining the safety and serviceability of the network. Primarily, they are provided to fulfil the following:

- Ensuring that the highway is drained efficiently and effectively removing surface water from the carriageway and footway.
- Ensuring that properties adjacent to the highway do not suffer flooding due to the highway drainage system
- Limiting the negative effects that poor drainage has on the integrity of the highway structure.
- Ensuring that watercourses are not contaminated by highway pollutants.
- The policy provides for the setting of maintenance regimes for the cleansing and maintenance of the highway drainage system that reflects the location and needs of the various drainage units and systems to ensure the function and meet the policy objectives.
- Fulfil the statutory duties required under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010.

**11.0 *Access to Information***

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

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**Appendix A**

**Policy: Highway Tree Maintenance and Inspections**

## 1.0 Introduction

1.1 The Council is responsible for all trees on the highway. Trees within falling distance of the highway are those in third party ownership on land adjacent to the highway which may cause damage to the highway or put users of the highway at risk from harm. Liability for these trees rests primarily with the owner or occupier of the land. The Council however has a duty of care to users of the highway with respect to these trees.

1.2 The aim of the Council's policy for trees on the highway is that they are maintained in a healthy condition and do not pose a danger to users of the highway and or cause structural damage to private property or the highway itself.

## 2.0 Policy

2.1 For trees on the highway the Council will carry out tree inspections and operate a defect reporting system in line with current codes of practice, established guidelines and current best practice in order to meet its legal obligations. This will include the visual inspection from the highway of trees within falling distance of the highway where practicable.

2.2 The Council's tree maintenance regime is based on safety both for users of the highway and adjacent properties. The aim is to maintain adequate clearance for vehicles and pedestrians using the highway including visibility splays, signs and street lights.

2.3 In addition to the regular highway inspections the Council carries out the Council will respond to complaints, queries and reports from members of the public and others regarding highways trees by inspecting the site and if appropriate commission a report by a qualified arboriculturist.

2.4 The Council will carry out any remedial/preventative works that are deemed necessary as a result of the arboreal inspection within the recommended timescale. All inspections and work recommendations shall be in accordance with current codes of practice, British Standards and the principles of good arboricultural practice.

2.5 Any remedial action that is required to remove a hazard identified during a routine safety inspection will be carried out in accordance with the Council's inspection policy and the highway made safe by remedying / removing the hazard as soon as reasonably practicable

2.6 In the event that an emergency response is required to an incident the Council will take all necessary actions to make the highway safe by removing the hazard or obstruction with the minimum of delay or by closing the highway, or part of it, to until such time that the remedial actions can carried out safely.

2.7 Where trees adjacent to the highway are found, by report or inspection, to be in an unsafe condition, that may affect the highway or users of the highway, the Council will use its powers under Section 154 of the Highways Act 1980 to remedy the situation and recover from the owner any associated costs.

2.8 Where a third party owned tree falls across the highway, the Council will seek to recover all the costs, from the owner of the tree, incurred in carrying out any work including any traffic management measures.

2.9 The Council will not normally carry out tree work in response to complaints regarding television or radio reception. Complaints regarding blocking of light will only be considered should the exclusion of light be unreasonable and affect a habitable room.

2.10 Highway trees will not be pruned or otherwise cut back due to leaf fall, fruiting bodies, sap and bird fouling.

**Appendix B**

**Policy: Highway Verge Maintenance**

## 1.0 Introduction

1.1 It is recognised that well maintained highway grass verges and landscaped areas enhance the appearance of the highway environment and street scene. Conversely, badly maintained margins tend to create poor impression, especially in urban areas. In order to maintain a high standard of appearance throughout the Borough, they require regular maintenance to keep them looking at their best.

1.2 Generally speaking, the highway verge is defined as being the grassed or planted area that lies between the footway and carriageway or where no footway exists between the carriageway and highway boundary. It plays an important role in providing an area for locating street furniture and signs so that they do not create an obstruction on footway/cycleways. Verges also assist in draining the highway and they also provide an area for utility infrastructure that is relatively easy to reinstate and maintain.

1.3 Verge Maintenance is carried out on the highway for both safety and amenity purposes to:

- maintain visibility at junctions and bends
- prevent signs and bollards becoming obscured
- provide a refuge for pedestrians and road users where no footway exists
- prevent the encroachment of grass on to paved areas
- prevent the spread of weeds
- maintain and enhance the biodiversity of road side without compromising road safety

Appearance is a high priority for urban verges whereas in rural areas conservation is given a greater importance.

## 2.0 Policy

2.1 Rural Verges (Roads with Speed Limit >40mph)
Cutting will be carried out to visibility splays, at junctions and on bends and a 1.2m swathe adjacent to carriageways or footways. The frequency of cutting will be dependent on the rate of growth but will normally be twice per year. Additional cutting of visibility splays at junctions and bends will be carried when conditions determine that sight lines are, or are likely to become, obstructed by vegetation. The vegetation is to be cut to a height of below 100mm.

2.2 There are some special rural verges containing wild flowers. These areas of verge where identified are subject to a sensitive maintenance regime which takes account of the wild flowers and biodiversity of the area.

2.3 Urban Verges (Roads with Speed Limit 40mph or less)
The whole width of the verges shall be cut to maintain the height of the grass between 25mm and 100mm throughout the year.

2.4 Vegetation around road sign, columns, safety fences, posts, walls and other vertical obstructions that cannot be cut around by mowing machine shall be cut by other means.

2.5 The application of the rural and urban standards shall be flexible and depend on the general character of the particular road or area rather than be determined strictly by speed limit considerations.

2.6 In addition to ensuring that the verges are adequately and regularly cut, the Council will also endeavour to ensure that the highway verges are not adversely damaged by vehicles, either through parking or over-riding. Measures to protect affected verges may comprise the installation of physical barriers, verge reinforcement/strengthening and/or restraint through legislative means.

2.7 Apart from exceptional circumstances – i.e. where immediate works are required to obviate danger to users – the need for verge reinforcement works will be assessed and any works will only be undertaken as part of a planned programme of maintenance works.

**Appendix C**

**Policy: Highway Weed Control**

## 1.0 Introduction

1.1 There are two distinct aspects of the highway weed control function;

- The first is the treatment of general weeds which are likely to interfere with the highway e.g. when they create a hazard, cause structural damage, affect drainage systems or become unsightly.

- The second aspect is the statutory duty to control harmful/noxious weeds on the highway; these are defined in the Weeds Act 1959 and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

## 2.0 General Weed Control

2.1 The following problems can arise from general weed growth on the highway if left unabated:

- Weeds will cause structural damage to the footways, carriageways and cycle ways if they are allowed to grow freely. Hence in the long term, much greater maintenance costs will result from an inadequate weed control strategy.
- Weed growth is visually intrusive and heavy growth can give the impression that the highway network is being poorly maintained. This would impact upon customer satisfaction surveys and therefore Best Value.
- Weed growth in the carriageway channel will cause a build up of detritus which will impede the effective drainage of the highway.

For these reasons, it is essential that the Council has an effective means of controlling weed growth on the highway.

2.2 Treatment intervals for the application of weedkiller will vary depending on a number of factors including climatic conditions and amount of debris on highway etc. For this reason it is more appropriate to set a performance led specification for weed control rather than a specification which stipulates a fixed number of weedkiller applications.

## 3.0 Control of Noxious/Invasive Weeds

3.1 <u>The Weeds Act 1959</u>

The Weeds Act 1959 empowers DEFRA to serve notice requiring an occupier of land to take action to prevent the spread of certain specified weeds. Prosecution under the Act is pursued by DEFRA specifically when agricultural land is threatened by the specified weeds. DEFRA may also elect to have a third party undertake any necessary action and recover costs from the occupier.

Specified weeds under the Weeds Act 1959 are Spear Thistle; Creeping Thistle; Curled Dock; Broadleaved Dock and Common Ragwort

3.2 The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981

Section 14 of the Wildlife and Countryside Protection Act 1981 makes it an offence, liable to a fine, to plant or otherwise cause to grow in the wild, certain specified weeds. It may be a defence to prove that all reasonable steps were taken to prevent the plants growing in the wild.

Specified weeds under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 are Giant Hogweed; Himalayan Balsam and Japanese Knotweed.

3.3 The Town and Country Planning Act (England & Wales1990)

Section 215 (England & Wales) empowers Local Authorities to serve notice on owners or occupiers of land to control weeds considered harmful to the amenity of the surrounding area. Failure to take appropriate action may be liable to a fine, or alternatively the Local Authority may recover costs incurred in employing a third party to take the appropriate action.

3.4 It is clear from the legislation that there is a duty on the authority to take practicable measures to control the growth and prevent the spread of harmful/noxious weeds on the highway. Failure to do so could potentially result in prosecution under one of the above Acts and/or compensation claims from adjacent landowners.

**4.0 Policy**

4.1 The Council will carry out total weed control operations on areas of paving and hard standings, kerb, channels, back of footway, hedge bottoms and around street furniture.

4.2 Weed control measures will be by either herbicide application or by mechanical and/or hand pulling of weeds. Cutting may also be used to achieve the level of vegetation control required.

4.3 The Council will carry out selective weed control operations on rural highway verges to control the growth of injurious, noxious and controlled weeds including other invasive vegetation.

4.4 The Council will respond to complaints and reports of weed infestation and carry out where necessary spot treatment of vegetation with herbicide or by mechanical/manual removal to ensure that the Council's objectives and statutory obligations are met.

Appendix D

**Policy: Highway Hedge Maintenance**

## 1.0 Introduction

1.1 One of the main reasons why Cheshire is regarded as being such an attractive county is that many of its country lanes and roads are still bounded by mature hedgerows and trees. Not only do these features play a key role in shaping the overall landscape character of the county, but they also help to attract inward investment, combat pollution, encourage tourism, provide an ideal habitat for a wide range of flora and fauna whilst also offering users varied, pleasant and interesting routes.

## 2.0 Maintenance Objectives

2.1 Safety is the dominant issue in the maintenance of all boundary hedges. The frontagers, and not Cheshire East Council, usually own them. Hedges need cutting back so that overgrown branches do not impede pedestrians, drivers' sight lines are not blocked and traffic signs not hidden.

2.2 We notify landowners of any potential danger to the highway user from overgrown hedges or overhanging trees (which are usually owned by the adjacent landowner if they are within the hedgerow). If the landowner is not able, or is unwilling, to carry out the work, the Council can arrange for cutting to be done and the landowner charged for the work. Hedges within the road verges are the responsibility of Cheshire East Council. Many Parish Councils help us by reminding landowners of their responsibilities

2.3 Where the Council is the owner of a hedge then it will be maintained so as not to cause a nuisance or obstruction to highway users.

## 3.0 Policy

3.1 Hedges that are the responsibility of the Council shall cut back or trimmed as necessary so as not to impair highway safety and use by the public. The growth from hedges will be controlled so as not to obstruct sight lines, signs, streetlights etc. or hinder highway maintenance operations.

3.2 Cutting and trimming of highway hedges shall be restricted to the autumn and winter months. Trimming during March to August is likely to damage or disturb nesting birds and their young which is an offence under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981.

3.3 Any additional cutting or trimming of hedges outside the autumn/winter period shall only be carried out to maintain public safety and appropriate measures shall be taken to ensure that damage to wildlife and habitats is minimised to accord with the Wildlife and Country side Act 1981.

3.4 The Council shall maintain a schedule of hedges that it maintains and update the records as necessary.

3.5 The Highways Act 1980 (Section 154) empowers the Council, as Highway Authority, to protect the safety of highway users by ensuring that owners and occupiers of land adjacent to highways carry out their legal duties in respect of roadside hedges impacting on highway safety.

3.6 Where the Council becomes aware of a hedge impacting on highway safety a notice will be served on the landowner or occupier under section 154 of the Highways Act 1980. This gives the landowner 14 days to undertake the necessary maintenance work. In the event that the maintenance is not carried out the Council will carry out the work and recharge the landowner or occupier.

**Appendix E**

**Policy: Highway Surface Water**

## 1.0 Introduction

1.1 The efficient operation of highway drainage systems plays a major role in maintaining the safety and serviceability of the network. Primarily, they are provided to fulfil the following:

- Ensuring that the highway is drained efficiently and effectively removing surface water from the carriageway and footway.
- Ensuring that properties adjacent to the highway do not suffer flooding due to the highway drainage system
- Limiting the negative effects that poor drainage has on the integrity of the highway structure.
- Ensuring that watercourses are not contaminated by highway pollutants.
- Fulfil the statutory duties required under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010.

1.2 Generally, they are made up of a number of different elements:

- Piped drainage – includes gullies, inspection chambers, soakaways, kerb offlets and a wide variety of conduits and ironwork.
- Ditches and grips – They may become obstructed due to silting, accumulation of vegetation and debris as well as damage by traffic
- Culverts – a channel or conduit carrying a watercourse under roads.

1.3 Flooding on carriageways, cycleways and footways can arise due to a number of factors some of which may be related to the condition of drainage systems. For instance, as well as structural failure, piped systems and culverts can suffer from silting and blockage by debris and vegetation. Furthermore, ironwork and inspection chambers may be subject to subsidence and on occasions collapse.

1.4 To discharge our statutory duty as required by the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 inspections of flooding incidents will be undertaken whenever notification of such an event is received. During periods of consistent or heavy rainfall, numerous incidents can e reported and inspections of these will be carried out as resources allow. When flooding constitutes a risk to the safety of the highway user or threatens adjacent properties, the Council will do what is reasonable and practicable to alleviate the problem and minimise the risk.

1.5 Flooding incidents will be recorded and if such instances reoccur regularly, investigations will be carried out to ascertain the cause. If it is identified that the problems are due to the failure of the drainage system, appropriate

remedial work will be undertaken as soon as funding can be secured and the works can be programmed. On occasions, remedial works may be of a specialised nature or require significant pre-planning. Such schemes will be considered for implementation as part of the planned structural maintenance programme.

1.6 For those elements which are visible, defects will be identified when safety or other inspections are carried out (i.e. following a service request). Details of defects will be accurately and properly recorded and dealt with in accordance with the Highway Safety Inspection Code of Practice.

## 2.0 Policy

2.1 The cleansing, emptying and removal of detritus from highway drainage units, gullies, manholes, catchpits, channels and combined kerb and drainage units will be carried out at frequencies, appropriate to their location, to ensure the effectiveness of the highway drainage system.

Cleansing of drainage units includes:

- The removal of all detritus and weed growth around and in drainage units including any surrounding apron.
- Checking and clearing connections
- Recharging gullies with water and
- The reporting of any damaged or non-functioning units

2.2 Highway drainage interceptors will emptied and cleansed at a frequency to ensure they function correctly and do not contaminate water courses or drainage systems.

2.3 Where the highway drainage is found or reported to be not fully functional through the Council's routine inspections or report from the public the issue will be investigated and any blockages cleared and system repaired to return the system back to its fully operational condition.

2.4 Where third party drainage adversely affects the highway the Council will investigate and take such action, involving other agencies as necessary, to protect the highway and its users.

2.5 Carry out investigations of flooding incidents (where appropriate or necessary) to identify which organisation have the relevant flood risk management functions and what they have done or intend to do to mitigate this risk.

# CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

## REPORT TO: ENVIRONMENT AND PROSPERITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

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**Date of Meeting:** 8th February 2011
**Report of:** Head of Regeneration
**Subject/Title:** Pavement Café Policy
**Portfolio Holder:** Councillor Menlove

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### 1.0 Report Summary

1.1 That the Committee members provide comments on the reaffirmation of the inherited policy for the control and licensing of pavement cafés on the highway.

1.2 The Council during its first 18 months has been approving and granting licences under the Highways Act for businesses to place tables and chairs on the highway to enhance their trading. Such permissions and licences have been granted in accordance with the Highways and Town and Country Planning Acts, where appropriate, within strict guidelines.

### 2.0 Recommendations

**2.1 Members of the Committee are asked to provide comment on proposed Pavement Café Policy prior to the Policy being submitted to the Strategic Director Places for formal approval.**

### 3.0 Reasons for Recommendations

3.1 The Pavement Café Policy is aimed to set out the Council's consistent approach, for owners and managers of restaurants, cafés, bars, tea rooms, coffee shops and snack bars, who may be considering placing tables and chairs outside their premises.

3.2 The current operation of the Pavement Café licensing and conditions has served the Council well and adequately controlled pavement cafés for the benefit of shoppers and visitors, the business concerned and the economic well-being of the area.

3.3 It is considered that the policy for pavement café s should be approved subject to the licence conditions, as set out in the Appendices, being adhered to.

### 4.0 Wards Affected

4.1 This report affects all wards equally.

## 5.0 Local Ward Members

5.1 This report affects all wards equally.

## 6.0 Policy Implications including - Climate change - Health

6.1 There are no human resources implications of the recommended option.

6.2 The policy is intended to ensure that highways enforcement is carried out in a fair and consistent way.

6.3 Enforcement of highways legislation is intended to bring about a reduction in environmentally irresponsible behaviour.

6.4 Enforcement of highways legislation is intended to bring about a reduction in environmental problems including the appearance of the street scene and obstructions caused by alfresco refreshment areas. Local people, businesses and communities can expect to see an improvement in the street scene and safety as a result of this enforcement.

## 7.0 Financial Implications (Authorised by the Borough Treasurer)

7.1 The Strategic Director confirms that the costs of implementing this policy will be met from existing budgets.

7.2 The Council proposes a charge £550 for an initial licence under the Highway Act for a pavement café and £330 for the licence to be renewed on an annual basis. This twelve month cycle enables the Council to monitor the pavement cafés and either introduce additional conditions or not to renew a licence should there be any negative impact from the facility. The applicant would also be liable for any charges the Council levies with respect to planning approval, listed building consent and premises licence.

## 8.0 Legal Implications (Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)

8.1 It is an offence to deposit items on the highway without authorisation and the Council is empowered to prosecute offenders under the Highways Act 1980 and the Police Town Clauses Act 1847. Other powers are available under the common law. Strictly, anything located on the highway, which is not authorised by law, is capable of amounting to an obstruction. This applies to both permanent and temporary features. As a result, the scope of these sections has been extended to encompass related matters such as ‘alfresco’ refreshment areas.

8.2 Under Part VII A of the Highways Act 1980 the Council has the power to licence the placing of items and amenities on certain types of highway, which includes footpaths, footways, pedestrian areas and other highway where

vehicular traffic is prohibited. In some cases, the consent of the frontagers is required and special considerations apply in respect of a walkway.

8.3 The Council has the power to impose such terms and conditions in the licence as it thinks fit, including a requirement to indemnify the Council in respect of the placing/retention of the item on the highway. In respect of fees, if the Council is the owner of the soil beneath the highway it can impose such reasonable charges as it may determine. Where the Council is not the owner of the soil beneath the highway, it can only require the payment of such charges as will reimburse the council for its reasonable expenses in connection with granting the licence. Prior to granting a licence the Council is required to post notices on the street, serve notice on the owner and occupier of any premises appearing to the council to be likely to be materially affected and undertake consultation. The licence must not be granted until the Council has taken into consideration all representations made to it in connection with the proposal within the period specified in the notice.

8.4 If it appears to the Council that the licensee has committed any breach of the terms of the licence, it may serve a notice on him requiring him to take such steps to remedy the breach as are specified in the notice within such time as is so specified. If the person fails to comply with the notice, the Council may take the steps itself and any expenses incurred, together with interest may be recovered from the person on whom the notice was served.

8.5 The advantage of entering into a licence with each individual person or business is that the Council can ensure compliance with the terms and conditions of the licence. Without a licence, the Council can only set down guidelines and then take enforcement action where appropriate.

## 9.0 Risk Management

9.1 The risk of not implementing this policy is that when we take a case to court we have no formal policy to back up the action being taken.

## 10.0 Background and Options

10.1 Pavement cafés are areas of the public highway on which tables and chairs may be placed and where food and/or drink are consumed. Typically restaurants, café s and public houses, where there is sufficient space on the highway, like to expand their trading opportunities and offer continental style service by having an “Alfresco” seating area outdoors.

10.2 The “Alfresco“ café culture is becoming a popular attraction in towns and cities across the country. A pavement café which is well designed and located and fits with the local area can add value by increasing the use and vibrancy of the street and creates feeling of well-being. Through pavement cafés businesses can increase trade not only for the particular premises concerned but for other businesses in the area due to the attraction of visitors and shoppers.

10.3 The Council recognises the economic benefits and enhancement of the street scene that these schemes can provide. However it is important that they are well designed and set out and do not impinge on safety or inconvenience users of the highway.

10.4 The Council wishes to encourage the alfresco culture but at the same time ensure that the publics' right to use the highway is not adversely affected. Implemented schemes must not create a hazard or obstruct the highway for pedestrians, blind or visually impaired people or people with limited mobility. The facilities must be provided to the highest possible standards without any detrimental effect upon the community as a whole.

10.5 The Council has licensed and approved pavement cafés in the first year of the Council under set licence conditions. These conditions are set out in Appendix A to this report and underpin the Council's policy for pavement café s on the highway. Additional conditions are applied where it is proposed to serve alcohol and these are set out in Appendix B. The guidance provided to applicants can be found in Appendix C.

10.6 The Council proposes to charge £500 for an initial licence under the Highway Act for a pavement café and £330 for the licence to be renewed on an annual basis. This twelve month cycle enables the Council to monitor the pavement café s and either introduce additional conditions or not renew a licence should there be any negative impact from the pavement café. The applicant would also be liable for any charges the Council levies with respect to planning approval, listed building consent and premises licence.

10.7 The charges for pavement café licences will be reviewed on an annual basis along with all other charges the

## 11.0 *Access to Information*

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

Name: Gary Mallin
Designation: Highway Asset and Traffic Manager
Tel No: 01270 686342
Email: gary.mallin@cheshireeast.gov.uk

**Appendix A**

**Pavement Café Policy and Conditions**

1. A licence must be granted for the use of the highway for tables & chairs for an outdoor café to be lawful. It does not grant permission for the use of the highway for any other purpose including the sale or display of goods or services.

2. Unless express written permission is granted by Cheshire East Borough Council ('the Council'), this Licence may not be assigned or sublet to any other business.

3. The Licence shall remain in force for a period of 12 months from the date thereof provided that if there is a breach of any of these conditions the Council reserves the right to withdraw the Licence by giving the Licensee seven days notice in writing of the Council's intention to withdraw the same.

4. All reasonable directions of the Council or its representative are to be complied with.

5. Tables, chairs, furniture, fittings and barriers associated with the refreshment area or café (Furniture and Fittings) shall not encroach on to the highway beyond the area licensed for the purpose by the Council, and shown on the plan annexed to this Licence ('the Licensed Area'). Care shall be taken with the siting of umbrellas and awnings neither of which may extend outside the Licensed Area. The whole of the adjacent highway shall remain open for pedestrian use at all times and shall not be obstructed by public use of the Licensed Area. Free and unobstructed passage of pedestrians on the highway must be maintained at all times so as not to cause any nuisance annoyance or obstruction thereof and the Licensee shall:-

   (a) ensure that all persons taking refreshments do not encroach beyond the Licensed Area

   (b) be responsible for the conduct of all persons using the Licensed Area.

6. Tables and chairs on the public highway shall be positioned to allow the safe passage of pedestrians, blind or visually impaired people and people with limited mobility. The tables and chairs must be placed so as not to obstruct drivers' sight lines or highway signs. They must be within an area defined by an approved temporary barrier sited within an area permanently marked on the highway only by means of an approved brass stud situated at each corner of the Licensed Area, installed by the Council. The costs of providing, installing, maintaining, removing and making good marker studs are to be borne by the Licensee.

7. A minimum free width of 1.8 m or in fully pedestrianised areas, one third the width of the public highway (measured from the centre of the highway),

whichever is the greater, must remain free and unobstructed for pedestrians. This minimum may be increased where there are intense levels of pedestrian traffic or where there is street furniture on the highway. At bus stops 2.3 m of unobstructed footway will be required. Designated outdoor café areas on opposite sides of the street must be separated by 3.5 m measured along the street to permit fire brigade access or passage.

8. In the event of the surface of the highway being disturbed by the Licensee by any means, the Licensee shall restore and made good the highway at the Licensee's cost, to the satisfaction of the Council. The Licensee shall be responsible for all damage caused to the Licensed Area as a consequence of its use, whether caused by the Licensee or not.

9. Access for emergency services must be available at all times. If the Licensee is requested to move any Furniture and Fittings or other items within the Licensed Area by the Council, Police or Fire Officer or Statutory Undertaker

    (a) in the interest of public safety (for example on occasions when there are demonstrations, public unrest and disorder, bomb warning or fire alert) or

    (b) for the purpose of carrying out works in on or under the highway

    the Licensee shall immediately comply with that request.

10. Access for those working for adjacent properties to put scaffolding over or adjacent to a Licensed Area, and to carry out works on that scaffolding, is to be afforded at all reasonable times.

11. In the event that, as a result of the Council requiring the highway for any reason or cause arising in connection with its powers and duties as highway authority, the Licensed Area is not available for use by the Licensee, there shall be no claim against the Council for loss of trade.

12. Any Furniture and Fittings associated with the use of the Licensed Area shall be installed and maintained to the satisfaction of the Council.

13. Access to the Furniture and Fittings and the Licensed Area shall be afforded at all reasonable times to officers of the Council for the purposes of inspection.

14. The Licensed Area shall be kept in a clean, litter free and in a tidy condition during its operation and used glasses, plates, cutlery, containers, papers and all other articles thereon shall be removed on a regular basis and at the close of business each day and all refuse shall be removed. Care should be taken to ensure that litter does not stray onto adjacent areas, any windblown litter outside the perimeter of the Licensed Area must be collected. Cleansing of any spillages is to be dealt with by the Licensee as soon as they occur.

15. The sale of food and/or drinks from temporary stalls or takeaway food from outdoor sale points is prohibited. No outdoor ice-cream or drinks vending machines or stalls will be allowed. Covers/ tables must be serviced directly

from immediately adjacent building premises of a permitted A3/food use, where the food is prepared and sold ('the Premises').

16. Any signage, flags, banners, "A" boards or temporary advertisements displayed or placed in on or around the Licensed Area must be in accordance with the Council's Clear Way Forward Policy and Guidelines.

17. The Licensed Area will only be open for the use as a refreshment area between the hours of 07.00 hrs and 23.00 hrs or such hours as may be designated on the Licence (the Refreshment Period).

18. Furniture and Fittings may only be placed on any part of the Licensed Area which is shared with vehicles (partially pedestrianised areas) 30 minutes after vehicular access is closed and must be removed and the Licensed Area completely cleared no later than 30 minutes before vehicular access re-commences.

19. The Licensee shall remove all Furniture and Fittings and any other items within the Licensed Area by the end of a Refreshment Period and shall not place any Furniture and Fittings or any other items within the Licensed Area before the commencement of a Refreshment Period.

20. The Licensee will be responsible for the cleanliness of the Licensed Area at all times. The Licensed Area must be kept clean and litter free. Care should be taken to ensure that litter does not stray onto adjacent areas, any windblown litter outside the perimeter of the Licensed Area must be collected.

21. A suitable litter/refuse bin(s) must be provided within the Licensed Area at all times during the Refreshment Period. The Licensee will be responsible for the removal and collection of all waste material.

22. Failure to comply with the cleaning requirements under this Licence will result in the serving of a Notice requiring compliance with the terms of the Licence. In the event of failure to comply with the Notice, the Council will carry out the work deemed necessary and recover costs from the operator. Repeated failure to comply with the cleaning requirements may result in revocation of the Licence.

23. The Licence will not be renewed, or may be cancelled, if the terms and conditions are not complied with after two written warnings have been issued by the Council.

24. The Licensee shall pay to the Council on the date of the Licence a licence fee in the sum of £500 for the first year and £330 at subsequent renewals, if granted.

25. Renewals must be applied for in writing to the Area Highway Manager of the Council no later than two months before the expiry of the current Licence.

26. The Licensee shall indemnify and keep indemnified the Council from and against all actions demands costs charges or expenses arising out of or in connection with the use of the refreshment area and for this purpose shall

take out an insurance policy in at least the sum of £5,000,000 (Five million pounds) for any one accident without limiting the number of claims arising out of any one accident with an insurance company to be approved by the Council and shall produce such policy and the receipt for the premium thereof to the Council.

27. A legible copy of the current Licence and accompanying plan must be displayed for inspection at any time by the Council.

**Appendix B**

**Additional Conditions Relating to Public Houses**

1. The Licensed Area must, at all times, be monitored by a CCTV system which is capable of being viewed on a monitor by staff working in the bar area. This system must record images and store them unedited for a period of at least 7 days. Copies of the images will be made freely available to a constable or an employee of the police authority or licensing authority upon request.

2. The Licensed Area must be cleared of all furniture, fittings, barriers, umbrellas etc. associated with it and they must be stored inside your premises outside the times covered by this licence.

3. The Licensed Area must be frequently visited by a member of staff and any glasses, bottles, crockery, cutlery etc. that are finished with must be cleared away as soon as is practicable. These visits must also monitor those persons using the Licensed Area to ensure that it is not frequented or resorted to by people who are intoxicated.

**Appendix C**

## GUIDANCE ON THE PROVISION OF REFRESHMENT FACILITIES ON THE HIGHWAY BY PERSONS OTHER THAN COUNCILS

### 1. INTRODUCTION

You can only provide and operate a refreshment facility on the highway with permission from Cheshire East Council (the Council) as a highway authority. However, The Council will only grant you permission if you comply with certain criteria and provide proof of any other permissions (or exemptions) that may be required.

This guidance has been produced to help you to apply for permission from the Council and understand the criteria and the other permissions which may be applicable**.**

### 2. GENERAL CRITERIA

#### (a) Designated Area

You will only be allowed to provide a refreshment facility within a designated area operated and serviced from your existing premises. In proposing the extent of the designated area you should have consideration for the following:

- It should be located adjacent to your premises and contained within its frontage.
- It should not discourage pedestrians from using a footway or cause them to make sharp deviations to their route.
- It should not conflict with accesses or dropped crossings.
- It should not obstruct the sight lines of drivers or pedestrians or obscure highway signs.
- It should leave a clear width of highway available for use by pedestrians and emergency vehicles. Generally, this should be 1.8m on footways, 2.3m on footways with a bus stop or, in pedestrianised areas, 1.85m or 1/3$^{rd}$ of the highway width from the centre line (whichever is the greater). These may be increased or decreased depending on the particular circumstances (e.g. where there are high pedestrian volumes, particularly wide highways, refreshment facilities on both sides, etc.)

You should be aware that, in some cases, there will be no scope to give permission for a refreshment facility because of the above and your application may be refused.

You will be required to allow the emergency services or the owners of apparatus access to the designated area at any time. You will be required to comply with instructions of the Council, Police, Fire Officer, Statutory Undertakers or any other person or body with a statutory interest in this respect. Under such circumstances you will have no recourse to a claim for loss of trade.

#### (b) Barriers

The designated area must be delineated and guarded by portable barriers approved by and maintained to the satisfaction of the Council. These should be reasonably rigid, designed to resist being blown over by the wind or passing traffic and have:

- A smooth panel /handrail (of at least 150mm depth) fixed at a height of between 1m and 1.2m above ground level.
- A tapping rail (of at least 150mm depth) fixed at a height no more than 200mm above ground level.

The barriers should be of contrasting colours (such as black and white or other colour combinations) so that they can be easily identifiable by people who may be visually impaired but do not overly dominate the street scene.

You will be required to keep the designated area clean and tidy at all times and should manage it so that used crockery and cutlery, refuse and spillages are removed promptly. Please be aware that you could be charged for the cost of making good any damage to, or disturbance of the highways consequent to the use of the refreshment facility.

**(c) Hours of Operation**

Permission for the refreshment facility will only be valid between 07.00 and 23.00. Outside of these times, you will be required to remove the refreshment facility and all furniture, fittings, barriers, umbrellas, awning etc. associated with it, and store them inside your remises. Permission may be revoked if you do not adhere strictly to these time restrictions.

**(d) Indemnity**

You will be required to indemnify the Council against all losses and claims for injury or damage to any person or property which may arise out of the provision of the refreshment facility. For this purpose, you must provide proof that you have taken out an insurance policy in at least the sum of £5,000,000 (Five million pounds), for one incident with the number of incidents unlimited, with an insurance company to be approved by the Council.

**3. OTHER PERMISSIONS WHICH MAY BE REQUIRED**

You may be required to obtain other permissions in order to be able to provide and operate a refreshment facility. The Council will require proof of such permissions (or exemption from permission) before giving you a licence.

There may be fees or charges made for making applications and/or the granting of any of these permissions. Therefore, before you submit your application, it is recommended that you seek the advice of the Council, as they may be able to provide advice on specific cases before an application is made.

Although this will not guarantee that you get the permission, it may help you to avoid paying any fees or charges for an application that is likely to be refused. It is also a good idea to discuss your proposal with all your neighbours, as they may be included in the consultation process used when assessing an application.

**(a) Planning Permission**

Planning permission may be required where there is a material change of use of land. The Planning Department will bear in mind the need to protect residents of nearby properties from unreasonable nuisance and may therefore refuse or attach conditions or limitations to your application (e.g. restricted hours of operation).

**(b) Listed Building Consent**

A refreshment facility and its associated furniture will not be allowed to adversely affect the special architectural or historic character of a listed building or the Conservation Area in which it may lie. Therefore, you may be required to obtain listed building consent for any work to a listed building, internally or externally or where the environment of an adjacent listed building is affected by the proposal.

**(c) Premise Licence**

In order to serve alcohol as part of a refreshment facility, the area you propose to use must be included in the premise licence required for the supply of alcohol on that premises. Therefore, you may need to apply for an amendment to your premise licence if this is not included.

**4. APPLICATION PROCESS**

As previously stated, it is recommended that you seek the advice of the Council before you submit your application. To consider your proposal, the Council will require you to submit the following at least 3 months prior to the date on which you wish to start:

- A complete copy of the application form.
- 6 copies of a location plan to a scale of 1:1250, clearly marking the existing premises and the proposed designated area edged and hatched in red.
- 6 copies of a site plan to scale of no less than 1:100 showing the exact location and dimensions of the designated area and its associated furniture (in the case of a pedestrian area, the line of the opposite frontages must be shown).
- Proof of indemnity, in the form of a valid insurance policy.
- A cheque made out to 'Cheshire East Council' for the initial licence charge.

In order to avoid a delay in the processing of your application, you may also wish to provide the following required documents at the time of your application:

- Proof of planning permission or exemption.
- Proof of listed building consent (where applicable).
- Proof of premise licence (where applicable).

When you have submitted the above, your proposal will be sent for consultation to the emergency services, the Planning Department and premise licensing authority. If your proposal is to provide and operate a refreshment facility on a highway which is not pedestrianised, the Council must also publish a notice at the location and serve a copy on the owners or occupiers of premises which are materially affected. The Council must allow 28 days from the publication of this notice for representations to be made.

Your proposal, the views of all the consulted bodies and any representations received will then be considered by the Highways Office who will accept (with or without special conditions) or refuse your application. If your application is accepted, you will be issued with a licence.

You will be required to display a legible copy of your licence, in a conspicuous position on your premises, adjacent to the refreshment facility so that it can be inspected by the Council or any other person with an interest at any time.

Your licence will be valid for a period of twelve months from the date of issue and must be renewed annually. Licence renewals should be sought at least 2 months prior to the expiry of the existing licence. You will be required to pay an additional charge for these annual renewals and the Council reserves the right to revert to initial charge should the renewal charge not be paid prior to the expiry of the existing licence.

**CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL**
**APPLICATION FORM FOR THE PROVISION OF REFRESHMENT FACILITIES ON THE HIGHWAY BY PERSONS OTHER THAN COUNCILS**

| | |
|---|---|
| Applicant's Name: | |
| Applicant's Address: | |
| Applicant's Tel No: | |
| Name & address of premises to which proposal relates: | |
| Name of highway affected: | |
| Brief details of the proposal: | |
| Proposed start date & times of operation: | |
| Have you obtained Planning Permission or exemption prior to submitting your application? (if yes, please attach a copy) | |
| Does the proposal affect a listed building or conservation area, and if so, have you obtained a consent or exemption prior to submitting your application? (if yes, please attach a copy) | |
| Do you intend to serve alcohol as part of your proposal and if so, is the proposed designated area included on your premise licence? (If yes, please attach a copy) | |
| Have you taken out insurance to indemnify Cheshire East Council? (if yes, please attach a copy) | |
| Please attach a cheque for the relevant charge made payable to "Cheshire East Council" | |

| Key Decision | Decisions to be Taken | Decision Maker | Expected Date of Decision | Proposed Consultation | Relevant Scrutiny Committee | How to make representation to the decision made |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| CE10/11-78 Wilson Bowden Development Agreement | To approve the final terms and conditions contained in the revised Development Agreement relating to Macclesfield Town Centre. | Cabinet | 6 Jun 2011 | | Environment and Prosperity | John Nicholson, Strategic Director Places |
| CE10/11-67 The Cheshire East Economic Development Strategy | To approve the Economic Development Strategy. | Cabinet | 14 Mar 2011 | Meetings with key stakeholders, Parish Councils, Local Area Partnerships, Chambers of Commerce and businesses; website consultation. | Environment and Prosperity 8 February 2011 | John Nicholson, Strategic Director Places |
| CE10/11-66 Draft Local Transport Plan Implementation Plan | To approve the draft Local Transport Implementation Plan following public consultation. | Cabinet | 14 Mar 2011 | Public consultation to include transport and environmental groups, neighbouring authorities, Parish Councils, bus and train operators, Local Area Partnerships. | Environment and Prosperity 8 February 2011 | John Nicholson, Strategic Director Places |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| CE10/11-76 Interim Policy on the Release of Housing Land | To approve the interim policy on the release of housing land. | Cabinet | 14 Feb 2011 | Widespread consultation has already been carried out and details will be appended to the Cabinet report. | Environment and Prosperity Scrutiny 8 February 2011 | John Nicholson, Strategic Director Places |
| CE10/11-77 Interim Planning Statement on Affordable Housing | Approval of Interim Planning Statement on Affordable Housing. | Cabinet | 14 Feb 2011 | Widespread consultation has already been carried out and details will be appended to the Cabinet report. | Environment and Prosperity Scrutiny 8 February 2011 | John Nicholson, Strategic Director Places |

# CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

## REPORT TO: ENVIRONMENT AND PROSPERITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

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**Date of Meeting:** 8 February 2011
**Report of:** Borough Solicitor
**Subject/Title:** Work Programme update

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### 1.0 Report Summary

1.1 To review items in the 2011 Work Programme and to determine whether or not any additional items need to be included.

### 2.0 Recommendations

2.1 That the Committee note the work programme.

### 3.0 Reasons for Recommendations

3.1 It is good practice to agree and review the Work Programme to enable effective management of the Committee's business.

### 4.0 Wards Affected

4.1 All

### 5.0 Local Ward Members

5.1 Not applicable.

### 6.0 Policy Implications including

6.1 Not known at this stage.

### 7.0 Financial Implications 2010/11 and beyond

7.1 Not known at this stage.

### 8.0 Legal Implications

8.1 None.

### 9.0 Risk Management

9.1 There are no identifiable risks.

**10.0 Background and Options**

10.1 Since the last meeting of the Committee, The Chairman has met with the Portfolio Holders to discuss the work programme and future issues for the Committee.

10.2 The monitoring Officer has issued advice to Overview and Scrutiny Committees on the Membership of Task and Finish Groups for those occasions when Members do not wish to set up a task and finish Group on a proportional basis as follows:

10.3 The constitution currently requires that Task and Finish are organised on a proportional basis, but this has proved difficult with such small numbers (they usually consist of 5 or 6 members).

10.4 If the constitutional requirement for proportionality were removed, there is still a statutory requirement. By virtue of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, Schedule 1, advisory committees are subject to the proportionality rules contained in the act. Unlike the constitutional requirement, however, the Act permits proportionality to be dispensed with, provided that the scrutiny committee so decides on a 'nem con' vote. Removing the requirement in the constitution would therefore provide greater flexibility.

10.5 In effect this means that if members are mindful to set up a Task and Finsih group on a non proportionate basis, this can only be done by a 'nem con' vote ie a vote without objection, otherwise the Task and Finish Group must be set up on a proportional basis

10.6 In reviewing the work programme, Members must pay close attention to the Corporate Plan and Sustainable Communities Strategy.

10.7 Members must also have regard to the general criteria which should be applied to all potential items when considering whether any Scrutiny activity is appropriate. Matters should be assessed against the following criteria:

- Does the issue fall within a corporate priority
- Is the issue of key interest to the public
- Does the matter relate to a poor or declining performing service for which there is no obvious explanation
- Is there a pattern of budgetary overspends
- Is it a matter raised by external audit management letters and or audit reports?
- Is there a high level of dissatisfaction with the service

If during the assessment process any of the following emerge, then the topic should be rejected:

- The topic is already being addressed elsewhere
- The matter is subjudice
- Scrutiny cannot add value or is unlikely to be able to conclude an investigation within the specified timescale

**11** ***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
Tel No: 01270 686465
Email: katie.smith@cheshireeast.gov.uk

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# Environment and Prosperity Scrutiny Committee Work Programme – 29 January 2011

| Issue | Description/Comments | Suggested by | Portfolio Holder | Corporate Priority | Current Position | Date |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Local Transport Plan - Implementation Plan | To give consideration to the Local Transport Plan prior to it being submitted to Cabinet for approval | Committee | Macrae | The growth and development of a sustainable Cheshire East | On target | 8 February 2011 |
| Street Lighting Pilot | To receive an update on a project to have reduced/no lighting in residential areas, plus reduced lighting output when the traffic flows allow on major roads. | Portfolio Holder | Menlove | The growth and development of a sustainable Cheshire East | On target | 8 February 2011 |
| Interim Affordable Housing and Numbers | To consider the interim statement prior to it being considered by the Strategic Planning Board | Committee | Macrae | To grow and develop a sustainable Cheshire east | On target | 8 February 2011 |
| Interim Policy for the release of future housing land | To consider the interim statement prior to it being considered by the Strategic Planning Board | Committee | Macrae | To grow and develop a sustainable Cheshire east | On target | 8 February 2011 |
| Highway Policies | To give consideration to a number of policies prior to them being submitted to the Portfolio Holder for approval | Committee | Menlove | To grow and develop a sustainable Cheshire east | On target | 8 February 2011 |
| Update on Highway Procurement Contract. | To give consideration to an update from the Procurement Project Group – to receive an update paper on 08.02.11. | Chairman | Menlove | To grow and develop a sustainable Cheshire east | On target | 8 February 2011 |
| Waste Collection and Route | To give consideration to the proposed new | Committee | Menlove | To grow and develop a | On target | 8 February 2011 (or |

# Environment and Prosperity Scrutiny Committee Work Programme – 29 January 2011

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Optimisation and Transfer Points | arrangements. | | | sustainable Cheshire east | | possibly 3 March) |
| Economic Development Strategy | Members gave consideration to the draft strategy on 8 June 2010 and requested to receive the final draft prior to it being submitted to Cabinet for approval | Committee | Macrae | The growth and development of a sustainable Cheshire East | On target | 22 March 2011 (or possibly 3 March) |
| Public Transport Strategy | To follow from the update on the LTP – to include an update on the criteria for bus subsidies. | Caroline Simpson | Macrae | The growth and development of a sustainable Cheshire East | On target | 22 March 2011 |
| Cheshire East Housing Strategy | | Adrian Fisher | Macrae | The growth and development of a sustainable Cheshire East | On target | 22 March 2011 |



**Possible Items to Monitor or consider at future Meetings**

Carbon Reduction Commitment – to review agreement with the Carbon Trust – June 2011 - Cllr Menlove
Crewe Crematorium – Cllr Menlove
Budget
Performance Management – Cllr Brown
Street Naming and Numbering – Cllr Menlove
Update on All change for Crewe – Cllr Macrae - May
Update on Macclesfield Economic Master Plan – Cllr Macrae - May
Congleton Town Centre – Cllr Macrae
Sustainable Towns – Cllr Menlove

**Items removed**

# Environment and Prosperity Scrutiny Committee Work Programme – 29 January 2011

Highway Assessment Management Plan and Network Management – Cllr Macrae/Menlove – Included within the procurement contract item.

## Dates of Future Environment and Prosperity Scrutiny Committee Meetings

25 Jan 2011, 8 Feb 2011, 22 March 2011, 26 April 2011.

## Dates of Future Cabinet Meetings

17 Jan 2011, 14 Feb 2011, 14 March 2011, 11 April 2011.

## Dates of Future Council Meetings

24 February 2011, 21 April 2011, 18 May 2011

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