

Cabinet Members for Health & Wellbeing, Safer & Stronger Communities, Performance & Capacity and Prosperity

Agenda

Date:	Monday, 13th September, 2010
Time:	9.30 am
Venue:	Committee Suite 1 & 2, Westfields, Middlewich Road, Sandbach CW11 1HZ

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

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

1. **Apologies for Absence**

2. **Declarations of Interest**

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

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

In accordance with Procedure Rules Nos.11 and 35 a period of 10 minutes is allocated for members of the public to address the meeting on any matter relevant to the work of the meeting. Individual members of the public may speak for up to 5 minutes but the person presiding will decide how the period of time allocated for public speaking will be apportioned where there are a number of speakers. Members of the public are not required to give notice to use this facility. However, as a matter of courtesy, a period of 24 hours' notice is encouraged.

Members of the public wishing to ask a question at the meeting should provide three clear working days' notice, in writing, in order for an informed answer to be given.

Contact:	Paul Mountford, Democratic Services
Tel:	01270 686472
E-Mail:	paul.mountford@cheshireeast.gov.uk

CABINET MEMBER FOR HEALTH & WELLBEING

4. Harmonisation of Fees and Charges in Leisure Facilities (Pages 1 - 12)

To consider proposals for the harmonisation of fees, charges and membership policies in leisure facilities inherited from former district authorities in Cheshire East.

CABINET MEMBER FOR SAFER & STRONGER COMMUNITIES

5. Housing Fire Safety Protocol (Pages 13 - 28)

To consider a proposed Housing Fire Safety Protocol between Cheshire East Council and Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service to aid co-ordination of the actions of both bodies and promote fire safety.

CABINET MEMBER FOR PERFORMANCE & CAPACITY

6. Media Relations Protocol (Pages 29 - 44)

To consider proposed minor changes to the Council's Media Relations Protocol.

CABINET MEMBER FOR PROSPERITY

7. Homelessness Strategy (Pages 45 - 88)

To consider the adoption of a Homelessness Strategy for Cheshire East.

8. Pre-Publication Partial Consultation on Manchester's Core Strategy (Pages 89 - 98)

To consider a report on Manchester City Council's proposed policy approach to managing the growth of Manchester Airport through its Core Strategy.

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing

Date of Meeting: 13th September 2010
Report of: Head of Health and Wellbeing
Subject/Title: Harmonisation of Fees and Charges in Leisure Facilities

1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 To provide the Cabinet Member for Health & Wellbeing with the required information in order for a decision to be made on the harmonisation of fees, charges and membership policies in leisure facilities inherited from former district authorities in Cheshire East.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 That the Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing
- (1) approve the revised scale of fees and charges in leisure facilities with effect from 1st October 2010 as part of a two-phase exercise to align pricing where appropriate; and
 - (2) approve the phased withdrawal of the former Congleton Borough Council Bonus Card Scheme in line with the new Cheshire East Everybody memberships.

3.0 Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 The authority has inherited a number of different approaches to fees and charges in leisure facilities from the former district authorities, which has now resulted in quite significant differences in prices charged to customers at Cheshire East leisure centres for comparable products and services.
- 3.2 On 1 April 2010, a new harmonised membership scheme was launched (Everybody) along with a new concessionary discount scheme (Everybody Options), these new schemes provided a consistent approach to memberships and discounts which allow access to any Cheshire East Council leisure facility. The Bonus Card in the Congleton Area facilities, which is primarily a loyalty scheme, was not withdrawn at the time and as a result is beginning to cause confusion for both staff and customers having two concurrent schemes running. While the benefits of a loyalty scheme are recognised, the lack of a joined leisure management database makes a common Cheshire East scheme impossible to manage and would be investigated for reintroduction at such a time when a single leisure management system is introduced.

4.0 Wards Affected

4.1 N/A

5.0 Local Ward Members

5.1 N/A

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

6.1 It is important to ensure that use of leisure facilities for health improvement is encouraged and that high or unfair pricing is not seen as a barrier to participation. The Everybody Options scheme compliments the headline price levels by offering targeted, means-tested discounts of up to 50% for those who are unable to pay the full price levels for key activities.

7.0 Financial Implications (Authorised by the Borough Treasurer)

7.1 The exercise aims to introduce a fair and transparent approach to charging within the leisure facilities. Currently by continuing to operate similar products and services with significant price variance, the Authority may be challenged for operating unfair pricing arrangements, the realignment of fees & charges over a two-phase process will begin to address these issues.

7.2 This process is also in line with the approved Health & Wellbeing Pricing & Charging Policy which aimed to have completed the phased harmonisation exercise by 2012.

7.3 The net impact of the rise on the overall fees and charges gives an average increase of:

October 2010 – December 2010	3.22%
January 2011 – May 2011	0.72%

Taking into account the possibility of reduced use through some fee increases, and the off-peak period, an estimate of £30,000 additional income is suggested over the first phase only.

8.0 Legal Implications (Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)

8.1 The provision of Leisure facilities is a discretionary service and is subject to powers primarily under Section 19 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, the Local Government Act, 1972 and the general "Wellbeing" powers in the Local Government Act, 2000.

8.2 Under S.19 (2) of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, the Local Authority may make any recreational facilities provided by it "...available for use by such persons as it thinks fit either without charge or on payment of such charges as the authority thinks fit."

- 8.3 The Local Authority will have to comply with any terms and conditions in respect of the Congleton Borough Council Bonus Scheme. I have not seen the terms and conditions, but as I understand that the cards are subject to renewal every 12 months and the plan is for a phased withdrawal that allows the cards to run to their natural termination date, there should not be an issue.

9.0 Risk Management

- 9.1 In harmonising pricing levels, there will be some users who are met with increased or decreased fees which could result in a net decrease in facility usage and income. The impact of the changes to the charges will be monitored

10.0 Background and Options

10.1 Options for Consideration

a. Recommended - Since the amalgamation of the Leisure Facilities into one service, the approach to setting fees and charges has been based on a net increase of previously set levels. As prices are now published as one authority, users have become increasingly aware of potential unfair approaches to pricing policy within the service. Therefore the Cabinet Member is asked to approve a revised scale of fees and charges as detailed in Appendix 1 and to approve a process for the withdrawal of the Bonus Card as detailed in Appendix 2. These actions form the first phase of the harmonisation exercise in October 2010 with Phase 2 scheduled to be completed in June 2011.

b. Not Recommended – Not to harmonise fees & charges at this time and continue with inherited pricing arrangements.

11.0 Overview of Year One and Term One Issues

- 11.1 N/A

12.0 Access to Information

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

Name: Jon Winkle

Designation: Service Support Officer (Marketing & Intelligence)

Tel No: 01270 685949

Email: jon.winkle@cheshireeast.gov.uk

This page is intentionally left blank

Leisure Facilities

Mid-Year Pricing Review 2010/11

Swimming Pool Activities

Description	VAT Rate	Current Price	Stepped Harmonisation	% Change	Avg	Comments
Swimming Adult						Options Discount Available
Congleton Area	s	£3.70	£3.60	-2.70%	5.50%	Remove Bonus Card
Crewe & Nantwich Area	s	£3.40	£3.60	5.88%		
Macclesfield Area	s	£3.00	£3.40	13.33%		
Swimming Junior/OAP						
Congleton Area	s	£2.50	£2.50	0.00%	4.78%	Options Discount Available
Crewe & Nantwich Area	s	£2.30	£2.40	4.35%		Options Discount Available
Macclesfield Area	s	£2.00	£2.20	10.00%		Options Discount Available
Swimming Under 3						
Congleton Area	s	Free	Free	0.00%	0.00%	
Crewe & Nantwich Area	s	Free	Free	0.00%		
Macclesfield Area	s	Free	Free	0.00%		
Swimming Family Swim - Minimum 1, Maximum 2 adults & Minimum 2, Maximum 3 Juniors						
Congleton Area	s	£10.20	£10.00	-1.96%	3.78%	Removal of Bonus Card
Crewe & Nantwich Area	s	£8.50	£9.00	5.88%		
Macclesfield Area	s	£8.10	£8.70	7.41%		
Spectator						
Congleton Area	s	£0.60	£0.70	16.67%	-1.01%	Rarely used
Crewe & Nantwich Area	s	£0.60	£0.70	16.67%		Rarely used
Macclesfield Area	s	£1.10	£0.70	-36.36%		Rarely used
School Swim - Primary School						
Congleton Area	e	£0.50	£0.80	60.00%	23.03%	
Crewe & Nantwich Area	e	£1.20	£1.20	0.00%		
Macclesfield Area	e	£1.10	£1.20	9.09%		
School Swim - Secondary School						
Congleton Area	e	£1.20	£1.20	0.00%	0.00%	
Crewe & Nantwich Area	e	£1.20	£1.20	0.00%		
Macclesfield Area	e	£1.20	£1.20	0.00%		
School Swim - Instruction Per Hour						
Congleton Area	e	£12.30	£16.00	30.08%	10.45%	Cost of Instructor
Crewe & Nantwich Area	e	£15.80	£16.00	1.27%		Cost of Instructor
Macclesfield Area	e	£16.00	£16.00	0.00%		Cost of Instructor
Swimming Lessons Junior Stages 1-2						Options Discount Available
Congleton Area	e	£4.20	£4.50	7.14%	3.22%	Per lesson equivalent
Crewe & Nantwich Area	e	£4.39	£4.50	2.51%		Per lesson equivalent
Macclesfield Area	e	£4.50	£4.50	0.00%		Per lesson equivalent
Swimming Lessons Junior Stages 3+						Options Discount Available
Congleton Area	e	£4.20	£4.30	2.38%	0.77%	Per lesson equivalent
Crewe & Nantwich Area	e	£4.12	£4.30	4.37%		Per lesson equivalent
Macclesfield Area	e	£4.50	£4.30	-4.44%		Per lesson equivalent
Swimming Lessons Adult						Options Discount Available
Congleton Area	e	£4.80	£4.80	0.00%	1.78%	Per lesson equivalent
Crewe & Nantwich Area	e	£4.65	£4.80	3.23%		Per lesson equivalent
Macclesfield Area	e	£4.70	£4.80	2.13%		Per lesson equivalent
Parent & Baby Swim						
Congleton Area	e	£4.20	£4.10	-2.38%	2.65%	
Crewe & Nantwich Area	e	£3.40	£3.40	0.00%		
Macclesfield Area	e	£2.90	£3.20	10.34%		
Aquafit (45mins)						Options Discount Available
Congleton Area	e	£3.60	£3.90	8.33%	2.00%	Harmonised length of session
Crewe & Nantwich Area	e	£4.20	£4.20	0.00%		Harmonised length of session
Macclesfield Area	e	£4.30	£4.20	-2.33%		Harmonised length of session
Pool Hire (Main Pools) Minimum Basic Hire Rate, Casual Use - Equipment/Additional Staff Extra						
Crewe	s	£80.90	£77.00	-4.82%	N/A	
Nantwich	s	£80.90	£77.00	-4.82%		
Sandbach	s	£58.70	£60.00	2.21%		
Alsager	s	£58.70	£64.00	9.03%		
Congleton	s	£58.70	£64.00	9.03%		
Poynton	s	£55.50	£60.00	8.11%		
Wilmslow	s	£58.70	£64.00	9.03%		
Knutsford	s	£53.50	£60.00	12.15%		
Macclesfield	s	£104.20	£104.00	-0.19%		Larger Pool
Pool Hire (Main Pools) Minimum Basic Hire Rate, Regular Use - Equipment/Additional Staff Extra						
Crewe	e	£64.72	£61.60	-4.82%	N/A	
Nantwich	e	£64.72	£61.60	-4.82%		
Sandbach	e	£46.96	£48.00	2.21%		
Alsager	e	£46.96	£51.20	9.03%		
Congleton	e	£46.96	£51.20	9.03%		
Poynton	e	£44.40	£48.00	8.11%		
Wilmslow	e	£46.96	£51.20	9.03%		
Knutsford	e	£42.80	£48.00	12.15%		
Macclesfield	e	£83.36	£83.20	-0.19%		Larger Pool
Pool Hire (Learner Pools) Minimum Basic Hire Rate, Casual Use - Equipment/Additional Staff Extra						
Crewe	s	£50.50	£48.00	-4.95%	N/A	
Nantwich	s	£50.50	£48.00	-4.95%		
Congleton	s	N/A	£30.00	N/A		New Line
Wilmslow	s	N/A	£30.00	N/A		New Line
Macclesfield	s	£59.20	£59.00	-0.34%		Larger Pool

Sports Hall Activities

Description		VAT Rate	Current Price	Stepped Harmonisation	% Change	Avg	Comments
Badminton Adult Peak				*			Options Discount Available
Congleton Area	s	£9.40	£9.50	1.06%	3.03%		
Crewe & Nantwich Area	s	£9.40	£9.50	1.06%			
Macclesfield Area	s	£8.60	£9.20	6.98%			
Badminton Adult Off Peak							
Congleton Area	s	£8.00	£8.00	0.00%	4.76%		
Crewe & Nantwich Area	s	£7.00	£7.50	7.14%			
Macclesfield Area	s	£7.00	£7.50	7.14%			
Badminton Junior (Off-Peak Only)							
Congleton Area	s	£6.10	£6.10	0.00%	3.09%		
Crewe & Nantwich Area	s	£5.90	£5.90	0.00%			
Macclesfield Area	s	£5.40	£5.90	9.26%			
Badminton Family (Off-Peak Only)							
Congleton Area	s	£7.60	£7.60	0.00%	4.17%		
Crewe & Nantwich Area	s	£6.40	£6.80	6.25%			
Macclesfield Area	s	£6.40	£6.80	6.25%			
Squash Adult Peak				*			Options Discount Available
Congleton Area	s	£7.10	£7.20	1.41%	3.02%		
Crewe & Nantwich Area	s	£7.10	£7.20	1.41%		No Squash Courts	
Macclesfield Area	s	£6.40	£6.80	6.25%			
Squash Adult Off Peak							
Congleton Area	s	£5.90	£6.10	3.39%	3.39%		
Crewe & Nantwich Area	s	£5.90	£6.10	3.39%		No Squash Courts	
Macclesfield Area	s	£5.90	£6.10	3.39%			
Squash Junior (Off-Peak Only)							
Congleton Area	s	£4.50	£4.70	4.44%	4.44%		
Crewe & Nantwich Area	s	£4.50	£4.70	4.44%		No Squash Courts	
Macclesfield Area	s	£4.50	£4.70	4.44%			
Squash Family (Off-Peak Only)							
Congleton Area	s	£5.30	£5.50	3.77%	3.77%		
Crewe & Nantwich Area	s	£5.30	£5.50	3.77%		No Squash Courts	
Macclesfield Area	s	£5.30	£5.50	3.77%			
Table Tennis Adult				*			Options Discount Available
Congleton Area	s	£6.30	£5.00	-20.63%	2.97%		Very low demand for activity
Crewe & Nantwich Area	s	£3.30	£4.20	27.27%		low increase recommended	
Macclesfield Area	s	£4.40	£4.50	2.27%		to stimulate use	
Table Tennis Junior (Off Peak Only)							
Congleton Area	s	£4.20	£3.00	-28.57%	3.27%		Very low demand for activity
Crewe & Nantwich Area	s	£2.20	£2.80	27.27%		low increase recommended	
Macclesfield Area	s	£2.70	£3.00	11.11%		to stimulate use	
Table Tennis Family (Off Peak Only)							
Congleton Area	s	£4.80	£4.00	-16.67%	0.16%		Very low demand for activity
Crewe & Nantwich Area	s	£3.50	£3.80	8.57%		low increase recommended	
Macclesfield Area	s	£3.50	£3.80	8.57%		to stimulate use	

Sports Hall Hire

Description	VAT Rate	Current Price	Stepped Harmonisation	% Change	Avg	Comments
Full Hall - Adult						
Congleton Area	s	£47.20	£47.00	-0.42%	3.19%	
Crewe & Nantwich Area	s	£45.20	£46.00	1.77%		
Macclesfield Area	s	£42.50	£46.00	8.24%		Excludes MLC (Larger Hall)
Full Hall - Junior (Off Peak Only)						
Congleton Area	s	£31.00	£32.00	3.23%	3.23%	
Crewe & Nantwich Area	s	£31.00	£32.00	3.23%		
Macclesfield Area	s	£31.00	£32.00	3.23%		Excludes MLC (Larger Hall)
Half Hall - Adult						
Congleton Area	s	£30.00	£30.00	0.00%	3.16%	
Crewe & Nantwich Area	s	£27.40	£30.00	9.49%		
Macclesfield Area	s	£30.00	£30.00	0.00%		Excludes MLC (Larger Hall)
Macclesfield LC	s	£43.00	£45.00	4.65%		
Half Hall - Junior (Off Peak Only)						
Congleton Area	s	£20.00	£21.00	5.00%	5.00%	
Crewe & Nantwich Area	s	£20.00	£21.00	5.00%		
Macclesfield Area	s	£20.00	£21.00	5.00%		Excludes MLC (Larger Hall)
Macclesfield LC	s	£31.00	£32.00	3.23%		
Minor Hall - Adult (Where Available)						
Congleton Area	s	£27.80	£27.00	-2.88%	3.41%	
Crewe & Nantwich Area	s	£22.10	£25.00	13.12%		
Macclesfield Area	s	£22.10	£22.10	0.00%		No Minor Halls
Minor Hall - Adult Off-Peak (Where Available)						
Congleton Area	s	£23.10	£24.00	3.90%	3.90%	
Crewe & Nantwich Area	s	£23.10	£24.00	3.90%		New line
Macclesfield Area	s	£23.10	£24.00	3.90%		No Minor Halls
Minor Hall - Junior Off-Peak Only (Where Available)						
Congleton Area	s	£17.80	£18.50	3.93%	3.93%	
Crewe & Nantwich Area	s	£17.80	£18.50	3.93%		New line
Macclesfield Area	s	£17.80	£18.50	3.93%		No Minor Halls

Health & Fitness

Description	VAT Rate	Current Price	Stepped Harmonisation	% Change	Avg	Comments
Fitness Class General Adult						Options Discount Available
Congleton Area	e	£3.20	£3.60	12.50%	6.87%	Excludes yoga/spinning/pilates and other specialist classes
Crewe & Nantwich Area	e	£3.70	£4.00	8.11%		
Macclesfield Area	e	£4.40	£4.40	0.00%		
Membership Pricing (Harmonised)						
Annual Single DD	s	£28.00	£28.00	0.00%	0.00%	Membership pricing has already been harmonised as part of new membership scheme rollout on 1st April 2010
Annual Single Cash	s	£308.00	£308.00	0.00%		
Annual Joint DD	s	£50.00	£50.00	0.00%		
Annual Joint Cash	s	£550.00	£550.00	0.00%		
Annual Options DD	s	£19.00	£19.00	0.00%		Prices not recommended for further increase due to current market forces.
Annual Options Cash	s	£209.00	£209.00	0.00%		
Monthly Single DD	s	£35.00	£35.00	0.00%		
Monthly Joint DD	s	£55.00	£55.00	0.00%		
Monthly Options DD	s	£24.00	£24.00	0.00%		
Options Annual Fee	s	£5.00	£5.00	0.00%		
Lost Card Fee	s	£5.00	£5.00	0.00%		
Fitness Suite Casual						Options Discount Available
Congleton Area	s	£5.50	£5.50	0.00%	0.00%	Already harmonised and linked to membership pricing
Crewe & Nantwich Area	s	£5.50	£5.50	0.00%		
Macclesfield Area	s	£5.50	£5.50	0.00%		
Fitness Suite Induction						Options Discount Available
Congleton Area	e	£15.00	£15.00	0.00%	0.00%	Already harmonised and linked to membership pricing
Crewe & Nantwich Area	e	£15.00	£15.00	0.00%		
Macclesfield Area	e	£15.00	£15.00	0.00%		

Outdoor Activities

Description	VAT Rate	Current Price	Stepped Harmonisation	% Change	Avg	Comments
Astroturf - Winter Adult Full Pitch						
Congleton Area	s	£60.20	£61.20	1.66%	3.06%	
Crewe & Nantwich Area	s	£60.00	£61.20	2.00%		
Macclesfield Area	s	£58.00	£61.20	5.52%		
Astroturf - Winter Junior Full Pitch						
Congleton Area	s	£47.70	£47.70	0.00%	3.30%	
Crewe & Nantwich Area	s	£43.10	£45.70	6.03%		
Macclesfield Area	s	£44.00	£45.70	3.86%		
Astroturf - Winter Adult 1/3 Pitch						
Congleton Area	s	£33.60	£38.00	13.10%	5.45%	
Crewe & Nantwich Area	s	£36.80	£38.00	3.26%		
Macclesfield Area	s	£40.00	£40.00	0.00%		
Astroturf - Winter Junior 1/3 Pitch						
Congleton Area	s	£23.10	£24.00	3.90%	5.45%	
Crewe & Nantwich Area	s	£22.20	£24.00	8.11%		
Macclesfield Area	s	£23.00	£24.00	4.35%		
Astroturf - Summer Adult Full Pitch						
Congleton Area	s	£55.00	£55.00	0.00%	5.33%	
Crewe & Nantwich Area	s	£48.30	£52.00	7.66%		
Macclesfield Area	s	£48.00	£52.00	8.33%		
Astroturf - Summer Junior Full Pitch						
Congleton Area	s	£42.50	£40.00	-5.88%	4.75%	
Crewe & Nantwich Area	s	£31.60	£35.00	10.76%		
Macclesfield Area	s	£32.00	£35.00	9.38%		
Astroturf - Summer Adult 1/3 Pitch						
Congleton Area	s	£28.30	£33.00	16.61%	4.04%	
Crewe & Nantwich Area	s	£32.60	£33.00	1.23%		
Macclesfield Area	s	£35.00	£33.00	-5.71%		
Astroturf - Summer Junior 1/3 Pitch						
Congleton Area	s	£17.90	£19.50	8.94%	5.96%	
Crewe & Nantwich Area	s	£17.50	£19.50	11.43%		
Macclesfield Area	s	£20.00	£19.50	-2.50%		
Tennis Peak						
Congleton Area	s	£5.70	£5.30	-7.02%	-0.95%	Options Discount Available Slight reduction proposed to stimulate usage
Crewe & Nantwich Area	s	£5.30	£5.30	0.00%		
Macclesfield Area	s	£4.80	£5.00	4.17%		
Tennis Adult Off-Peak						
Congleton Area	s	£4.00	£3.80	-5.00%	0.59%	Slight reduction proposed to stimulate usage
Crewe & Nantwich Area	s	£3.40	£3.80	11.76%		
Macclesfield Area	s	£4.00	£3.80	-5.00%		
Tennis Junior (Off-Peak Only)						
Congleton Area	s	£3.90	£3.00	-23.08%	-5.24%	Slight reduction proposed to stimulate usage
Crewe & Nantwich Area	s	£2.30	£3.00	30.43%		
Macclesfield Area	s	£3.90	£3.00	-23.08%		
Tennis Family (Off-Peak Only)						
Congleton Area	s	£4.60	£4.00	-13.04%	2.42%	Slight reduction proposed to stimulate usage
Crewe & Nantwich Area	s	£3.00	£4.00	33.33%		
Macclesfield Area	s	£4.60	£4.00	-13.04%		

Grass Soccer Pitches

Grass Soccer Pitches

Prices to be reviewed and harmonised for phase 2 (June 2010), pitches are already invoiced for 2010-11 season
new prices to be available for 2011-12 season invoice process

Misc

Description	VAT Rate	Current Price	Stepped Harmonisation	% Change	Avg	Comments
Sauna						
Congleton Area	s	£4.80	£5.10	6.25%	2.08%	Options Discount Available
Crewe & Nantwich Area	s	£5.30	£5.30	0.00%		
Macclesfield Area	s	£3.70	£3.70	0.00%		

Facility Specific Details

Description	VAT Rate	Current Price	Stepped Harmonisation	% Change	Avg	Comments
Cumberland Arena - Athletics						
Track and In-Field Meetings & Club Hire						
Weekdays Adult per hour	s	£52.60	£54.00	2.66%	N/A	
Weekdays Junior per hour	s	£34.70	£35.70	2.88%	N/A	
Weekends Adult per hour	s	£63.10	£64.70	2.54%	N/A	
Weekends Junior per hour	s	£44.10	£45.10	2.27%	N/A	
Bank Holidays per hour	s	£89.30	£91.30	2.24%	N/A	
Macclesfield - Athletics						
Track Adult	s	£3.20	£3.30	3.12%	N/A	
Track Junior	s	£1.70	£1.80	5.88%	N/A	
Track Club (per hour)	s	£37.30	£39.00	4.56%	N/A	Consider aligning with
School (per hour)	s	£29.60	£30.50	3.04%	N/A	Cumberland Arena price model
Athletics Meet (Per Hour)	s	£46.10	Negotiable			In common with Cumberland
Cumberland Arena - Football						
11-a-side						
Winter Peak Adult	s	£64.10	£65.70	2.50%	N/A	
Winter Peak Junior	s	£44.10	£45.20	2.49%	N/A	
Winter Off-Peak Adult	s	£43.10	£44.20	2.55%	N/A	
Winter Off-Peak Junior	s	£26.30	£27.00	2.66%	N/A	
Summer Peak Adult	s	£54.70	£56.10	2.56%	N/A	
Summer Peak Junior	s	£35.70	£36.60	2.52%	N/A	
Summer Off-Peak Adult	s	£44.10	£45.20	2.49%	N/A	
Summer Off-Peak Junior	s	£24.10	£24.70	2.49%	N/A	
7-a-side						
Winter Peak Adult	s	£41.00	£42.00	2.44%	N/A	
Winter Peak Junior	s	£23.20	£23.80	2.59%	N/A	
Winter Off-Peak Adult	s	£30.50	£31.30	2.62%	N/A	
Winter Off-Peak Junior	s	£14.70	£15.10	2.72%	N/A	
Summer Peak Adult	s	£33.60	£34.50	2.68%	N/A	
Summer Peak Junior	s	£17.90	£18.40	2.79%	N/A	
Summer Off-Peak Adult	s	£26.30	£27.00	2.66%	N/A	
Summer Off-Peak Junior	s	£13.10	£13.40	2.29%	N/A	
Grass Soccer Pitches - Cumberland & Razzar						
Main Pitch Casual	s	£78.80	£80.80	2.54%	N/A	AA Grade
Main Pitch Regular	s	£63.10	£64.70	2.54%	N/A	AA Grade
Main Pitch Reg Floodlit	s	£97.50	£99.90	2.46%	N/A	AA Grade
Razzar - Junior	s	£24.20	£24.80	2.48%	N/A	
Razzar - Adult	s	£41.50	£42.60	2.65%	N/A	B Grade

Malkins Bank Golf Course						
18 Hole Summer						
Weekend	s	£15.90	£16.30	2.52%	N/A	Suggested 2.5% increase only for Malkins Bank while awaiting the outcome of the management review process.
Weekend Junior	s	£8.50	£8.70	2.35%	N/A	
Weekday Adult	s	£13.30	£13.70	3.01%	N/A	
Weekday Junior	s	£6.60	£6.80	3.03%	N/A	
Weekday 60+ / Options	s	£9.00	£9.20	2.22%	N/A	
9 Hole Summer						
Weekend	s	£11.70	£12.00	2.56%	N/A	
Weekend Junior	s	£6.40	£6.60	3.12%	N/A	
Weekday Adult	s	£10.20	£10.50	2.94%	N/A	
Weekday Junior	s	£5.60	£5.80	3.57%	N/A	
Weekday 60+ / Options	s	£7.00	£7.20	2.86%	N/A	
Season Tickets (New Sales & Renewals Only)						
7 Day All	s	£487.00	£499.00	2.46%	N/A	Adults, Over 60s, Options
7 Day Junior	s	£130.90	£134.20	2.52%	N/A	
5 Day Adult	s	£382.30	£391.50	2.41%	N/A	
5 Day Junior	s	£99.50	£102.00	2.51%	N/A	
5 Day Over 60 / Options	s	£293.30	£300.80	2.56%	N/A	
Practice Ground						
One Hour	s	£3.20	£3.30	3.12%	N/A	
Society Booking Fee	s	£5.30	£5.40	1.89%	N/A	
18 Hole Winter						
Weekend	s	£16.00	£16.40	2.50%	N/A	
Weekend Junior	s	£6.40	£6.60	3.12%	N/A	
Weekday Adult	s	£13.00	£13.30	2.31%	N/A	
Weekday Junior	s	£6.10	£6.30	3.28%	N/A	
Weekday 60+ / Options	s	£7.70	£7.90	2.60%	N/A	
9 Hole Winter						
Weekend	s	£10.70	£11.00	2.80%	N/A	
Weekend Junior	s	£5.20	£5.40	3.85%	N/A	
Weekday Adult	s	£9.00	£9.30	3.33%	N/A	
Weekday Junior	s	£5.20	£5.40	3.85%	N/A	
Weekday 60+ / Options	s	£6.60	£6.80	3.03%	N/A	

Report



Date: 13/9/10

Subject: Appendix 2 - Congleton Area Bonus Cards

Overview

In April 2010, a new membership scheme for health and fitness (Everybody) and concessionary discounts (Options) was introduced across all leisure facilities which replaced former comparable membership schemes which were operating from legacy authorities. The new membership schemes allow residents to use any Cheshire East Council facility as part of their membership fee.

While there is now a harmonised membership fee, regardless of which leisure centre is being used, there are still a number of differences in pricing for casual pay-as-you-go use and a loyalty scheme which is still in operation in the Congleton area called the Bonus Card.

Issues

The Bonus Card has two key elements; it operates both as a loyalty card and a discount card. There are around 5000 live Bonus Card holders paying between £5-10 for their card fee on an annual basis.

Loyalty Card

Loyalty Cards in the retail sector reward customers who regularly use the same outlet as well as providing a wealth of data about customer usage profiles. Customers in the former Congleton area facilities continue to gain and spend loyalty points at facilities in those areas, however as the leisure management system database is not shared across all three facilities, customers cannot transfer these points to facilities outside of the Congleton area. This lack of a standard approach is now beginning to cause some issues where customers are visiting facilities outside of the former Congleton area with the expectation of being allowed to continue using their Bonus Card in these centres. The potential data available from the loyalty scheme in terms of monitoring usage profiles is also not being used.

Discount Card

The Bonus Card was introduced a number of years ago as a method for regular customers to gain a further discount on the published fees and charges with a "Bonus Card" rate for all customers of around 40-50p below the approved fees & charges in return for annual purchase of the card itself (around £10).

While there is an income element to the sale of the cards, the ongoing discounts more than outweigh the income from this card and therefore reduce the annual income potential for each centre when compared to non-card holders. Similarly with the issues relating to loyalty points, customer expectation is that the discount element of the card can be used at other leisure facilities outside of the former Congleton area where pricing is already set at a lower level which causes confusion to both staff and customers when these cards are presented.

Report

The discount element of the card also rewards casual use which then competes with the Everybody membership scheme which is designed to promote more frequent use and long-term health and fitness commitment, therefore the Bonus Card scheme is being seen by customers as a more attractive option than the new scheme and is potentially reducing the number of Everybody membership sales in the Congleton area.

Proposal

A phased discontinuation of the Bonus Card is proposed which will be introduced alongside a phased review of fees and charges in October. As the Congleton area generally has a higher level of casual pricing, a harmonisation exercise in October would reduce certain fees which would minimise potential negative customer reaction which is likely purely as a result of removing the card.

Phase 1 – 1/10/10

End sale of new Bonus Cards at all Congleton area leisure centres, backed up by a communications plan informing customers of the new options available to them (Everybody and Everybody Options).

Phase 2 – 1/10/10

Write to live Bonus Card holders with a final date for 'cashing in' of loyalty points balances in June 2011 and confirming end of the scheme.

Full Timescale

01/08/10 – Decision required for scheme withdrawal

6/08/10 – Staff briefing note circulated

16/08/10 – Customer notices produced in centres, email to available addresses

1/10/10 – New card sales end, staff encouraged to up-sell other membership options

1/10/10 – 31/10/10 – Write to customers informing of points balance and deadline for cashing in.

31/6/10 – Loyalty points to be cashed in by this date, no new points issued from this point.

1/10/11 – Final date for using cards (discount element only) purchased up to end of September 2010.

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Cabinet Member for Safer & Stronger Communities

Date of Meeting: 13th September 2010
Report of: Strategic Director - Places
Subject/Title: Housing Fire Safety Protocol

1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 This report outlines the local authority's duty to enforce fire safety in residential properties and recommends that a protocol be agreed between Cheshire East and Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service to aid co-ordination of the actions of both bodies and promote fire safety.

2.0 Recommendation

- 2.1 That the Housing Fire Safety Protocol appended to this report be agreed between Cheshire East Council and Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service to aid co-ordination of the actions of both bodies and promote fire safety.

3.0 Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 Cheshire East has a legal duty to take enforcement action where a Category 1 hazard assessed under the Housing Act 2004 is present in a residential property, including hazards related to fire. Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service also have a legal duty to ensure fire safety in common areas of multiple-occupied housing. The protocol sets out the lead responsibilities of each authority and joint working arrangements. Failure to agree joint working arrangements could lead to tenants of privately-rented properties and their neighbours being vulnerable to fire risks.

4.0 Wards Affected

- 4.1 All wards.

5.0 Local Ward Members

- 5.1 All local ward members.

6.0 Policy Implications including - Climate change - Health

- 6.1 There is a greater risk of fire in a house in multiple occupation or a flat. The health risks of fires is well documented, with a high risk of fire leading to death. The reduction of fire risks will lead to reduced pressure on accident and emergency departments and the risk of fatality.

7.0 Financial Implications

7.1 There are no financial implications.

8.0 Legal Implications (Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)

8.1 The Council has the statutory duties in relation to fire safety which are referred to in this report, and the Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service has its own statutory duties. Whilst there is no statutory duty to enter into a protocol with another statutory body to improve fire safety, the power to do so is outlined below, and it is good practice to have a protocol between the Council and the Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service to promote co-ordination of the way in which their respective duties are carried out.

8.2 The power to enter into a protocol is contained within section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 which states: *"Without prejudice to any powers exercisable apart from this section but subject to the provisions of this Act and any other enactment passed before or after this Act, a local authority shall have power to do any thing (whether or not involving the expenditure, borrowing or lending of money or the acquisition or disposal of any property or rights) which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to, the discharge of any of their functions."*

9.0 Risk Management

9.1 Without a protocol in place, there is a risk that the two authorities may not be able to optimise co-ordination of their statutory duties, potentially placing tenants at risk. Putting the proposed protocol in place mitigates that risk.

10.0 Background and Options

10.1 The Housing Act 2004 and the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 imposed an analogous duty on local authorities and fire and rescue authorities to enforce fire safety provisions within houses in multiple occupation.

10.2 A house in multiple occupation is defined as:

- An entire house or flat, which is let to three or more tenants who form two or more households and who share a kitchen, bathroom or toilet.
- A house or flats which have been converted entirely into bed-sits or other non-self contained accommodation and which are let to three or more tenants who form two or more households and who share a kitchen, bathroom or toilet facilities.
- A converted house, which contains one or more, flats which are not wholly self-contained (i.e. the flat does not contain within it a kitchen, bathroom and toilet) and which is occupied by three or more tenants who form two or more households occupy.

- A building, which has been converted entirely into self-contained flats if the conversion did not meet the standards of the 1991 Building Regulations and more than one third of the flats, are on short-term tenancies.
- 10.3 There are 25 licensed houses in multiple occupation in Cheshire East, and approximately 150 non-licensable houses in multiple occupation.
- 10.4 Local authorities have a legal duty to enforce minimum housing standards under the Housing Act 2004 utilising the Housing Health and Safety Rating System, and licence certain houses in multiple occupation under Part 2 of the Housing Act 2004. The statutory licensing scheme applies to houses in multiple occupation of 3 or more storeys where 5 or more tenants form at least 2 households, and share a kitchen, bathroom or toilet facilities.
- 10.5 Fire and rescue authorities have a legal duty to enforce the Fire Safety Order in the common areas of all residential accommodation not forming a single private dwelling, including houses in multiple occupation.
- 10.6 Because responsibility for enforcing fire safety legislation overlaps between the authorities, the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health and the Chief Fire Officers Association recommend that a protocol is established at a local level to clarify authorities' lead roles.
- 10.7 Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service have worked with Cheshire East Council and the three other local authorities in Cheshire to develop a protocol to ensure the efficient use of resources, appropriate review and monitoring arrangements, and to identify separate areas of inspection and enforcement and provide for urgent or complex requests for assistance from either party. It seeks to provide all parties, as far as practical, with a measure of confidence that they are discharging their respective duties under their respective legislation.
- 10.8 The protocol clarifies which authority has the lead role for enforcement in different types of properties, and establishes arrangements for consultation between authorities on fire risks and enforcement action to be taken against owners of non-compliant residential properties.
- 10.9 The local authority has the lead role for inspecting and enforcing the Housing Act 2004 in single-occupied residential properties, shared housing, houses in multiple occupation, and all self contained flats in its boundaries.
- 10.10 The fire and rescue authority has the lead role for inspecting and enforcing the Fire Safety Order in hostels, bed and breakfast accommodation, hotels and all multiple-occupied accommodation owned by the local authority.
- 10.11 The lead role for inspecting and enforcing fire safety legislation in premises with mixed commercial and residential provision and sheltered housing will be determined based on the individual nature of the property and by agreement between the authorities.

10.12 The local authority has a duty under section 10 of the Housing Act 2004 to consult the fire and rescue authority, wherever practicable, before issuing a licence for a house in multiple occupation or taking enforcement action where a fire hazard is identified in any house in multiple occupation. The protocol clarifies how that consultation will be carried out.

11.0 Access to Information

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

Name:	Karen Whitehead
Designation:	Private Sector Housing Manager, Planning & Housing
Tel No:	01270 686653
Email:	karen.whitehead@cheshireeast.gov.uk



Subject: The Housing Act 2004-Licensing and Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) and other Houses Regulations 2006 (S.I. 373), Protocol between Local Housing Authorities and Fire and Rescue Authorities to improve Fire Safety.

Outline of Agreement: Housing Fire Safety protocols between Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service and Halton Unitary Authority, Warrington Unitary Authority, Cheshire East Unitary Authority and Cheshire West and Chester Unitary Authority.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This protocol establishes the principles and describes the joint working arrangements between Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service and Halton Unitary Authority, Warrington Unitary Authority, Cheshire East Unitary Authority and Cheshire West and Chester Unitary Authority, (collectively described as the Local Housing Authority, or LHA as appropriate) to deliver the objective of improved fire safety in relevant types of housing stocks where their legislation may apply. It provides a framework for detailed local arrangements between the two parties and their respective Regional and National Bodies. All parties within this protocol will adopt in entirety the guidance contained within the LACORS Housing Fire Safety "Guidance on fire safety provisions for certain types of existing housing" document and subsequent amendments.
- 1.2 The enacting of the Housing Act 2004 and the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 has brought about similar duties on each Authority to enforce certain fire safety provisions within such housing.
- 1.3 The protocol seeks to promote the efficient use of resources, appropriate review and monitoring arrangements, to identify separate areas of inspection and enforcement and provide for urgent or complex requests for assistance from either party. It seeks to provide all parties, as far as practical, with a measure of confidence that they are discharging their respective duties under their respective legislation.
- 1.4 Lead enforcing roles for each party are outlined in Section 2 of the protocol. The collaborative working arrangements as detailed in this protocol are recognised as supporting the Government expectations regarding partnerships. It is also acknowledged that the protocol will enable both authorities to promote fire and other safety provisions in a wider range and greater number of premises than if they had acted independently or not undertaken joint inspections.
- 1.5 Nothing in this protocol shall be considered as creating a contractual relationship, a contract of employment or a relationship of principal and agent between parties and shall not add in any way to the existing statutory duties of the parties. No party to this agreement shall hold itself as being authorised to enter any contract on behalf of any other party or in any way bind any other party to the performance, variation, release or discharge of any obligation otherwise than in circumstances expressly or implicitly permitted by this agreement.

1.6 The signatories to this protocol are shown in Appendix A.

2. General

2.1 The Housing Act 2004 (HA2004) and associated legislation introduces:

- A widening of the types of residential premises typically covered by the Act
- A new definition of HMO
- The mandatory licensing for HMOs of three storeys and above [with 5 or more occupants] with conditions (including fire safety) prescribed
- A new system for assessing housing conditions based upon the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)
- New enforcement powers

2.2 The aims of the Act are to:

- Protect all occupants and their visitors
- Identify and prioritise higher risk HMOs
- Target resources to those properties containing category one hazards as identified by the application of HHSRS
- Ensure only 'fit and proper' landlords with adequate management standards are licensed for HMOs

2.3 It is a requirement of the Act to have due regard to enforcement guidance as produced by the Department of Communities and Local Government (formerly Office of the Deputy Prime Minister)

3. Enforcement Powers

3.1 The table below indicates the lead enforcing authority Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service (CFRS) or the relevant Local Housing Authority for the different property types 1-6.

No.	Description of property type	Enforcing Authority
1.	Single dwellings, including shared housing (fire risk assessment not required)	LHA
2.	All HMOs whether or not subject to mandatory, selective or additional licensing	LHA
3.	All self contained flats, whether purpose built or converted	LHA
4.	Premises with mixed commercial and associated residential accommodation and sheltered housing	CFRS or LHA
5.	Hostels/B&B/hotels	CFRS
6.	All multiple-occupied accommodation that is owned or managed by the LHA	CFRS

3.2 The table provides a general guide-**it is not definitive** and certain premises will fall under more than one category. In addition there is a requirement for the Local Housing Authority under Section 10 of the HA2004, wherever practicable, to consult the Fire Authority before:

- Discretionary notification regarding the issue of HMO licences.
- Taking action to deal with fire hazards in common parts of HMOs or buildings containing flats.

3.3 In addition to the powers detailed above, the LHA will authorise, utilising Part 7 section 239 of the Housing Act 2004, Powers of Entry into individual flats within HMOs to specific officers within Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service. The requirements are detailed within section 239 of the Housing Act 2004. The purpose of the delegation of powers will allow CFRS to gather information relating to fire safety within the flats and also collect certain information for the LHA to assist the LHA in their duties under the HA2004. However, unless entry is for the purposes of ascertaining whether an offence has been committed, the service shall give 24 hours notice to the occupier.

4. Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP)

4.1 Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service's IRMP recognises that some of the very highest risks to life from fire are included within the HMO sector.

4.2 Subject to requirements of the IRMP (which by its nature is a dynamic and evolving programme) Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service recognises the need for and will adopt a proactive and supporting role with the relevant Local Housing Authority to address and reduce the risk to life as well as maximising community safety in relevant premises.

4.3 For the purpose of this directive, relevant Local Housing Authority departments are accepted as the lead Authority with responsibility for dealing with HMOs.

4.4 Wherever possible this will be in conjunction with Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service where the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (RRFSO) applies (i.e. not for single domestic dwellings, shared housing etc).

5. Houses or Flats in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)

5.1 Definition: **The Local Authority Authorised Officer will ultimately determine whether any premises are an HMO or not.** Under the provisions of the Housing Act 2004, if a person lets a property, which is one of the following types, it is deemed to be an HMO:

- An entire house or flat, which is let to three or more tenants who form two or more households and who share a kitchen, bathroom or toilet.
- A house or flats which have been converted entirely into bed-sits or other non-self contained accommodation and which are let to three or more tenants who form two or more households and who share a kitchen, bathroom or toilet facilities.
- A converted house, which contains one or more, flats which are not wholly self-contained (i.e. the flat does not contain within it a kitchen, bathroom and toilet) and which is occupied by three or more tenants who form two or more households occupy.
- A building, which has been converted entirely into self-contained flats if the conversion did not meet the standards of the 1991 Building Regulations and more than one third of the flats, are on short-term tenancies.

5.2 In order to be a HMO the property must be used as the tenants only or main residence and it should be used solely or mainly to house tenants. In addition, rent should be payable in at least one of the units.

5.3 Licensing Schemes

Under the Housing Act 2004 Part 2 mandatory licensing scheme an HMO must be licensed if it is in a building of three or more storeys and is occupied by five or more tenants in two or more households who share a kitchen, bathroom or toilet facilities.

5.4 The Local Authority also has discretionary powers under Part 3 to widen the remit of licensing to include smaller HMOs, depending on local conditions.

5.5 Relevant application packs for owners are available from Local Authorities. On receipt of satisfactorily completed application forms the Local Authority will process the application. The applicant will then be assessed against pre-set criteria to determine whether or not they are a sufficiently fit and proper responsible person to own or manage an HMO.

5.6 The Local Authority will also determine whether suitable 'management arrangements' have been made. Matters to be considered include:

- A system for tenants to report defects and emergencies
- Arrangements to respond to such requests
- A process for dealing with anti-social behaviour
- Arrangements for periodic inspections and repairs
- Adequate funding for and competence of the owner/manager

Licence conditions include such matters as:

- Gas Safety Certificates (where necessary)
- The safety of electrical appliances
- The maintenance of the condition of suitable furniture
- The installation and maintenance of smoke alarms and any fire alarm system
- The supply of tenancy agreements to all tenants within 28 days

5.7 Licences may be refused or revoked; in addition interim and final management orders may be made or served by the Local Authority in certain prescribed circumstances. These orders transfer short or long-term management of the premises to the Local Authority.

6 Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (RRFSO)

Article 42 of the RRFSO require Local Authorities to ensure that the Fire Authority for the area has the opportunity to make suitable representations before any licence is issued.

7. Consultations

7.1 Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service will be formally consulted regarding plans for HMO premises of 3 storeys or greater in height OR in any HMO where a Category 1 or Category 2 Fire hazard under the Housing Health & Safety Rating System (HHSRS) (see section 11 below) is identified and they intend to carry out enforcement action. Any subsequent notices under Part 1 of the Housing Act will be issued by the Local Authority.

7.2 Section 10 of the Housing Act 2004 requires Local Housing Authorities to consult with the local Fire & Rescue Service before taking enforcement action in respect of a prescribed fire hazard in a HMO or in the common parts of building containing flats. The

form of the consultation is not prescribed. Where emergency measures are to be taken in relation to a fire hazard the Local Housing Authority must consult with the local Fire & Rescue Service before they take those measures as far as is practicable.

7.3 Single Occupancy & Shared Houses

At present there are no nationally agreed guides and standards available for such premises. Pending the availability of such documentation the signatories will assess such premises on a risk based approach. This agreed position will subsequently be reviewed when relevant nationally agreed guidance is subsequently available.

The Local Housing Authority may consult where category one fire hazards are present in these premises.

7.4 Other HMOs

- Three or more storeys
- Complex or hybrid HMOs
- Hostels

7.5 Existing procedures will be largely retained in the cases listed in 7.4. Such formal consultations will commence with an initial assessment of the proposals and plans by a Local Authority Housing Officer with suitable Fire Safety knowledge.

7.6 A report will then be forwarded to Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service with letting details as well as the fire safety measures. Two copies of the relevant building plans will accompany the report. Each plan should consist of a single line drawing, suitably annotated to show the fire safety measures deemed necessary to maintain a suitable means of escape in the event of fire.

7.7 Upon receipt of the report and plans, Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service will respond with their comments within 15 working days. Priority will be given, subject to suitable risk assessments, to higher risk premises. Such responses will indicate the suitability or otherwise of the proposals, together with any further recommendations. Both the Local Housing Authority report and Cheshire Fire & Rescue Services comments will be based upon the joint Local Authority / Fire & Rescue Service Housing Fire Precautions Guide; (LACORS). This guide has been previously accepted as best practice between Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service and each of the four Unitary Authorities within the Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service area (Halton Unitary Authority, Warrington Unitary Authority, Cheshire East Unitary Authority and Cheshire West and Chester Unitary Authority).

7.8 All partners within this protocol recognise the Home Stamp “Guide to Fire Safety and Security Protection in Multi-Occupied Residential Properties” as supplementary best practice guidance to the LACORS document. The Homestamp document enhances the practical advice for landlords on carrying out fire risk assessments. The safety solutions are offered in the form of detailed plans and appendices having regard to typical occupancy, ensuring that vulnerable occupants are better protected.

7.9 Meetings

Formal consultation between all authorities will take place in accordance with the requirements of the Housing Act 2004 Section 10 and the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 Article 46.

Arrangements will be put in place to facilitate the following:

7.9.1 Strategic level consultation

Formal meetings will be held at a strategic management level to review procedural and policy issues. This group will also monitor the outcomes of the protocol and will meet every twelve months.

7.9.2 Tactical Level

7.9.3 Emergency situations

This will result in direct consultation between the Local Housing Officer and the Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service Fire Safety Advisor or Manager, dependant upon the circumstances of the situation. Where possible this should be between an identified and named link officer from each authority.

7.9.4 Non-emergency situations

Meetings between the LHA and the Unitary CFP department will be held at least once every three months. This will ensure effective communication channels and that information sharing is maintained.

8. Joint Inspections

Such inspections will be arranged as far as practicable under each Authority's own enforcement powers under their respective legislation.

8.1 Fire Authority- Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 Under this legislation, the Fire Authority for the area concerned can inspect any place where the RRFSO applies, under **Article 27** and issue:

- Alterations Notices (**Article 29 paragraphs 1-5**).
- Enforcement Notices under (**Article 30 paragraphs 1-5**)
- Prohibition Notices (**Article 31 paragraphs 6-7**)

8.2 Alterations and Enforcement Notices can only be served on areas covered by the above order. Prohibition notices can potentially cover all areas in the premises.

8.3 Prior to such notices being issued to an HMO, Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service will contact the Local Authority.

8.4 Local Authority-Housing Act 2004, Enforcement Framework: Powers of Local Authority Housing Departments under the above Act:

- Serve an Improvement Notice requiring remedial works
- Make a Prohibition Order, closing the whole or part of a dwelling or restricting numbers
- Suspend these types of notice
- Take emergency action
- Serve a hazard awareness notice
- Make a Demolition Order
- Declare a clearance area
- Apply for an Interim Management Order
- Make a Final Management Order

8.5 Where emergency measures are needed in relation to a prescribed fire hazard in an HMO, the Local Housing Authority should consult Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service as far as is practicable. This procedure is detailed more fully in Section 10 of the Housing Act 2004.

8.6 The Local Housing Authority is **required** to consult with the Fire Authority if:

- A prescribed Category 1 fire hazard exists in a HMO or any other building containing one or more flats; and
- They intend to carry out enforcement action.
- Any such consultations will be initially by the most expedient method and will be confirmed in writing thereafter.

9.0 Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service Audits

Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service's audits are determined by the overall requirements of the Service's Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP). To accommodate the needs of the plan, HMO audits will be carried out as part of the Fire Authority's Targeted Risk Based Inspection Programme. Local Housing Authorities will be contacted prior to such themed audits to maximise efficiency and effectiveness of resources.

10.0 Complaints

Complaints - Third Party

Where either Authority has received complaints, or if unacceptable conditions have been reported, then the Local Housing Authority will utilise their inspection and enforcement powers.

10.1 Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service will assist in more complex fire related cases and where possible joint inspections will take place. Where this is not possible in urgent situations (i.e. out of hours) Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service will, if necessary, take steps to implement interim measures pending the Local Housing Authority's resolution.

10.2 All complaints against both third party and Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service personnel will be dealt with using laid down procedures contained within Service Orders.

10.3 Complaints against Local Housing Authority personnel will be dealt with using their own internal procedures.

11. Housing Health & Safety Rating System (HHSRS)

The HA1985 HMO fitness test has been replaced with an evidence-based national risk assessment process (HHSRS).

Local Authorities are obliged to base enforcement decisions for residential premises on these assessments.

Actions of Authorities will be based on three key considerations:

- The hazard rating as determined by HHSRS
- Any identified hazards above or below prescribed thresholds (Category 1 and 2).
- The most appropriate course of action to take to deal with the hazard.

11.1 The purpose of an HHSRS assessment is not to set a standard but to generate objective information in order to determine and make informed enforcement decisions.

Current technical guidance is contained in the Department of Communities and Local Government's February 2006 Housing Health & Safety Rating System Operating Guidance document.

11.2 HHSRS separately assesses twenty-nine categories (Appendix B) of housing health and safety hazards and provides a rating for each (including fire). It does not provide a single rating for any HMO or single/multi-occupied dwelling.

11.3 Hazard ratings are expressed through a numerical score, which will fall within one of ten bands. Bands A-C are Category 1 hazards; bands D-J are Category 2 hazards (Category 1 hazards being the highest). Category 1 hazards represent a mandatory duty to act. Category 2 hazards are discretionary. Bands D-J are not listed within the appendix.

11.4 All ratings are based on the risk to the most vulnerable target group to the hazard being assessed. For example stairs constitute a higher risk to the elderly; therefore they are considered the most vulnerable group with regard to assessing hazards relating to stairs. A dwelling, which is considered safe for the most vulnerable group, is therefore safe for all groups according to the guidance.

11.5 Any subsequent enforcement action is based on both the potential and actual occupancy. Joint inspections **on non-fire** related Hazard Profiles will not be carried out by Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service personnel.

12. Communications

12.1 Mutually agreed suitable communication agreements will be established and maintained between the Local Housing Authority and Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service's Community Fire Prevention Department. These agreements will detail areas including

- Inter-agency contact details
- Including out of hours
- Re-housing arrangements for any occupiers left without a residence during enforcement or prohibition notice procedures
- Data exchange and processes

13. Monitoring and Evaluation

13.1 Any changes to this protocol, other than minor administrative changes, will be subject to approval at strategic level and by the signatories to this protocol. All parties to the protocol will produce a joint annual report. Any changes will be reported and made via the ISO9001:2000 process.

14. Data Exchange

14.1 Each Local Housing Authority and Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service will establish local communication channels to exchange data.

14.2 Local Housing Authorities will provide data in an agreed format to Cheshire Fire and Rescue service to enable the population of their databases. Such information will be updated as necessary.

14.3 Cheshire Fire and Rescue service will provide data in an agreed format to Local Housing Authorities to enable the population of their databases. Such information will be updated as necessary.

14.4 All authorities will ensure that the information is marked as “confidential” and will not disclose it to other organisations without consent. The above authorities will not use or disclose information supplied pursuant to this protocol without consulting the original authority. All information, whether held on manual files or computer/digital media, will be treated as confidential. All data shared will be stored, transferred and transmitted in accordance with Data Protection principles and other relevant legislation.

15. Post- Incident Considerations

15.1 In the event of fire in HMOs or self contained flats etc Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service will deal with the initial incident in accordance with the requirements of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004, Service Orders and Standard Operating Procedures as deemed necessary by the Officer in Charge of the incident.

15.2 Ongoing security of the premises post incident will usually be passed onto the responsible person or their representative. In their absence the security would be passed over to the Police or Local Authority for further action.

15.3 Further access may be required by Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service to facilitate fire or forensic investigation, including the taking of samples in association with Police Scenes of Crime Officers and/ or appointed forensic science representatives.

APPENDIX A**Signatories to the protocol**

Authority	Name and title	Signature and date
Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service		
Halton Unitary Authority		
Warrington Unitary Authority		
Cheshire East Unitary Authority		
Cheshire West and Chester Unitary Authority		

APPENDIX B**HHSRS Hazard Profiles****A. Physiological Requirements
Hygrothermal Conditions**

- 1) Damp and mould growth
- 2) Excess heat
- 3) Excess cold

Pollutants (non-microbial)

- 4) Asbestos (and MMF)
- 5) Biocides
- 6) Carbon monoxide and fuel combustion products
- 7) Lead
- 8) Radiation
- 9) Uncombusted fuel gas.
- 10) Volatile organic compounds

**B. Psychological Requirements
Space, Security, Light & Noise**

- 11) Crowding and space
- 12) Entry by intruders
- 13) Lighting
- 14) Noise

**C. Protection Against Accidents
Falls**

- 19) Falls associated with baths, etc
- 20) Falling on level surfaces, etc
- 21) Falling on stairs, etc
- 22) Falling between levels

Electric Shocks, Fires Burns & Scalds

- 23) Electrical hazards
- 24) Fire**
- 25) Flames, hot surfaces, etc.

Collisions, Cuts and Strains

- 26) Collision and entrapment
- 27) Explosions
- 28) Position and operability of amenities, etc
- 29) Structural collapse and falling elements

This page is intentionally left blank

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Cabinet Member for Performance and Capacity

Date of Meeting: 13th September 2010
Report of: Communications and PR Manager
Subject/Title: Media Relations Protocol

1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 This report is in relation to the Media Relations Protocol which has previously been approved by Cabinet. It has subsequently had minor revisions which are highlighted in red in the attached copy.

2.0 Recommendation

- 2.1 That the Cabinet Member for Performance and Capacity approve the proposed minor changes to the Council's Media Relations Protocol as highlighted in the Appendix to the report.

3.0 Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 To expedite the approval of the protocol so that it may be brought into use with immediate affect.

4.0 Wards Affected

- 4.1 Not applicable.

5.0 Local Ward Members

- 5.1 Not applicable.

6.0 Policy Implications including - Climate change - Health

- 6.1 Not applicable.

7.0 Financial Implications

- 7.1 Not applicable.

8.0 Legal Implications (Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)

- 8.1 As the range of issues covered by the media team and Council representatives is extremely wide, it is difficult to predict which if any may involve legal considerations. Judgement as to when legal advice or support may be necessary

must rest with the individuals concerned, but does need to be a factor to be considered in the publication of information.

9.0 Risk Management

9.1 Not applicable.

10.0 Background and Options

10.1 The Media Relations Protocol is needed to guide both Members and officers in their dealings with the media to ensure we follow best practice in enhancing and protecting the reputation of the Council.

11.0 Access to Information

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

Name: Anthony Taylor

Designation: Communications Business Partner

Tel No: 01270 86579

Email: anthony.taylor@cheshireeast.gov.uk

APPENDIX

MEDIA RELATIONS PROTOCOL

Contents

1 Introduction

2 Structure of the Communications Team

3. Media Relations

3.1 Purpose of Media Relations Team

3.2 Nominated Council Spokespeople

3.2.1 Proactive media releases

3.2.2 Proactive media releases and Ward Members

3.2.3 Reactive media statements

3.2.4 Broadcast interviews

3.2.5 Proactive releases for Scrutiny Committees

3.3 Media Contact

3.3.1 Elected Members

3.3.2 Officers

3.3.4 Partners

3.4 Putting the Council's interest first

3.5 Corporate statements

3.6 Media Monitoring

3.7 Crisis media relations

3.8 Confidentiality

3.9 Complaints about media coverage

3.10 Media restrictions – purdah and embargoes

4. Media Relations – ways of working

4.1 Areas of responsibility

4.2 Daily management of the Media Relations officer

4.3 On-call working

4.4 Media monitoring

4.5 Media training for Council spokespeople

4.6 Media Relations software

4.7 News releases – general

4.8 Sign-off process for news releases

4.9 Handling unusually sensitive issues

4.10 Knowing Council business – assessing and digesting agendas

4.11 Photography

4.12 Contacts details for Media Relations

Media Relations Protocol

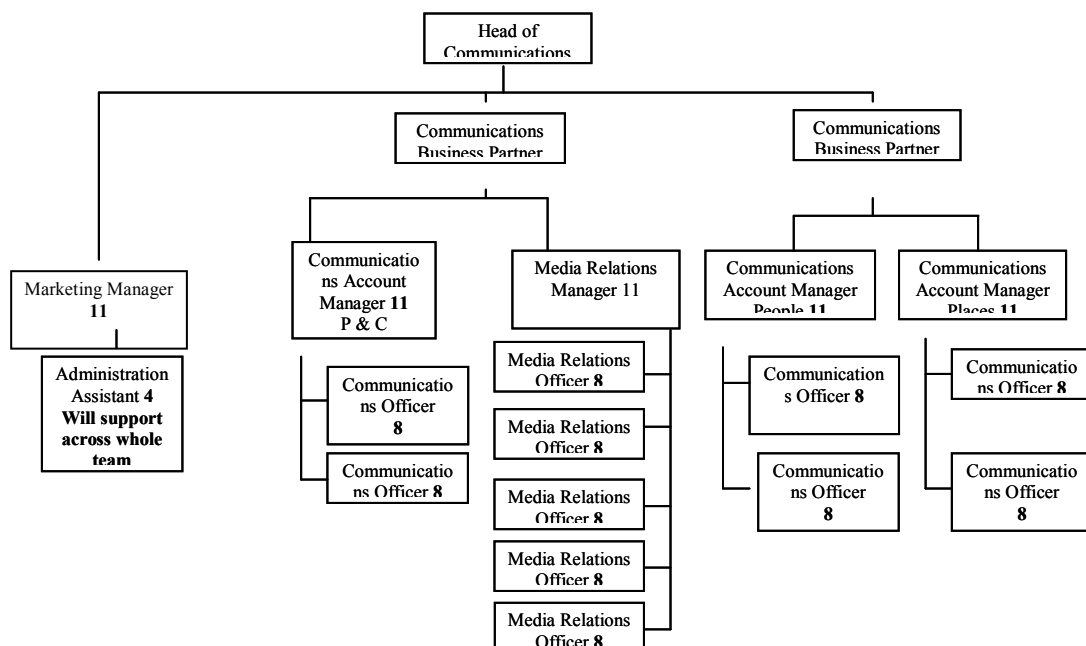
1.INTRODUCTION

This protocol serves as the definitive strategic positioning document for the Media Relations function of Cheshire East Council. It has been approved by Cabinet and Corporate Management Team (CMT).

The protocol also mirrors closely the guidelines and practices outlined in the Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity, as recommended by the Department for Communities and Local Government. (Appx A).

2. STRUCTURE OF THE COMMUNICATIONS TEAM

The Media Relations Team sits within the wider communications function. The Media Relations Manager works to the Communications Business Partner for Performance and Capacity who is the strategic lead. The Media Relations Manager provides the operational lead and manages the team on a day-to-day basis.



3.MEDIA RELATIONS

3.1 Purpose of Media Relations Team

The Media Relations Team sits within the Communications Team. All six members are highly-experienced journalists from the fields of print, radio and television. They hold either National Council for the Training of Journalists qualifications or those of the Broadcast Journalism Training Council.

The function of the team is to provide information to the media, in various formats to promote the work and policies of the Council in order to enhance its reputation at a local, regional and national level. It is also responsible for providing information, advice and guidance to officers and elected Members when the Council interacts with the media.

The objectives of the Media Relations team are:

- to inform residents of the services provided by Cheshire East Council;
- to promote and enhance the reputation of Cheshire East Council at local, regional and national levels;
- to protect and defend the reputation of Cheshire East Council at local, regional and national levels; and
- to offer media support, guidance and training for elected Members of the Council and senior officers.

The Media Relations Office is staffed from 8.30am to 5.30pm every week day. Outside these times is an on-call duty Media Relations Officer, who can be reached via the main Communications phone number 01270 686577.

A member of the Media Relations Team is available 365 days a year, 24 hours a day.

The Team produces information in a variety of formats:

- **Proactive Media Releases** - a written release promoting a service of, a decision of or the work of the Council. Through proactive coverage, the Council will be positioned in a positive and transparent light. The Media Relations Team advises on how best to place the right stories in the most appropriate outlet (eg radio, television, print, online, blog etc) with the best chance of success. The media expertise of the team will determine how proactive coverage is generated. Planning proactive coverage will form part of the wider communications plans for each of the Council's three directorates (People, Places and Policy and Performance).
- **Proactive Media Statements** - a written statement that is wholly in the words of a nominated Council spokesperson.

- **Reactive Media Releases** - generally issued as a rebuttal to an article or a broadcast already published and is generally in the words of a nominated Council spokesperson. As a large public body, it is inevitable that the Council will face regular scrutiny by the media, and on occasions, attack. The latter is often unfounded and will be challenged by the team on the day of issue or prior to publication if known about. The team will engage the support of Legal Services, if necessary, to counter any issues of potential defamation. On the occasions where the criticism is genuine, the team will respond with transparency and accountability. Responding to negative criticism will always be made as a considered judgement call by the Media Relations Team.
- **Reactive Media Statement** - a written statement that is prepared and issued in response to a specific question.
- **Information bulletins** - used when it is necessary to get vital information out to the public very quickly – eg school closures, gritting routes, refuse collections etc during period of adverse weather. These do not include a quote from anyone.
- **Briefing notes** – prepared in advance of either print or broadcast interviews.

3.2 Nominated Council Spokespeople

3.2.1 Use of ‘Council spokesperson’

Every effort will be made to attribute quotes to the relevant individuals as set out in 3.2.2 – 3.2.6 below. Only in exceptional circumstances will quotes be attributed to ‘a council spokesperson’.

3.2.2 Proactive Media Releases

Recognised best practice states that all proactive media releases should carry at least one quote: this should be from the relevant portfolio holder who is the appointed Council spokesperson for that portfolio or relevant ward member (see 3.2.2 below).

There may be occasions when, in the absence of the Portfolio Holder, a senior officer is quoted. Directors and Heads of Service should furnish the names of appointed officers for each service area to the Media Relations Team and ensure that the named officers are aware that they have been nominated.

If a Portfolio Holder is not available another spokesperson will be necessary. They should be chosen as follows:

- The relevant director or head of service or appointed spokesperson

If they are not available:

- The Portfolio Holder for Performance and Capacity

If they are not available:

- the Leader or the Chief Executive

In the very unlikely event that none of the above is available and in order to meet immediate media deadlines, the quote may be attributed to a Council spokesperson.

3.2.3 Proactive Media Releases and Ward Members

There will be occasions when another quote is needed for a proactive media release – e.g. from a service user in the form of a case study, or from the relevant Ward Member. The latter should be used only where that Ward Member has had significant input at a ward level in a project being promoted by the Council.

It is not possible for the Media Relations Team to know whether or not a Ward Member is significantly involved. It is therefore the responsibility of the service being promoted or the relevant portfolio holder to provide such information.

3.2.4 Reactive media statements

The Media Relations Team currently feeds 43 local media outlets, many of which pose several questions each day. There is only one evening paper and that covers just a small part of the Council's population. Other local print media outlets are weekly newspapers.

All newspapers, whether daily or weekly, carry daily deadlines. Pages are planned and completed as the week progresses, which means that all media queries, wherever possible, should be answered within one working day.

The Team has no control over the timing of these queries, although every effort is made to encourage the various media outlets to provide queries in a timely fashion or to negotiate for a story to be placed on a different page if a query cannot be answered within a newspaper's original timescale. Such encouragement and negotiation is not always successful, particularly if the story is contentious.

It is therefore essential that all media queries are given appropriate priority by all Members and officers of Cheshire East Council. A failure to provide a response in a timely fashion can seriously harm the reputation of the Council and be presented in such a way as to imply a lack of transparency while engendering an atmosphere of mistrust.

Few queries come in singularly, but rather regularly present themselves as one question among many. Again, the Team has no control over how the questions are posed. When several questions are posed at once, there can be considerable overlap in the service areas that need to be contacted for information and therefore overlap in the portfolio areas.

This lack of timeliness, coupled with several questions at a time, can and does mean that the relevant Portfolio Holder cannot be named in a response. However, it is recognised that statements made in the name of a Council spokesperson can lack the perceived integrity of those carrying the name of a person.

The Media Team will email full details of any query to the relevant senior officer who has been named as a nominated spokesperson and copy in the relevant Portfolio Holder. The time of the deadline will be clearly shown.

The media response will go out in the name of the relevant officer unless the Portfolio Holder indicates, within the timescale, whether he or she wants it to go in their name. If the Portfolio Holder is happy to leave the response to their appointed officer, it is requested that he or she informs the Media Relations Team as soon as possible.

The media will, on occasions, attempt to bypass the Media Relations Team. However, in order to protect the reputation of the Council, it is essential that all media enquiries are co-ordinated and managed effectively through the Media Relations Team.

It is vital for the team to be able to record and monitor ALL interaction with the media. If this is not done, the reputation of the Council is potentially at risk. It would be helpful to the Media Relations Team if elected Members were to log any interaction with the media.

The Media Relations Team will work closely with elected Members and officers, offering guidance and advice, in order to provide timely and effective responses to the media.

On occasion, an interview will be arranged for either an elected Member or officer. The Media Relations Team will provide briefings and advice and must accompany interviewees to interviews or be present on the line for telephone interviews (conference calls etc)

3.2.5 Broadcast interviews

On occasion, a radio or television interview will be arranged. The same rules for nominating a spokesperson apply as for proactive media releases.

The Media Relations Team will provide briefings and advice and must accompany interviewees to interviews or be present on the line for telephone interviews (conference calls etc)

3.2.6 Proactive releases from Scrutiny Committees

Proactive media releases may be issued when a Task and Finish Group is formed and again to report on the findings of the group. No media releases will be issued around subjects yet to be considered by the committees or where all relevant material is not available.

3.3 Media contact

3.3.1 Elected Members

The media will often attempt to contact elected Members directly.

If the nature of the enquiry relates to Council business and is non-political, the elected Member is requested to refer the enquiry to the Media Relations Team for initial handling and advice on procedure. By doing this, the Media Relations Team can record the query and either advise on the response or prepare and issue the response.

If the nature of the enquiry is political, in accordance with the democratic process, the elected Member has no duty to inform the Media Relations Team.

3.3.2 Officers

The media will also often attempt to contact employees of the Council directly.

The employee must always and immediately refer all enquiries from the media to the Media Relations Team as the first line of procedure. It is essential to record all media queries at the time of receipt. No initial comment or response to the media should be made by an employee. The Media Relations Team will provide advice on the most appropriate response.

Unauthorised comment by officers on behalf of the Council that is potentially harmful to its reputation may result in a disciplinary action.

3.3.4 Partners

The Council works closely with partners from all sectors. It is essential to ensure that when the Council is included in their media releases we approve the release and that we include them and consult them about releases we produce that involve their work.

3.4 Putting the Council's interest first

The central Media Relations Team's purpose is to represent the best interests of the Council in the media. Coverage of the decisions and work of elected Members and employees will be determined within a system of prioritisation, according to the current news agenda.

It is important to note that, on occasion, the most effective strategy is not to respond to the media. Media requests will be determined by both the news agenda and their prior agreement in directorate communications plans.

It will also be necessary to seek approval from other involved parties as appropriate.

Where elected Members are required to respond to the media regarding the policy of Cheshire East Council, such publicity should be objective and explanatory. While it may acknowledge the part played by individual elected Members as holders of particular positions in the Council, personalisation of issues or personal image-making must be avoided. (in accordance with the Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity, as recommended by the Department for Communities and Local Government).

This protocol does not prevent any political group or individual elected Member not a portfolio holder issuing its/their own media information through its/their own channels. However, it is requested that all such information be copied to the Media Relations Team, where it will be held in confidence and used only to inform responses to media enquiries.

Exceptions to putting an elected Member forward for interview will arise during period of purdah or if there are potential conflicts of interest. In these cases, the Media Relations Team will identify a suitable alternative.

3.5 Corporate statements

On occasions, statements will be necessary that are corporate in nature and not related specifically to any portfolio. Either the Leader or the Chief Executive is the appropriate person to quote in these instances.

3.6 Media Monitoring

Monitoring the coverage of the Council in the daily media is the responsibility of the Communications Team. This is done in a variety of ways, using the best in modern technology and practice, including a media monitoring service.

Disseminating recorded media coverage of the Council to the various internal stakeholders is done in a clear, accessible and streamlined way.

3.7 Crisis media relations

A member of the Media Relations Team is available 365 days, 24 hours a day. In the event of a crisis breaking in the media outside of normal office hours (8.30am to 5.30pm), a duty Media Relations Officer is always on call **01270 686577**.

3.8 Confidentiality

The business of the Media Relations Team is highly confidential and all matters discussed within and by the team are treated with the highest standards of

discretion. It is essential that the team is briefed on all aspects of any issues, no matter how confidential or sensitive, to enable them to be best prepared for enquiries and put the interests of the Council first.

Occasionally, issues come to the notice of the media which involve employees or elected Members and aspects of their private lives or employment contracts. It is not the Council's policy to comment specifically on such issues. Responses must be brief and factual. Unless there are exceptional circumstances, names should not be included. An example statement would be:

"I can confirm that a member of staff has been suspended while an investigation into allegations of professional misconduct is carried out. Suspension in itself is not a form of punishment."

The exception to this rule is when the Council has been asked to provide a tribute following the death of an employee or elected Member. However, before any such tribute is issued, permission should be sought from the deceased's family.

3.9 Complaints about media coverage

Complaints about media reports should be referred to the Media Relations Manager or the Communications Business Partner to discuss appropriate action.

3.10 Media restrictions – purdah and embargoes

All publicity referring to a political party of anyone standing for election (local or parliamentary) must be suspended between the notice of an election and polling day. This period, which is known as purdah, is generally six weeks.

With the exception of the Mayor, Members will not be quoted in Council media releases and requests made to the Media Relations Team for media interviews with Members must be declined during this period.

During European elections, no publicity must be generated which refers to any of the candidates. Providing this practice is followed, it is not necessary to follow purdah instructions.

Occasionally a news release will contain information under embargo. Embargoes are not legally enforceable but are adhered to as standard industry practice by local and regional media, although not always by the national media. In order to assist the media with forward planning, embargoed releases may be issued in advance with the embargo indicated in bold and underlined at the top of the release.

4 MEDIA RELATIONS – WAYS OF WORKING

This area of the protocol covers all aspects of the operational function of the Media Relations Team.

4.1 Areas of responsibility

Each Media Relations Officer has responsibility for specific committees including scrutiny, and for two portfolio areas. Each holds regular meetings with each of their Portfolio Holders, Scrutiny Chairman/ Lead Scrutiny Officer –NB see paragraph 3.2.5.

4.2 Daily management of the Media Relations Office

a) Office hours

The Media Relations office is open from 8.30am to 5.30pm every week day. Outside these times, there is an on-call Media Relations Officer who can be reached via the main Communications phone number: **01270 686577**.

A member of the Media Relations team is available 365 days a year, 24 hours a day.

b) Administration

The Media Relations Team is responsible for:

- Management of media materials including newspapers
- General administration duties
- Maintenance of the shared drive for Media Relations
- Archiving of media material from Durrants
- Distribution lists for external and internal stakeholders

c) Housekeeping of written media relations material

All materials issued, including news releases and statements, by the media Relations Team are kept and maintained in the shared drive, to which only members of the Communications team have access.

d) Communicating with each other

Written communication between members of the Media Relations Team is principally done electronically.

Phone messages are sent between the team by email and all diary appointments are managed in Microsoft Outlook.

e) Daily media log

Every time a new request or phone call relating to a media enquiry is received by the Team, this is logged in a joint Media Log which is available in the Team's shared area.

This is monitored regularly by all members of the Team and is used by the Media Relations Manager to assess peaks and troughs in workload. It is also a helpful document as a 'handover' between team members at different periods of the day.

f) Distribution lists

News releases are issued only via email in order to record a 'paper trail' of the media outlets each release has been sent to.

The only external audience sent media releases by the Media Relations Team are the relevant media outlets. Other external audiences can obtain releases from the Council's website. Internally, all media releases are sent to members of Cabinet, all Councillors, CMT, all members of Communications and the Council's website. A hyperlink to the most recent news releases on the website is provided from the intranet.

4.3 On-call working

The on-call rota operates on a five-week cycle, with each Media Relations Officer carrying out one week on duty. The on-call period begins and finishes at 5.30pm each Friday. When an officer is on duty their work mobile phone and on-call blackberry must be switched on at all times and they must remain within two hour's travelling time of Westfields, Sandbach and consume no alcohol.

If an officer is unable to undertake their scheduled rota week, they should organise a swap with another officer on the rota and inform the Media Relations Manager of the change and their replacement.

The Media Relations Manager is not required to be part of the Media Relations on-call rota. However, s/he must be contactable by the duty on-call Media Relations Officer at all times, with the exception of periods of annual leave. The Media Relations Manager is always the first port-of-call for the on-call Media Relations Officer to offer advice and support if required.

If the on-call Media Relations Officer learns of an emergency out of office hours s/he will inform the Media relations Manager who will inform the Communications Business Partner, who will in turn inform the Head of Communications. The Head of Communications/ Communications Business Partner will be responsible for informing the Senior Manager Duty Officer from Extended Management Team.

4.4 Media monitoring

Monitoring the daily media coverage service (Durrants) is the responsibility of all members of the Communications team with acute focus by Media Relations.

The most recent and relevant local and regional newspapers are available to read in the following locations;

Westfields - Communications or Cabinet office
Municipal Buildings Crewe – Members Room
Macclesfield Town Hall – Members Room

All members of the Media Relations Team have full access to Durrants, an online news clippings service which monitors local, regional, national and international print and broadcast media for mentions of Cheshire East Council. Durrants updates are compiled at the end of each day and are received by the Team in an email summary the following morning.

Members of the Communications team also check the daily media monitoring service to ensure the Team is aware of stories as soon as they are published. Each article or broadcast is categorised depending on whether they are positive, negative or neutral and the percentage of each category is reported to elected Members each week.

Elected Members are also informed of how many potential readers or listeners have been reached each week and the total value of the coverage in advertising terms. **Each elected Member receives an electronic copy of this weekly media coverage report. Hard copies are placed in Members' Rooms in Crewe, Macclesfield and Sandbach.**

Negative coverage is assessed by the Media Relations Team and if it is incorrect and needs challenging, this will be done on the same day of publication.

Regional lunchtime TV and radio news bulletins are broadcast in the Communications office each day.

4.5 Media training for Council spokespeople

Media training for all relevant Council spokespeople is offered as appropriate.

All Members of Communications receive regular media training. This training is also available for:

Chief Executive

Leader

Cabinet

Scrutiny Chairmen

CMT – Corporate Directors and Heads of Service

4.6 Media Relations software

The Council uses Durrants software which provides a range of services for modern media relations practice including:

- Media cuttings
- Media searches
- News release distribution system
- Progress and output reports on coverage

4.7 News releases - general

News releases have the principal purpose of increasing public awareness of services provided by the Council and the functions it performs. All news releases must be written by a Media Relations Officer.

If a news release request is received directly from a directorate, the relevant Communications Business Partner must be made aware of this to ensure it falls within the general directorate communications plans.

Exceptions to quoting an elected Member will arise during period of purdah or if there are potential conflicts of interest. In these cases, the Media Relations Team will identify a suitable alternative.

All news releases must list the contact details of the relevant Media Relations Officer. It is not the Council's policy to include contact details of officers or elected Members, unless these are contained within the story text of the release.

News releases issued by partner organisations which refer to the authority must be approved by the Media Relations Team and include the appropriate elected Member comment. In the same way, those releases prepared by the Media Relations team involving partner organisations should also be approved by the partner organisations before issue.

4.8 Sign-off process for news releases

News releases must in the first instance receive approval from the requesting officer. If approval is also required from the requesting officer's line manager or other senior manager, obtaining this is the responsibility of the Media Relations Team.

Approval must next be gained from the relevant elected Member/Members. If an elected Member suggests significant changes, the amended release must be returned to the requesting directorate/service officer for final approval. The news release must receive full approval from the Media Relations Manager, or in his/her absence the Communications Business Partner, before it is issued.

4.9 Handling unusually sensitive issues

Occasionally a major incident or a significant issue which could affect the Council's reputation may arise. Any officer who becomes aware of a situation should inform the Media Relations Team immediately. As soon as a member of the Media Relations Team is informed they must brief the Media Relations Manager, Communications Business Partner and Head of Communications. This will trigger a process where all the appropriate people are informed, as follows:

- Chief Executive
- Leader
- Cabinet
- Elected Members

- Strategic Directors/Heads of Service
- Head of Service
- CMT
- Relevant Officers
- Partner Organisations

4.10 Knowing Council business – assessing and digesting agendas

All members of the Media Relations Team receive electronic agenda copies for all Council meetings inclusive of confidential papers from Democratic Services. It is the responsibility of each team member to be aware of the upcoming business. All members of the Media Relations Team must be aware of upcoming business for Cabinet and Full Council meetings.

Media Relations Officers must not arrange interviews with officers or elected Members on issues which appear on Council agendas before the meeting has taken place. It is acceptable for the Team to respond to media enquiries in advance of a meeting where a factual response only is required.

4.11 Photography

All requests for photography for media purposes must be passed through the Media Relations Team who will assess each request on a business need basis. As with all other photography, each directorate pays for its own photography, commissioned and managed by members of the Communications Team.

Each Media Relations Officer briefs the photographer on the requirements of the job and the Communications Assistant handles the IBS process therein.

4.12 Contact details for Media Relations

Communications
Cheshire East Council
Westfields
Middlwich Road CW11 1HZ
T: 01270 686577
E: communications@cheshireeast.gov.uk

END OF DOCUMENT

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Cabinet Member for Prosperity

Date of the meeting: 13th September 2010
Report of: Director of Places
Subject/Title: Homelessness Strategy

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The Homelessness Act 2002 granted new provisions and powers for local authorities' work on homelessness and prevention. It also imposed a duty upon local authorities to carry out a review of homelessness in their area and formulate and publish a strategy for the future based on the results of that review, outlining how the council and their partners would work to prevent homelessness and ensure accommodation and support for those who were homeless or at risk of homelessness. The Homelessness team has developed Cheshire East's first draft Homelessness Strategy following an extensive review process and is now seeking approval of the strategy.

2.0 Recommendation

- 2.1 That the Cabinet Member for Prosperity approve the adoption of the Homelessness Strategy appended to this report.

3.0 Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 It is a statutory requirement that Local Authorities have a strategy in place to prevent and deal with homelessness.

4.0 Wards Affected

- 4.1 All Wards

5.0 Local Ward Members

- 5.1 All Local Ward Members

6.0 Policy Implications including - Climate change - Health -

- 6.1 N/A

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

7.1 N/A

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

8.1 For the financial year 2010/11 there are no financial implications as all costs can be met within existing resources and from funding allocated to the authority from The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) for homelessness prevention work. For 2011/12 onwards, there is no further guarantee of any funding from DCLG so actions may need to be reconsidered in light of any reduction in funding levels.

9.0 Legal Implications (Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)

9.1 Under Section 1 of the Homelessness Act 2002 there is a statutory duty upon Local Authorities formulate a homelessness strategy. Section 3 provides that the strategy must deal with preventing homelessness and also securing that sufficient accommodation is and will be available for people in their district who are or may become homeless and for securing the satisfactory provision of support for people in their district who are or may become homeless or who have been homeless and need support to prevent them becoming homeless again.

9.2 Also under Section 1, the Council as a local housing authority and social services authority must take their homelessness strategy into account in the exercise of its functions.

9.3 Before adopting a homelessness strategy the Council must consult such public or local authorities, voluntary organisations or other persons as they consider appropriate.

9.4 A new homelessness strategy must be published by the Council every five years.

9.5 A copy of the published strategy must be made available at the council's principal office for inspection and copies provided on request on payment of a charge if required.

10.0 Risk Management

10.1 The Audit Commission placed a 2010 deadline on the production of the Homelessness strategy; failure to produce a strategy will result in criticism from the Commission and this will impact on any future inspection.

11.0 Background and Options

- 11.1 Local authorities are required to undertake a homelessness review within their area and use the information to formulate a strategy. The homelessness review should look at levels and likely future levels of homelessness in their district, establish the activities which are carried out to prevent homelessness, establish accommodation needs of the homeless and support needs.
- 11.2 Cheshire East's Homelessness team carried out the review in 2009. Extensive consultation with statutory and voluntary agencies as well as service users took place to identify gaps in service and ways of improving access to services and this has been fed into the strategy and the actions attached to it.
- 11.3 The areas identified for action focus on five key areas: homeless prevention, processes, temporary accommodation, tenancy support and permanent housing.
- 11.4 The focus of the strategy is on working in partnership with internal and external partners to provide holistic services which provide value for money, take account of best practice and enhance the services to customers.
- 11.5 There are 48 actions set in the Homelessness Strategy which will be monitored quarterly by the Homeless Strategy Steering Group.
- 11.6 The Homelessness Strategy has completed the 12 week consultation period and further comments from Citizen's Advice, Children's Service and Domestic Violence services have been incorporated.

12.0 Overview of Year One and Term One Issues

- 12.1 Ensuring there is sufficient funding in place to deliver the actions to prevent homelessness as prevention measures can be up to 37 times cheaper than taking a homeless application.

13.0 Access to Information

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

Name: Victoria Wellington

Designation: Homelessness and Housing Options Housing Manager

Tel No: 01270 686655

Email: Victoria.wellington@cheshireeast.gov.uk

This page is intentionally left blank



**DRAFT HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY
CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL**

2010-2013

Table of Contents

1. This Document.....	3
2. Strategic Context.....	4
2.1 National.....	4
2.2 Regional.....	6
2.3 Sub-regional.....	7
2.4 Local.....	8
3. Priorities for Cheshire East.....	11
4. Prevention.....	12
4.1 Financial inclusion.....	12
4.2 Youth homelessness.....	12
4.3 Homelessness from institutions or leaving care.....	13
4.4 Preventing rough sleeping.....	14
4.5 Preventing homelessness for families.....	15
4.6 Homelessness from the private sector.....	16
4.7 Homelessness due to relationship breakdown.....	17
4.8 Preventing Repossessions.....	18
5. Processes.....	19
6. Temporary accommodation.....	20
7. Tenancy support.....	22
8. Permanent accommodation.....	23
9. Implementation & Monitoring of the strategy.....	25
Glossary of terms.....	26
Appendix A.....	27
Action Plan.....	28

1. This document

The Homelessness Act 2002 granted new provisions and powers for local authorities' work on homelessness and prevention. It required local authorities to publish a review of homelessness in their area and a strategy for the future, outlining how the council and their partners would work to prevent homelessness and ensure accommodation and support for those who were homeless or at risk of homelessness.

The Act requires that a new and revised strategy be published at least every five years; this is Cheshire East's first Homelessness Strategy following Local Government Review in April 2009 and it will run from 2010 to 2013. This document should be read in conjunction with Cheshire East's Homelessness Review.

The areas identified for action in this strategy are related to analysis of the current situation in Cheshire East as set out in the Review, or were raised through consultation with statutory and voluntary sector organisations, and individuals experiencing homelessness. Full details of the consultation undertaken are available in the Review.

The document begins with an examination of relevant strategies at national, regional and local level and then sets out strategic priorities for Cheshire East under the following headings: prevention, processes, temporary accommodation, tenancy support and permanent housing.

2. Strategic context

This section outlines the national, county and district level strategic context within which the Cheshire East Homelessness Strategy will be placed.

2.1 National

Government policy on homelessness is outlined in the document “*Sustainable communities: settled homes; changing lives*”. This strategy aims to tackle homelessness and to halve the number of people living in insecure temporary accommodation by 2010. It focuses on:

- Preventing Homelessness
- Providing support for vulnerable people
- Tackling the wider causes and symptoms of homelessness
- Helping more people move away from rough sleeping; and
- Providing more settled homes

The strategy builds on the 2003 report “*More than a roof*” and continues to recognise that the personal and social causes of homelessness must be tackled alongside structural issues, such as housing supply.

- Social Housing

In 2006 the Housing Corporation published “*Tackling Homelessness*”, which outlines the role that Housing Associations are expected to take in preventing and responding to homelessness. The focus is on partnership working with local authorities and relevant stakeholders, with associations requested to prepare homelessness action plans that set out measures they will take around statutory and non-statutory homelessness. The Hills report “*Ends and Means: The Future Role of Social Housing in England*” published in 2007 looked at how we can best meet housing need now and in the future. The report emphasised the importance of a holistic approach to housing need, integrating employment, and training advice to ensure that tenants and homeseekers increase their opportunities for social and financial inclusion. The report also looked at how we can create and sustain mixed communities.

- Places of Change

The Places of Change programme is the successor to the Government’s Hostel’s Capital Improvement Programme. £160 million is being invested over six years (2005/2006-2010/2011) to improve the quality of hostel accommodation and other homelessness services such as day centres and to create “places for change”. Crewe YMCA has received £2 million from this fund plus £3 million from The Homes and Communities Agency (formerly The Housing Corporation) towards the redevelopment of their project. There will be a complete refurbishment of the front building in Gresty Road, Crewe, which will include facilities such as a gym, learning centre and café. Modern accommodation will be provided in a new building at the back. This redevelopment will result in much improved facilities for young people.

- Rough Sleeping Strategy

The Government’s new rough sleeping strategy “*No one left out; Communities ending rough sleeping*” was launched in November 2008. This strategy sets out the

new ambitious objective of ending rough sleeping in England by 2010. This new strategy recognises the importance of:

- Preventing people sleeping rough and tackling the flows of new rough sleepers onto the streets
- Diverting people from the streets as quickly as possible, so no-one needs to stay sleeping rough and to avoid people becoming entrenched and developing problems such as poor mental or physical health and substance misuse.
- Sustaining people in accommodation and their communities to prevent them returning to the streets in the future.

- Supporting People

The majority of revenue funding for homelessness services (such as support staff in hostels or floating support in independent tenancies) is supplied nationally by the Supporting People Programme and administered at a local level. A strategy for Supporting People “*Independence and Opportunity*” was published in June 2007 and outlines how the Supporting People programme helps to reduce homelessness by providing support to enable households to remain in their own homes and offering invaluable support services to other vulnerable groups. Its focus is on four key areas:

- Keeping service users at the heart of the programme
- Enhancing partnerships with the Third Sector
- Delivering in the new Local Government Landscape
- Increasing efficiency and reducing bureaucracy

The strategy commits to delivering Supporting People through the new performance framework for local government (Local Area Agreements), with funding delivered via the area based grant from 2009.

- Public Service Agreement 16

The Public Service Agreement 16 enacted in October 2007 aims to increase the proportion of socially excluded adults in settled accommodation and employment, education or training. For the purpose of this PSA socially excluded adults include care leavers, adult offenders under probation supervision, adults in contact with secondary mental health services; and adults with moderate to severe learning disabilities.

- Strategy and policy documents

A number of other recent strategy and policy documents also impact directly and indirectly on homelessness. These include:

- *Homes For the future: more affordable, more sustainable*, the housing green paper from Communities and Local Government (CLG), which sets out the Government's ambitions on the building of and access to private and social housing in England.
- *Lifetime Homes, Lifetime Neighbourhoods: A National Strategy for Housing in an Ageing Society* published by CLG in February 2008 sets out government plans for ensuring the availability of appropriate housing for older people, as an ageing population puts pressure on homes, health and social care services.

- *Reducing Dependency, Increasing Opportunity: Options for the future of Welfare to Work* is a report by David Freud into the future of the welfare system, looking particularly at ways to reduce the number of people on benefits.
- The *Our Health, Our Care, Our Say* White paper sets out a vision to provide people with good quality social care and NHS services in the communities where they live. These services should extend to all members of the community and be readily accessible by homeless individuals.
- *A Five year Strategy for Protecting the Public and Reducing Re-offending* outlines how the National offender Management service (NOMS) will ensure that the Criminal Justice System is effective in changing lives and tackling the factors that make people more likely to reoffend. This includes joint working with a wide range of partners beyond the Criminal Justice System, including among others housing and homelessness services.
- *Drugs; protecting families and communities*, is the Home Office ten year drugs strategy 2008-2018. This strategy focuses on protecting communities, families, young people and children through tackling drug supply, crime, anti-social behaviour, as well as delivering new approaches to drug treatment and public information campaigns.
- The Crime & Disorder Act 1998 promotes the practice of partnership working to reduce crime and disorder and places a statutory duty on police and local authorities to develop and implement a strategy to tackle problems in their area. Section 17 of the Act recognises that there are key stakeholder groups who have responsibility for the provision of a wide and varied range of services to and within the community. In carrying out these functions section 17 places a duty on them to do all it can to reasonably prevent crime and disorder in their area.

2.2 Regional

The North West Regional Assembly published its own Regional Homelessness Strategy in 2007. The priorities contained within that strategy include:

Priority One: Prevent homelessness

- Increase early identification and intervention
- Provide timely and high quality advice and information that enables households to resolve their housing issues
- Prevent evictions from social housing and the private sector
- Prevent repeat homelessness
- Reduce the level of rough sleeping

Priority Two: Increase access to a choice of settled homes

- Inform activity to increase the supply and access of social rented stock
- Increase the role of the private rented sector
- Increase the rate of successful and sustainable move-on
- Increase the number of homeless people receiving training and/or entering into employment, addressing worklessness and increasing household income
- Support improvements in temporary accommodation to develop into Places of Change
- Offer a range of supported housing options

Priority Three: Develop plans and activity based on a robust understanding of homelessness and housing need

- Increase the understanding of the causes of homelessness, housing need, nature of rough sleeping and the impact of housing markets
- Develop an understanding of temporary and supported housing
- Develop a region-wide minimum standard for collecting data
- Develop an understanding of resources currently used
- Develop a regional standard for engaging service users

It is essential that Cheshire East's Homelessness strategy reflects the overall objectives for the region as a whole whilst focussing on priorities specific to our area.

2.3 Sub-regional

The previous Sub-Regional Homelessness Strategy expired in 2008. The strategy, formulated by the six former Cheshire districts together with Halton and Warrington, achieved a number of successes including:

- Multi-Agency Monitoring
- A co-ordinated countywide rough sleepers count
- Successful Homelessness Innovation bid for the employment of Private Sector Liaison Officers
- Joint training programme
- Sharing of best practice
- Joint countywide Homeless Prevention Group
- Successful grant funding for play equipment for temporary accommodation

It is anticipated that the future delivery of sub-regional homelessness issues will be delivered by a new group incorporating Cheshire East, Cheshire West and Chester, Warrington and Halton, this group should be launched early in 2010.

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

The four priorities listed below have been identified as the key issues for the sub-region:

- Priority one: To increase the supply of affordable housing to support economic growth and development
- Priority two: To make best use of the sub-region's existing housing stock
- Priority three: To meet the housing and accommodation-related support needs of the sub-region's most vulnerable residents
- Priority four: To increase the supply of market housing to support continued economic growth and regeneration and to meet local housing needs

The Cheshire Sub-Regional Housing Strategy action plan is split into the two areas of Cheshire West and East. The Cheshire East action plan will form the basis of the strategic approach to delivering housing services and supply of houses for Cheshire East over the next 3 years.

2.4 Local

- Local Strategic Partnership

The Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) in Cheshire East brings together, at a local level, all of the different parts of the public, private, business, community and voluntary sectors so that different initiatives and services support each other and work together across Cheshire East. The partnership framework is driven by, and reflects, local circumstances. It includes an Executive board which is able to advise the Partnership and provide capacity to make timely decisions. In addition, five individual thematic partnerships support the Partnership by overseeing and commissioning services relevant to their service area. These thematic partnerships are:

- Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP)
- Children's Trust
- Health & Wellbeing
- Learning, Skills and Economic Development
- Environment and Sustainability

- Local Area Agreements

New delivery and inspection arrangements for local government are increasingly based on Local Area Agreements (LAA). These three year agreements involving central government (represented by the regional government office), the local authority and its partners in the area (working through the Local Strategic Partnership) are aimed at improving public services by promoting joint working at a local level.

Indicators in the Cheshire East LAA which affect or are affected by housing and homelessness are:

SAFER COMMUNITIES	
NI 18	Adult Re-offending For those under Probation Supervision
NI 32	Repeat Incidents of Domestic Violence cases reviewed at MARAC*
LI37	Increasing Non-Police referrals to MARAC *
CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE ECONOMIC WELLBEING	
NI 117	Number of Children not in education, employment or training
NI147	Care Leavers in Suitable Accommodation
LOCAL ECONOMY	
NI 154	Net additional homes provided
TACKLING EXCLUSION & PROMOTING EQUALITY	
NI 155	Number of affordable homes delivered
NI 156	Number of households living in temporary accommodation
NI 141	Percentage of vulnerable people achieving independent living
NI 142	Percentage of people who are supported to maintain independent living

* Multi-agency Risk assessment conferencing- a system for identifying & responding to those at highest risk(342 adults with 463 children in CE 2009-10)

The target for the one specific indicator relating to homelessness, NI 156, is 18 for 2009/2010 reducing to 12 in 2010/2011. In order to achieve this target Cheshire East intends to:

- Work in partnership with stakeholders to proactively prevent homelessness reducing the need for temporary accommodation
- Where the use of temporary accommodation cannot be avoided, we will work in partnership with stakeholders so that suitable alternative accommodation can be found as quickly as possible.

- Supporting People

The Cheshire Supporting People 5 Year Strategy (2005-2010) was published in 2005. The North West Regional Housing Needs analysis, which is currently ongoing, will inform a new strategy for Cheshire East Supporting People.

There are two tiers to the Supporting People partnership in Cheshire East. They are the Commissioning Body and Core Strategy Group. The Commissioning Body is a partnership of:

- Central and Eastern Cheshire Primary Care Trust
- Cheshire East Council
- National Probation Service- Cheshire

This group is responsible for the commissioning of services based on the strategic priority and need. The Core Strategy Group is accountable to the Commissioning Body and is responsible for revising the Cheshire Supporting People Strategy. The membership of the Core Strategy Group includes representatives from:

- The Supporting People Team
- Central & Eastern Primary Care Trust
- National Probation Service-Cheshire
- Provider representative of the National housing Federation
- Drug and Alcohol Action Team
- Youth Offending Team
- Care Leavers Service
- Mental Health Services
- Provider representative of the Cheshire Housing Alliance
- Provider representative from the local provider forums
- Strategic Housing

- Cheshire's Teenage Pregnancy Strategy

Cheshire County Council developed a ten year teenage pregnancy strategy (2001-2011). This strategy aims to reduce the number of unplanned pregnancies, support teenage parents and to encourage young people to defer parenthood until a time when they feel more able to take full responsibility for meeting their own needs and those of their child. The strategic goals are:

- A baseline level of services throughout the county with specific provision in local areas as appropriate
- To take a variety of approaches to meeting need and providing services
- To encourage diversity and creativity, piloting new approaches
- To build and learn from best practice and "what works"
- To ensure that young people have easy access to information on sexual health services, including emergency contraception
- To ensure service providers recognise and meet their responsibilities in respect of teenage pregnancy and parenthood

- To help young people remain in their usual provider of education, continue to have access to full-time education and return to it, with child care support as necessary
- That all young people be assisted through their Connexions personal advisors to be aware of and able to access educational and employment opportunities.

- Drug & Alcohol Action Team

The Cheshire Drug & Alcohol Action Team (DAAT) is a partnership of organisations that works to co-ordinate and implement the National Drug Strategy in East Cheshire. These organisations work to:

- Prevent young people becoming drug users
- Reduce the supply of illegal drugs
- Reduce drug-related crime and the harm it causes to communities
- Promote treatment and support and reduce drug related deaths
- Encourage drug offenders into treatment and away from involvement in drug-related crime
- Assist drug users to access accommodation, education and employment
- Reduce drug-related issues that have an impact on community morale
- Consult drug users and their carers, as well as those communities affected by drug use.

- Crime and Disorder

In order to meet the aims of section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 Cheshire East Council has established a Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP). The CDRP includes the Police, Fire Service, the NHS primary care trusts and Probation service. There is also input from the Youth Offending Team, drug action Team, the community and voluntary sectors and other partners including Housing. The Housing team participates in several operational and strategic groups which aim to tackle reduce crime and anti-social behaviour and work together to manage offenders. These are:

- Reducing Re-Offending group
- Local Risk Management group
- Prolific Offenders group
- MAPPA- high risk offenders
- Task and Co-ordinate

- Cheshire East Domestic Abuse Partnership

This partnership brings together all statutory and third sector agencies with a responsibility to respond to domestic abuse including the housing sector. Its priorities for this year are:

- Establishing a strategy in which all partners have investment and which informs other strategies particularly LSCB & LSAB's
- Embedding the newly established CE DAP partnership structures
- Ensuring the local strategy is in line with the government's Violence Against Women & Girls strategy, including the identification of a senior "champion" in the area.
- Securing long term commissioning of services, including increase in long term support for lower risk clients
- Improving integrated family work and responses to the overlap of domestic abuse/mental health/substance abuse.
- Embedding new training programmes

- Achieving National targets and accreditation of MARAC process and Independent Domestic Violence Advocacy Services (Leading lights)
- Improving & integrating performance reporting from all agencies
- Improving access to services for all communities

3. Priorities for Cheshire East

The review of homelessness in Cheshire East and consultation with stakeholders in the statutory and voluntary sectors, as well as with service users has informed a number of priorities for Cheshire East. These are detailed in the following sections, under the following headings:

- Prevention
- Processes
- Temporary Accommodation
- Tenancy Support
- Permanent accommodation

Under each heading the key findings from the review, and where appropriate from consultation, are outlined. Action points follow.

Cheshire East Council is committed to developing this strategy into an action plan that will be taken forward over the next 3 years.

Action 1: The Council will work with partner organisations to develop an action plan encompassing each of the points in this strategy, for delivery in the period 2010-2013

Action 2: Cheshire East Homelessness Strategy Steering Group will be instrumental in assisting the development of this action plan, and in designing a structure for implementing, monitoring and evaluating progress against the targets set out in the action plan.

Action 3: Service users will be involved, via consultation, in development of any new initiatives which are brought forward from delivery of the action plan

4. Prevention

Prevention of homelessness is central to this strategy. Whilst overall in Cheshire East, as in the rest of England, rates of homelessness acceptances have been falling, there remains much work to be done to prevent homelessness wherever possible.

This section details Cheshire East Council's strategic actions in a number of prevention areas.

4.1 Financial inclusion

Findings from the review

Although rates of unemployment in the Borough are below the National & Regional levels there are high rates of worklessness within the social rented sector with only 34.6% of heads of households in some form of employment. Stakeholders identified unemployment and lack of training/education as one of the main contributory factors amongst their homeless clients.

Tackling worklessness is a priority for central Government and the Regional Homelessness Strategy identifies the need to increase the number of homeless people receiving training and/or entering employment and increasing household income as one of its priorities under Priority 2 "Increasing access to a choice of settled homes".

Strategic Actions

Action 4: The Council will conduct a worklessness survey to look at the areas and types of households most affected by worklessness. These will help to target resources to the most deprived areas and to offer assistance to households who may find it difficult to access services.

Action 5: The provision of money advice is essential in the prevention of homelessness and the accessing of employment. Cheshire East Council will continue to support partners in the delivery of this service and will look to extend current provision of debt and welfare rights advice across the Borough.

Action 6: Working with partners at local and national levels the Council will seek to improve employment opportunities for homeless clients and those in temporary accommodation.

4.2 Youth Homelessness

Findings from the review

Despite low levels of homeless acceptances in the Borough amongst young people aged 16-24, the MAM data (Multi-Agency Monitoring project) suggests high levels of homelessness and housing issues amongst this age group. This fact is supported by the numbers of clients accessing the Young Person's Housing Support Worker in Macclesfield and the numbers receiving housing related advice via Connexions across Cheshire East.

Feedback from the consultation exercises indicated that family breakdown was one of the main causes of homelessness amongst young people. This is one of the three main reasons for homelessness collected on the P1E return. Young people also felt that a lack of independent living skills held them back from both accessing and sustaining a tenancy; this was mirrored in the responses from stakeholders. The Regional Homelessness strategy prioritises the need to increase the rate of successful and sustainable move-on from temporary accommodation and the development of pre-tenancy training will go some way towards achieving this aim.

Strategic actions

Action 7: The Housing Options Team will continue to carry out home visits in all appropriate homelessness cases, but in particular where parents are no longer willing to accommodate. The possibility of training officers in mediation techniques will be explored.

Action 8: Cheshire East Council will endeavour to continue the specialist support provided to Young People with homelessness/ housing issues in Macclesfield and will consider extending the provision to cover Crewe and Congleton.

Action 9: The Council will formulate a Joint Protocol for 16/17 year olds, which will set out the responsibilities in different cases, including the roles of Social care, Housing, Connexions YOT, Family support teams and the voluntary sector. It will work closely with partners to prevent homelessness and identify potential youth homelessness at an early stage.

Action 10: Services will be developed that give young people access to advice on housing and homeless issues via a range of Medias, in different locations. The Council will work closely with schools and colleges to provide an education programme to students on these subjects.

Action 11: The Council will work with partner agencies, particularly supported accommodation providers, to develop a package of training designed for young people covering the independent living skills needed to access and sustain a tenancy

4.3 Homelessness from institutions or leaving care

Findings from the review

The results of the review revealed that the numbers of cases accepted as homeless due to leaving custody was relatively low across Cheshire East, with just 7% of the total acceptances being from this category. The MAM data indicated offending history as a high contributory factor in 2006/07 but by 2007/08 this reason did not figure in the top ten most common factors. This does not reflect the fact that many offenders lose their accommodation due to being taken into custody and work needs to be done to ensure that homelessness is prevented wherever possible. The consultation exercise with stakeholders gave leaving custody as one of the main contributory

factors for their clients, which indicates that offenders may not be accessing statutory services.

The number of care leavers accepted in 2008/09 was also very low, with just 3% having this reason for their homelessness. Following the House of Lord's Ruling on homeless 16 and 17 year olds, "The Southwark Judgment", the numbers of care leavers in Cheshire East could increase significantly if Social Services are required to offer more young people care services. The consultation did not highlight any specific actions around care leavers but the action point relating to a formal protocol to be drafted between Housing and Social care, for dealing with 16/17 year olds should ensure that processes are put in place to deal with any increased demands on services.

People leaving hospital as homeless has not been identified as an issue but it is important to ensure that local hospital discharge co-ordinators are aware of procedures and protocols are in place to deal with potentially homeless patients.

The need for timely and high quality advice to prevent households becoming homeless and prevention of evictions from both social and private tenancies are both priorities in the Regional Homelessness Strategy.

Strategic actions

Action 12: Cheshire East will work with partners to ensure that services to those leaving prison have access to locally-based advice services, offering holistic advice relating to housing, benefits advice, employment and sign-posting to specialist services for mental health, substance abuse or any other issues that might affect the clients ability to access or sustain accommodation.

Action 13: The Council will ensure that hospitals covering Cheshire East area are aware of the Discharge Protocol. The Housing Options Team will also visit potentially homeless clients in hospital at the earliest opportunity to avoid the need for emergency action.

4.4 Preventing rough sleeping

Findings from the review

Levels of rough sleeping across Cheshire East are low, with the last three formal counts revealing numbers of between 0 and 4. Local knowledge suggests that at different times of the year individuals may be sleeping rough, the official count, conducted on a specified night in the year, does not always show the extent of the problem in the area. There are no services within the Borough specifically for rough sleepers and there is a definite need for a published protocol on how those sleeping outside in cold weather will be dealt with. It would also be helpful to have named contacts for the general public to report incidences of rough sleeping.

The Government's report "No-one left out" includes a good practice guide designed to help local housing authorities and their partners review and plan their strategic approach to preventing and tackling rough sleeping. A self assessment checklist included in the guide can help to assess the comprehensiveness of the services provided, improve partnership working and highlight opportunities for improving services to rough sleepers and those at risk of rough sleeping. It would be beneficial to complete the assessment to identify what, if any, services should be provided.

Stakeholders involved in the consultation exercise indicated that often clients with complex needs are excluded from temporary accommodation projects in the area and these are the types of people that often end up sleeping rough. A client of the Barnabus Centre in Macclesfield (East Cheshire Drugs & alcohol team) highlighted, via a NHS feedback sheet, the need for an outreach service for homeless people, providing equipment for rough sleeper's, a soup kitchen and day centre. The Regional Homelessness Strategy highlights two priorities around rough sleeping; firstly to reduce the numbers of those sleeping rough and to increase understanding of the nature of rough sleeping.

Strategic Actions

Action 14: Cheshire East Council will conduct a formal rough sleeper's count bi-annually and will also seek to make information available to residents of the Borough to report incidences of rough sleeping. This will facilitate the building of a better picture of the extent of the problem in the area.

Action 15: A protocol outlining the procedure for dealing with rough sleepers in severe weather will be developed and published.

Action 16: The Council, together with partners, will undertake an assessment of the services provided to tackle rough sleeping and determine whether a separate strategy is required to address this problem.

4.5 Preventing homelessness for families with children

Findings from the review

In Cheshire East last year families, either single parents or couples with children, accounted for 53% of households accepted as homeless. In 48% of cases the reason for having a priority need was due to having dependent children.

Many of the families accepted are placed into temporary accommodation, and although numbers are fairly low, this can have a detrimental affect on the households concerned. A survey commissioned by the Children's Fund in 2008 revealed that families in temporary accommodation suffer a deterioration in their quality of life with children not attending school, high accommodation costs and a lack of support being some of the issues raised.

Anti-social behaviour is an issue that can result in homelessness for families from both private and social rented accommodation. There are a range of measures that can be used to prevent eviction in these cases and housing options staff need to be aware of the procedures that be implemented and the support on offer.

Problems can arise when a family is found to be intentionally homeless under the legislation. A clear protocol needs to be put in place regarding the responsibilities of housing and social services in these cases.

The review consultation highlighted a lack of low-level support to aid families, who do not meet Social Services criteria for family support. Access to housing/money advice can help to prevent homelessness and address worklessness for this client group. The main issue to come out of the review for this client group was the lack of suitable, supported temporary accommodation.

In order to meet the priorities identified in the Regional Homelessness strategy the provision of high quality, accessible advice to this client group needs to be improved.

Strategic Actions

Action 17: The Council will develop a protocol for dealing with cases for families who are not owed a housing duty. This will outline the responsibilities to these households of Housing & Social Care, including the provision of funding to assist in accessing accommodation.

Action 18: Work will be undertaken to develop housing advice services for families with children to provide accessible, local services for this client group.

Action 19: Cheshire East Council will work with RSL's and private landlords to resolve anti-social behaviour issues amongst families and will ensure that staff are aware of options available to address this problem.

4.6 Homelessness from the Private Sector

Findings from the review

One of the 3 main reasons for homeless acceptances is the ending of Assured Shorthold tenancies; however instances of homelessness for this reason have reduced considerably, from 74 in 2006/2007 to just 20 in 2008/2009. This is a direct result of interventions by the Private Sector Liaison Officer and Homelessness Prevention Officers based within the Housing Options Teams. These two posts work with clients to resolve issues which may result in the ending of tenancies and act quickly to secure alternative accommodation where notices have been served due to, for example, a landlord selling a property.

The Council operates a Rent Bond scheme, which has been extremely successful in assisting potentially homeless and homeless households to access the private sector. However payments back into the scheme are low, with a collection rate of just 5.5% of the total outlay recovered in the year to date.

Affordability in the private sector for young people, under the age of 25, was highlighted as an issue during the consultation process. Local Housing Allowance rates are such that it is almost impossible for this client group to access privately rented accommodation; a solution to this problem needs to be found.

The standard of accommodation in the private sector is not always good, the introduction of the Landlord Accreditation Scheme across the Borough should help in part to ensure that properties, owned by landlords signing up to the scheme, meet safety requirements and are of a decent standard. Landlords themselves are also been accredited and this will recognise those who operate sound management practices and encourage them to operate within the law when dealing with tenancy issues, which will obviously benefit tenants and reduce the need for interventions by the Housing team.

The Regional Homelessness strategy indicates that Local Authorities should work to prevent evictions from the private sector wherever possible and also increase access to settled homes by utilising this resource.

Strategic Actions

Action 20: Housing will work with the Private Sector Housing Team to implement Landlord accreditation, by ensuring that landlords are aware of the benefits of membership of the scheme. They will also use the scheme to maximise the available accommodation for homeless and potentially homeless households.

Action 21: The Council will continue to operate the Rent Bond Scheme and will work to improve collection rates from clients.

Action 22: Cheshire East Council will work with partners and private landlords to improve access to private sector accommodation for clients under 25 years old.

4.7 Homelessness due to relationship breakdown

Findings from the review

One of the three main causes of homelessness in the Borough is violent or non-violent breakdown of relationship, accounting for 29% of the total acceptances. The number of cases approaching as homeless due to domestic violence has reduced over the past few years; in 2006/2007 58 acceptances were due to violent breakdown of relationship compared to 19 in 2008/2009. Many high level domestic violence cases are now dealt with by a multi-agency panel called a MARAC. These meetings, which are held once a month, have led to the reduction in the number of cases approaching Housing Options for assistance, as more victims are able to remain in their homes with target-hardening and appropriate support.

The percentage of non-violent breakdown in relationship cases has increased slightly over the past three years; financial pressures can often lead to partnerships breaking down, so it is essential to ensure that families have access to advice regarding debts and rights to benefits at the earliest opportunity. This is addressed at Action point 17. There was little feedback from the review regarding domestic violence and non-violent relationship breakdown. In Macclesfield in particular it has been difficult to engage with both staff and service users accessing the refuge. This needs to be remedied to ensure that the views of this client group are included when developing future initiatives and strategies.

The Local Area Agreement in Cheshire East, which sets out the “deal” between central government and the local authority and their partners on service improvement and quality of life for local people, includes two indicators regarding repeat incidents of domestic violence. It is essential that housing continue to participate in multi-agency work to deliver services to this client group.

Strategic Actions

Action 23: The Council will continue to participate in the MARAC, MARAC Steering Group and Cheshire east Domestic Abuse Partnership to ensure that homelessness due to domestic violence does not increase and to maximise prevention in these cases. This will include engaging in partnership working to make tenancy maintenance a safe option for clients e.g. target hardening and the application of protective legal measures.

Action 24: Work to improve stakeholder and service user involvement in issues around domestic violence will be undertaken. Involvement in The Homelessness Strategy Steering Group and any service user focus groups will be encouraged.

4.8 Preventing Repossessions

Findings from the review

Instances of homelessness due to mortgage repossession have reduced over the last 3 years with just 2 homelessness acceptances for this reason in 2008/2009. Despite fears that, with the country in recession, repossessions would increase due to higher levels of unemployment and households facing an income shock, mortgage possession claims in the County court were down by 23% in the third quarter of 2009 compared to the same quarter in 2008. This could be due to the introduction of the Pre-Action Protocol, which was introduced by the Civil Justice Council in November 2008, which makes it clear to lenders that repossession should be a last resort and this protocol is part of a package of measures introduced by the Government to reduce mortgage repossessions.

Cheshire East Council was one of the first authorities to implement a Repossessions Action Plan to prevent repossessions across all tenures. This plan includes the provision of a Repossession Fund and additional resources for court desks. The Council also participates in the Governments Mortgage Rescue Scheme (MRS). As yet there has not been a successful MRS application as many cases fall outside the criteria; however in the period from April 2009 to September 2009 61 cases were assisted with mortgage issues, the majority being referred to money advice or housing options for further advice.

The Housing Options Teams also work to prevent mortgage repossessions by contacting owners quickly when notifications of possession action are received from lenders. 111 clients have been contacted since October 2009, in order to offer advice and assistance prior to court action. This work will continue as will joint working with the CAB to provide an advice service at court on possession hearing days.

Action 25: The Council will continue to review and update the Repossession Action Plan and to participate in government initiatives to prevent mortgage repossessions

5. Processes

Findings from the review

People who are homeless or at risk of homelessness in Cheshire East may approach a number of different agencies for advice and assistance. It is important that these agencies work effectively together and that their respective roles are clearly defined and acknowledged. It is also to be noted that presentations as homeless to the Council do not tell the full story of the extent of homelessness and other sources of data should be strengthened to compliment data on statutorily homeless households. The consultation process confirmed the need for information sharing protocols and for strong partnerships to be developed with stakeholders to address key issues and improve service delivery. There was also the feeling that a common referral form would enable better multi-agency support for individuals. Weaknesses were identified in working practices with mental health services and probation in particular. There is also a need for service users to be involved. This is partially addressed in Action Point 3 but more robust collection of data on customer satisfaction is necessary to inform service improvement.

The Regional Homelessness strategy has the development of the understanding of housing need as one of it's main priorities, with the development of a region-wide minimum standard for collecting data and a standard for engaging service using being part of this action.

Strategic Actions

Action 26: The Council will collect data on approaches to its housing advice service and will use this data to inform service improvement and target resources. It will also seek to compliment this information by recording details about each individual's housing need and the outcomes of housing options interviews.

Action 27: The Housing Options Team will undertake regular customer satisfaction surveys with service users, using a variety of methods as opposed to purely paper-based consultation.

Action 28: Cheshire East will work with partner agencies to improve data collection on the housing and support needs of non-statutorily homeless clients.

Action 29: In order to improve joined up working and ensure appropriate referrals between agencies, the Council will seek to strengthen partnerships that are not currently in place and build on those that already exist. Information-sharing protocols & a common referral form will be introduced.

6. Temporary Accommodation

Findings from the review

In January 2005 the Government set a target, based on December 2004 figures, to reduce the number of households in temporary accommodation by half by 2010. Cheshire East Council had a total of 224 households in temporary accommodation in December 2004, as at 31st December 2009 there were just 8. The length of time people spend in temporary accommodation is reasonably brief, with an average stay of 7.8 weeks across the Borough in 2008/2009. The main reason for the reduction in placements and residence in temporary accommodation is the increased homelessness prevention and the identification of sustainable housing options for households.

Use of Bed and Breakfast is showing signs of reduction with only 7 placements in total in the first quarter of 2009/2010, with an average stay of 10 days. In November 2006 the Government announced a target to eliminate the use of Bed and Breakfast for 16 and 17 year olds by 2010 and for the last quarter this has been achieved by Cheshire East.

These figures reflect the position for statutorily homeless households, the consultation process revealed other issues for many non-priority homeless households (mainly singles) who access the supported accommodation projects across Cheshire East. Those points highlighted include the need for more direct access accommodation, more support in temporary/supported accommodation to prepare for independent living and facilitate move-on and more specialist accommodation for those clients with complex needs, substance abuse issues and offending history.

In 2010/2011 Cheshire East intends to conduct a comprehensive review of the temporary accommodation in use in the Borough and this process will result in an action plan specifically aimed at improving the overall provision of this type of accommodation in the Borough.

In order to meet regional objectives Cheshire East Council will need to increase the rate of successful move-on, support improvement in temporary accommodation to develop into places for change and offer a range of supported housing options.

Strategic Actions

Action 30: Cheshire East Council will conduct a comprehensive review of temporary accommodation provision, to analyse the way it is accessed, the support available and the standard of accommodation. This review will also consider the need for additional refuge space in the Borough.

Action 31: An investigation into the provision of supported accommodation for those clients with complex needs, and direct access accommodation for this group will be investigated.

Action 32: The Council will work with supported accommodation providers to improve rates of move-on from temporary accommodation and will work to ensure that clients who move into independent living are able to sustain their tenancies.

Action 33: Together with partners Cheshire East will work to ensure that all clients who enter temporary accommodation undergo a formal housing needs assessment and that referrals to appropriate agencies e.g. drug and alcohol services are made so that specialist support is accessed where needed.

7. Tenancy Support

Findings from the review

Provision of appropriate tenancy support maintains individuals in their tenancies, reduces the likelihood of homelessness and allows individuals to move on from temporary accommodation such as hostels. The homelessness review revealed that there are gaps with regards to families receiving tenancy support and relatively low capacity for teenage parents, who quite often leave supported accommodation to move into the private sector and then experience difficulties in sustaining their tenancies. There is also limited support for those leaving temporary accommodation to move into a permanent home.

During the consultation process linked to the review both stakeholders and service users had strong views on the issue of tenancy support. The main findings were that the support should be provided across the full range of tenancy types and client groups. It was felt that there should be a degree of flexibility in the criteria for accessing support, from low level support for those who are assessed as having the skills needed to sustain a tenancy but may need initial set-up support to intensive support for those with complex or special needs. Stakeholders felt that a tailored tenancy skills/training programme should be delivered by all providers and that there should be more emphasis on prevention to help sustain tenancies. Service users expressed a wish for the focus of tenancy support to be on money management and that they would want a support worker to have a good knowledge of services available on benefits, employment and training and health issues.

Addressing all these issues will help to achieve the regional priorities of increasing access to a choice of settled homes and preventing homelessness.

Strategic Actions

Action 34: In partnership with Supporting People the Housing service will seek to increase access to and provision of tenancy support, to prevent homelessness and help to sustain tenancies. In particular it will seek to increase service provision in the private sector and for those with complex needs and those experiencing domestic abuse.

Action 35: Cheshire East Council will work to ensure that all new tenancies for statutorily homeless households or those coming from supported accommodation will be accompanied by arrangements for tenancy support from the commencement of the tenancy. Protocols for sharing information and joint risk assessments between the Council, RSL's and voluntary sector agencies will be developed to support this process.

Action 36: The Council will work with partners, particularly supported accommodation providers, to ensure that clients in temporary accommodation receive the practical help they need to move into independent living. A pre-tenancy training scheme and help to set up in a new home will be the priorities.

Action 37: Multi-agency working to help sustain tenancies will be developed, the introduction of a crisis intervention panel, will prevent overlap of services and encourage agencies to share the workload on preventing homelessness.

8. Permanent accommodation

Findings from the review

The majority of housing stock in Cheshire East is owner occupied but house prices are significantly higher than in many other areas in the North West and almost seven times average incomes. Private renting is also expensive with, in some cases, the cost of a rent being 300% higher than social renting (for a four bedroom house in Macclesfield). People on low incomes would prefer the option of social renting and it is clearly the most affordable option. However the analysis of the number of lets in 2008/2009 by the three main RSL's in Cheshire East compared to the numbers of households on housing registers shows that supply of accommodation falls far below demand. There is a high demand for one and two bedroom properties, with households having significant waiting times for this type of accommodation. There is therefore great pressure on social housing stock, with homeless and potentially homeless households competing with waiting list applicants and newly –formed households for the limited resources. Information from the housing registers shows that both overcrowding and under-occupation are issues.

The review also revealed that there are a large number of properties empty in Cheshire East, with over 4% of the total dwellings unoccupied.

Service users felt that more priority should be given to people in temporary accommodation for social housing and also requested that more information on how to access private rented accommodation should be made available. The lack of move-on options was the main issue for stakeholders, particularly temporary accommodation providers, however previous experience highlights the fact that quite often residents are not registered on social housing registers and this needs to be addressed, particularly with choice-based lettings on the horizon.

Cheshire's Sub-Regional Housing Strategy has four key priorities which are all linked to the provision of permanent accommodation; these are to increase the supply of affordable housing, to make best use of existing stock, to meet the housing and support needs of the sub-regions vulnerable residents and to increase the supply of market housing to meet local housing needs.

The Regional Homelessness Strategy highlights a range of priorities around the provision of permanent accommodation, including increasing the supply of and access to social housing and increasing the role of the private sector in preventing homelessness.

Strategic actions

Action 38: The council will work with RSL partners to increase the supply of and access to social housing stock. It will do this by increasing targets for the provision of social rented housing in new developments, monitoring nomination agreements and by ensuring that the forthcoming Choice Based Lettings scheme (Cheshire Homechoice) retains a focus on priority for homeless, potentially homeless households and those ready to move on from temporary accommodation. Accessibility and support in using the system for vulnerable individuals will be considered and planned for with services working for these groups.

Action 39: A range of affordable housing options will continue to be provided by the Council, including an assisted Purchase Scheme, discount for sale schemes and shared ownership via RSL's. The Housing Options Team will ensure that they are familiar with the range of options available.

Action 40: Information on renting in the private sector will be made available to service users via a variety of Medias and the work of the Private Sector Liaison Officer will be promoted to inform both stakeholders and clients of what the service can provide.

Action 41: The Council's Private Sector team will endeavour to bring empty homes in the Borough back into use, grants for improvements will be offered to owners and wherever possible these properties will be used to help alleviate homelessness. Housing Options staff will be made aware of these options and referral routes.

9. Implementation & Monitoring of the Strategy

The action plan established from the strategy will help evidence the need for investments and/or commissioning of new services within the Borough. In order to ensure that the action plan objectives are met and achieved, structured and comprehensive monitoring of the plan must be completed.

The Homelessness Strategy Steering Group, consisting of statutory and other voluntary agencies, will monitor and review the progress in accordance with the action plan on a quarterly basis. A review of the Homelessness Strategy will be undertaken annually to establish feedback and progress of the action plan.

9.1 Future Consultation

The strategy is a working document and it is therefore essential that it is reviewed and the projects/initiatives contained in the action plan are monitored to ensure that they are carried out.

As one of the priority actions emerging from the consultation is joint working, it is important that regular liaison is carried out with key partners and service users.

The Homelessness Strategy Steering Group is an essential part of the monitoring process and contains a number of key organisations. A full list of the organisations represented on the steering group can be found in Appendix A.

9.2 Future Strategy Changes

As the strategy is a living document it is inevitable that some alterations may occur and that some actions may not be deliverable. The removal or additions of relevant actions, in addition to any changes in funding arrangements should be discussed with key partners and agreed in principle with the majority of the Homelessness Strategy Steering Group.

All key stakeholders will be notified of the changes agreed and will be given 28 days to respond.

9.3 Comments & Feedback Relating to this Strategy

Feedback and updated information from stakeholders, as a result of the distribution of the Homelessness Review, has been taken into account in the formulation of this strategy. If you would like to make any comments about this document or to request any further information or related documents please contact:

Karen Wild
Policy & Monitoring Officer
Cheshire East Council
Town Hall
Macclesfield
Cheshire
SK10 1DR

Telephone: 01625 504456
E-mail: Karen.wild@cheshireeast.gov.uk

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

ASBO	Anti Social Behaviour Order
AST	Assured Shorthold Tenancy
BME	Black & Minority Ethnic
BVPI	Best value performance indicator
CAB	Citizen Advice bureau
CBL	Choice Based Lettings
CEC	Cheshire East
CDAP	Cheshire domestic abuse partnership
CLG	Communities and Local Government
CPPHT	Cheshire Peaks & Plains Housing Trust
DAAT	Drug and alcohol action team
GP	General Practitioner
HA	Housing Association
HB	Housing Benefit
HMO	House in Multiple Occupation
HOT	Housing Options Team
HSSA	Housing Strategy Statistical Appendix
IMD	Index of Multiple Deprivation
LA	Local authority
LAA	Local Area Agreement
LGR	Local Government Re-Organisation
LHA	Local Housing Allowance
LSP	Local Strategic Partnership
LSVT	Large scale voluntary Transfer
MAM	Multi agency monitoring
MAPPA	Multi Agency Public Protection Panel
PCT	Primary Care Trust
PPO	Prolific and other priority offender
PSL	Private Sector Leasing
P1E	Statistical return on statutorily homeless households
RDS	Rent Deposit Scheme
RSL	Registered social landlord
SMART	Specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, time bound
SMHA	Strategic Market Housing Assessment
SOA	Super Output Area
SP	Supporting People
YOT	Youth Offending Team

APPENDIX A

List of organisations represented on Homelessness Strategy Steering Group

English Churches Housing Group
Regenda Group
Wulvern
Cheshire East Council Care Leavers Team
Youth Offending Team
Adullam Housing
Cheshire Police
Cheshire Peaks & Plains Housing Trust
Total People
New Leaf
Macclesfield Cradle Concern
Citizen's Advice Bureau
Connexions
Jobcentreplus
Johnnie Johnson Housing
Shelter
East Cheshire Drugs Service
Crewe YMCA
Cheshire East Council Benefits Section
Macclesfield Care & Concern
Macclesfield Women's Aid
Child & Adolescent Mental Health 16-19 Team
Probation Service
Just drop In Macclesfield
Plus Dane Housing
Crewe Women's Aid
Places For People

HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY ACTION PLAN 2010-2013

This action plan is designed to be SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and have a clear Timescale). It has been based on the 5 main themes and priorities identified in the strategy and the resulting actions.

PREVENTION						
Key Issue	Action	Resources	Lead Officer/Partnership	Measure Of Success	Target Date	Actual Outcome
1.1 Financial Inclusion	Conduct a worklessness survey looking at the areas & types of households most affected by worklessness.	Staff Time £1K CLG grant for printing costs	Policy & Monitoring Officer	Advice surgeries established in key areas and reduction in the numbers of homeless presentations from families.	April 2011	
	Extend the provision of Money Advice across Cheshire East in conjunction with external partners.	£25-30K CLG grant (recession pot)	Housing Options Manager	An increase in the number of cases where homelessness is prevented.	September 2010	
	Encourage RSL's to work with tenants to address financial inclusion issues and help to prevent homelessness.	Staff Time. Possible CLG funds for initiatives.	Policy & Monitoring Officer/ Partner RSL's	A reduction in the number of cases listed for court on rent days and a decrease in evictions from social tenancies.	On-going	
	Work with Job Centre Plus and local employers to address work skills & to offer work trials for clients in temporary accommodation with poor work records/ no references.	Staff Time	Policy & Monitoring Officer/ JCP	An increase in the numbers of clients who are work ready when they move to independent living.	December 2010	

PREVENTION						
Key Issue	Action	Resources	Lead Officer/Partnership	Measure Of Success	Target Date	Actual Outcome
	Investigate the possibility of providing a PO Box address for clients who are NFA to assist with job search.	Cost of PO Box £65 per year.	Policy & Monitoring Officer	Comparison of numbers using the service & those securing employment.	December 2010	
	Look to assist the Cheshire Neighbours Credit Union to expand into the south of the Borough.	£5k CLG grant + match funding from RSL's	Policy & Monitoring Officer	More resources for homeless clients to access loans and potential for introduction of home starter packs	March 2011	
1.2 Youth Homelessness	Continue to conduct home visits in all cases of parental exclusion and explore the possibility of providing training in mediation techniques to relevant staff.	Staff Time £2K CLG grant training expenses	Housing Options Team Leaders	Reduction in the numbers of homeless acceptances due to parental exclusion and increase in the use of mediation to prevent homelessness.	June 2011 & on-going	
	Consider the continuation of the role of Young Person's Housing Support Worker in Macclesfield and the provision of an additional resource in Congleton/Crewe. Opportunities for joint funding of the posts to be investigated.	Between £40K-£50K CLG grant but less if jointly funded	Housing Options Manager/Policy & Monitoring Officer	Reduction in the number of cases on Connexions caseload for housing related support.	December 2010	
	Formulate a Joint Protocol for 16/17 year olds, which will outline the responsibilities in	Staff Time	Housing Options Manager/Social Services	Reduction in the number of 16/17 year olds placed in Bed & Breakfast.	September 2010	

PREVENTION						
Key Issue	Action	Resources	Lead Officer/Partnership	Measure Of Success	Target Date	Actual Outcome
	different cases, including the roles of Social Care, Housing, Connexions, YOT, Family Support Teams & the voluntary sector.			An increase in the number of prevention cases recorded for this age group.		
	Arrange awareness sessions for Housing, Social Care & other relevant partners on the roles of each with regard to homeless 16/17 year olds.	Staff Time	Housing Options Manager/ Social Services	Fewer inappropriate referrals between agencies and improved staff knowledge.	October 2010	
	Deliver housing and homelessness advice services for young people via schools and colleges. Ensure that information is available in a range of medias.	Staff Time £500-£800 for publicity material	Policy & Monitoring Officer	Fewer instances of homelessness due to parental eviction.	December 2010 and on-going	
	Develop a package of training for young people to deliver the independent living skills needed to access and sustain a tenancy.	Staff Time £5K CLG grant for materials, venues etc.	Policy & Monitoring Officer/ MACC	An increase in the number of young people in temporary accommodation who move successfully into independent living	September 2011 (but pilot at MACC project by December 2010)	
1.3 Homelessness from institutions or leaving care	Work with Probation, YOT & local prisons to ensure that offenders are aware of where to access statutory services. Provide these agencies with the information needed to	Staff Time	Policy & Monitoring Officer	An increase in the numbers of clients with offending history accessing Housing Options Advice.	March 2012	

PREVENTION						
Key Issue	Action	Resources	Lead Officer/Partnership	Measure Of Success	Target Date	Actual Outcome
	prevent the loss of accommodation when offenders are taken into custody.					
	Re-launch hospital discharge policy with local hospitals to avoid the need for emergency action in cases of unplanned discharge.	Staff Time	Policy & Monitoring Officer	The numbers of cases with "left hospital" as the reason for homelessness remain low.	September 2010	
1.4 Rough Sleeping	Rough Sleeper's Count to be conducted Bi-annually.	Staff Time £5K CLG grant	Housing Options Manager/Policy & Monitoring Officer	No rough sleeper's found.	March 2010 & March 2012	
	Introduce monitoring system to record reports of rough sleeping made by stakeholders & members of the public. Make information available on who to contact if rough sleepers are found.	Staff Time	Policy & Monitoring Officer	A more accurate picture of the extent of rough sleeping in the Borough is established to inform future strategies.	September 2010	
	Publish a protocol outlining the procedure for dealing with rough sleeping in periods of severe weather.	Staff Time	Policy & Monitoring Officer	Cases of rough sleeping are reported and people accommodated where necessary.	September 2010	
	Undertake an assessment of services provided to tackle rough sleeping and develop a strategy if this is deemed	Staff Time	Policy & Monitoring Officer	Opportunities for improving services for rough sleepers are identified and implemented.	June 2011	

PREVENTION						
Key Issue	Action	Resources	Lead Officer/Partnership	Measure Of Success	Target Date	Actual Outcome
	necessary.					
1.5 Homeless families	Develop housing advice services for families with children in accessible locations and at times to suit customers needs.	Staff Time	Policy & Monitoring Officer/ Social Services	A reduction in the number of homeless acceptances for families and increased prevention outcomes for this group over the next 3 years	December 2010	
	Work with RSL's and private landlords to resolve anti-social behaviour issues amongst families and provide Housing Options staff with information on the options available to tackle this problem.	Staff Time	Policy & Monitoring Officer/ ASB Co-ordinator	Numbers of families evicted due to ASB reduce and number of homelessness preventions increase.	June 2010 & On-going	
	Formulate a protocol between Housing & Social Care on how families who are found to be intentionally homeless will be assisted and the responsibilities of each service with regard to these cases.	Staff Time	Policy & Monitoring Officer	Joint-working to ensure that families access alternative accommodation and are supported to ensure that they do not become homeless again in the future.	December 2010	
1.6 Homelessness from the private sector	Introduce landlord accreditation, maximise membership of the scheme and available	Staff Time	Policy & Monitoring Officer/ Private Sector Housing Manager	An increase in the number of landlords participating in the Accreditation	December 2010 & on-going	

PREVENTION						
Key Issue	Action	Resources	Lead Officer/Partnership	Measure Of Success	Target Date	Actual Outcome
	accommodation resulting from new contacts made.			Scheme and Rent Bond Scheme		
	Improve collection rates from clients who receive a Rent Bond by time- limiting the bonds and more vigorous monitoring of payments into the Credit Union	Staff Time	Policy & Monitoring Officer/PSLO	Increase in collection rate from 5.5% of total outlay to 15% within 12 months.	Monitor quarterly from June 2010	
	Maintain the reduction in the number of cases accepted as homeless due to ending of AST's due to interventions by PSLO's and Homelessness Prevention Officers	Staff Time	Policy & Monitoring Officer/Housing Options Team Leaders	No more than 5 cases per quarter accepted due to ending of AST's	Monitor quarterly from June 2010	
1.7 Relationship Breakdown	Continue to participate in MARAC & MARAC steering group.	Staff Time	Policy & Monitoring Officer	Homelessness acceptances due to domestic violence remain low (under 19 in 2008/2009).	On-going	
	Improve stakeholder & service user involvement in consultation & focus groups dealing with domestic violence issues.	Staff Time	Policy & Monitoring Officer	Improved attendance at Homelessness Strategy steering Group and service user events.	March 2011	
1.8 Preventing Repossessions	Continue to participate in the full range of Government initiatives to prevent mortgage repossessions,	Staff Time	Housing options Manager	Numbers accepted by Housing Options service as homeless due to mortgage	On-going	

PREVENTION						
Key Issue	Action	Resources	Lead Officer/Partnership	Measure Of Success	Target Date	Actual Outcome
	including MRS, Repossessions Action Plan and court desk			repossession remain at the current low levels		

PROCESSES						
Key Issue	Action	Resources	Lead Officer/Partnership	Measure Of Success	Target Date	Actual Outcome
2.1 Data Collection	Collect data on approaches to Housing options service, to include details of individuals housing need and outcomes of interviews.	Staff Time	Policy & Monitoring Officer/ Housing Options Team Leaders	The information collected will enable analysis of where resources should be targeted and will inform future strategies/initiatives.	March 2011	
	Work with partner agencies to improve data collection on the housing & support needs of non-statutorily homeless clients.	Staff Time Cost of software	Policy & Monitoring Officer/ All Partners	A better picture of homelessness in the Borough is provided to inform future service delivery.	March 2012	
2.2 Referrals	Introduce information-sharing protocols and a common referral form with partners.	Staff Time	Policy & Monitoring Officer	A reduction in inappropriate referrals and better multi-agency support for clients.	March 2011	
	Improve partnership working with Probation & Mental Health Team. Continue to work closely with all partners on homelessness & support issues across the full range of client	Staff Time	Policy & Monitoring Officer	Successful working practices are established with all partners to enhance service delivery and address key issues.	June 2011	

PROCESSES						
Key Issue	Action	Resources	Lead Officer/Partnership	Measure Of Success	Target Date	Actual Outcome
	groups.					
2.3 Customer Engagement	Develop new ways of gathering feedback on customer satisfaction with Housing Options Service.	Staff Time	Policy & Monitoring Officer/Housing Options Team Leaders	A clear picture of services users' opinions of The Housing Options Service is obtained to inform improvements and help to target resources.	September 2010	
2.4 Statistics	Remove the need to record clients as "Homeless from Home" on the Government returns, by reviewing current working practices and amending procedures	Staff Time	Housing Options Team Leaders	No use of "Homeless From Home" recorded on P1E except in exceptional circumstances.	September 2010	

TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION						
Key Issue	Action	Resources	Lead Officer/Partnership	Measure of Success	Target Date	Actual Outcome
3.1 Provision Of Accommodation	Conduct a comprehensive review of the temporary accommodation available in Cheshire East.	Staff Time	Housing Options Manager/ Policy & Monitoring Officer	Action plan in place with clear vision of the type/location/ standard and support requirements of this type of accommodation in the Borough	March 2011	

	Investigate the provision of supported accommodation for clients with complex needs.	Staff Time	Policy & Monitoring Officer/ Supporting People	The extent of the need for this type of accommodation is established and required funding is secured.	June 2012	
3.2 Move-On	Monitor the rates of move-on from supported accommodation projects. Ensure that service users are registered on waiting lists of RSL's and have access to advice on their housing options.	Staff Time	Policy & Monitoring Officer/Supported accommodation providers	Improved rates of move-on and bed-blocking avoided.	March 2011	
3.3 Needs Assessment	Work with partners to ensure that clients entering temporary accommodation undergo a formal housing needs assessment.	Staff Time	Policy & Monitoring Officer/ Partners	Clients are provided with specialist support from services such as Mental Health when required and there are fewer evictions from temporary accommodation.	December 2012	

TENANCY SUPPORT

Key Issue	Action	Resources	Lead Officer/Partnership	Measure Of Success	Target Date	Actual Outcome
4.1 Gaps in Provision of Support	Work with Supporting People Team to increase provision of tenancy support across all tenures.	Staff Time & SP funding	Housing Options Manager/ SP Team	A variety of new support is put in place, resulting in better move-on from supported housing projects and a reduction in tenancies lost, particularly in the	September 2011	

TENANCY SUPPORT						
Key Issue	Action	Resources	Lead Officer/Partnership	Measure Of Success	Target Date	Actual Outcome
				private sector.		
4.2 New Tenancies For Homeless Cases	Establish a procedure by which all new tenancies granted to statutorily homeless households or those leaving supported accommodation projects are accompanied by a tenancy support package.	Staff Time & SP Funding	Policy & Monitoring Officer/Housing Options Team Leaders/ Supported Accommodation providers	A reduction in the number of repeat homelessness acceptances and less failed tenancies for those moving from supported projects.	December 2011	
	Introduce joint risk assessments between the Council, RSL's and partner agencies.	Staff Time	Policy & Monitoring Officer	As above, the introduction of joint working will inform the levels at which tenancy support is required and any specialist requirements for clients.	December 2011	
4.3 Pre-Tenancy Assistance	Roll-out pre-tenancy training scheme (to be piloted at MACC) with all supported accommodation providers and other referring agencies.	Staff Time £15k for admin, materials, venues etc	Policy & Monitoring Officer	Improved move-on from supported housing projects and more non-statutorily homeless cases securing accommodation due to completion of training.	September 2011	
	Consider the provision of a storage facility for furniture for clients in	Staff Time Cost of storage (to be	Policy & Monitoring Officer	Clients are able to move smoothly to independent living,	June 2011	

TENANCY SUPPORT						
Key Issue	Action	Resources	Lead Officer/Partnership	Measure Of Success	Target Date	Actual Outcome
	supported accommodation who receive donations.	determined)		with less reliance on loans from Social fund.		
4.4 Crisis Intervention	Introduce a crisis intervention panel, made up of relevant agencies, to deal with cases where tenancies may be lost and a multi-agency approach is needed.	Staff Time	Policy & Monitoring Officer	Overlap of services is avoided and more tenancies are sustained due to shared workload on homelessness prevention.	September 2011	

PERMANENT ACCOMMODATION						
Key Issue	Action	Resources	Lead Officer/Partnership	Measure Of Success	Target Date	Actual Outcome
5.1 Social Housing	Work with RSL partners to increase the supply of social housing stock by increasing targets for the provision of this type of accommodation in new developments.	Staff Time	Policy & Monitoring/Housing Strategy Manager	More affordable accommodation available for homeless households & waiting lists reduced	March 2012	
	Nominations agreements with RSL's will be monitored, to ensure quotas are being met and properties from a range of developments are being offered.	Staff time	Policy & Monitoring Officer	The amount of accommodation for homeless households is maximised and homelessness is prevented by an offer of an RSL tenancy	September 2010	

PERMANENT ACCOMMODATION						
Key Issue	Action	Resources	Lead Officer/Partnership	Measure Of Success	Target Date	Actual Outcome
	Monitor the success of the forthcoming Choice-Based Lettings Scheme in meeting the needs of homeless & potentially homeless households & those moving on from supported accommodation.	Staff time	Policy & Monitoring Officer/ CBL Co-ordinator	Accessibility & support in using the scheme is such that a high proportion of vacancies are allocated to those in most need of accommodation.	December 2010 & on-going	
5.2 Affordable Housing	The Council will continue to offer a range of affordable housing options including an assisted purchase scheme, discount for sale schemes and shared ownership via RSL partners. Housing Options Teams will be kept up to date with the range of options available to clients.	Staff Time	Housing Strategy Manager/Housing Options Team Leaders	Households are able to access affordable housing and the use of this option is used more often in homelessness prevention.	On-going	
5.3 Private Sector	The work of the Private Sector Liaison Officers and information on how to access private sector housing will be widely publicised using a variety of Medias	Staff Time Cost of Literature	Private Sector Liaison Officers	Stakeholders and service users are aware of the services available and are able to utilise the private sector to access housing. A reduced number of tenancies in the private sector are lost by the timely	June 2010	

PERMANENT ACCOMMODATION						
Key Issue	Action	Resources	Lead Officer/Partnership	Measure Of Success	Target Date	Actual Outcome
				provision of advice.		
	The number of empty dwellings in the Borough will be reduced by encouraging any non-resident landlords to bring them back into use, grants for improvements will be offered where necessary.	Staff Time Renovation Grant Budget	Private Sector Team	A reduction in the number of empty properties and increase in the amount of accommodation available to help prevent homelessness.	March 2012	

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Cabinet Member for Prosperity

Date of Meeting: 13th September 2010
Report of: Stuart Penny, Planning Policy Manager
Subject/Title: Pre-Publication Partial Consultation on Manchester's Core Strategy

1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 This report sets out Manchester City Council's proposed policy approach to managing the growth of Manchester Airport through its Core Strategy, so that the growth requirements for the airport set out by the Government can be achieved i.e. of accommodating 45 million passengers per annum by 2030.

2.0 Recommendation

- 2.1 That the Cabinet Member for Prosperity approve that Cheshire East Council support Manchester City Council's policy approach to dealing with growth at Manchester Airport as detailed in its Core Strategy, subject to reference being made in the policy to ensure that detailed planning application proposals for airport expansion show that they would have no adverse impact on the highways network.

3.0 Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 In addition to making more efficient use of the existing operational area, Manchester Airport will need to expand its operational area over the plan period of the Core Strategy in order to grow to meet the capacity of 45 mppa as set out in the Future of Air Transport White Paper (2003) and amended in the UK Air Passenger Demand and CO2 Forecasts (2009).
- 3.2 The areas for expansion required to achieve this growth will no longer serve a Green Belt function over the lifetime of the Core Strategy, and there are exceptional circumstances which allow for revision of the Green Belt boundary through the Core Strategy.
- 3.3 The proposed South East Manchester Multi-Modal Study (SEMMMS) relief road will provide improved highway access to the airport from the east and assist the airport in meeting its expansion plans. However, funding for the scheme is currently uncertain and it is important that the policy is clear that the impact on the transport network, including the highway, will be a factor in determining planning applications for expansion.

4.0 Wards Affected

4.1 All Wards but particularly Bucklow, Knutsford and Wilmslow South.

5.0 Local Ward Members

5.1 Councillors A Knowles, J Macrae, G Walton, O Hunter, T Ranfield, S Wilkinson, G Barton, W Fitzgerald and R Menlove.

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

6.1 N/A

8.0 Financial Implications (Authorised by the Borough Treasurer)

8.1 N/A

9.0 Legal Implications (Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)

9.1 None for this Authority. Adjoining LPAs are required to consult this Council regarding the content of their Development Plan Documents.

10.0 Risk Management

10.1 N/A

11.0 Background and Options

11.1 Manchester City Council has published its 'pre-publication partial consultation' on its Core Strategy for consultation between 4th August and 15th September 2010. Following this partial consultation, statutory consultation on the 'Publication Draft' of the Core Strategy will take place in November.

11.2 Consultation on the 'Refining Options' stage took place in April and May 2009, followed by consultation on the 'Proposed Option' between November 2009 and February 2010. This Proposed Option put forward three possible options for managing growth at the airport, and this latest consultation now sets out the City Council's preferred option for the airport.

11.3 Cheshire East Council had previously supported the City Council's option 2 which broadly speaking was to:

"review the Green Belt boundary in the current operational area against the tests in PPG2 to determine which areas meet PPG2 requirements. Remove any areas which have been identified as no longer serving a Green Belt function. Prepare an Area Action Plan to consider proposals for further expansion to meet the capacity targets of the Future of Air Transport White Paper. An Area Action Plan would be required to demonstrate:

- *The need for and proposed use of specific areas of land*
- *There is no adverse impact on the highways network and surface access improvements are proposed to accommodate growth in passenger numbers*
- *Maximum possible reductions in noise*
- *Any adverse impact on areas of international or national conservation, ecological and landscape importance is avoided and where this is not possible appropriate mitigation measures are put in place to compensate for any adverse impact*
- *A further review of the Green Belt in areas identified for expansion and removal of the Green Belt only where it can be justified in terms of the tests of PPG2.”*

- 11.4 Following the publication of further evidence relating to the airport expansion and an independent review of the Green Belt in the vicinity of the airport, the City Council has chosen option 3 as its preferred approach. In addition to reviewing the Green Belt boundary in the current operational area, this option will also review the Green Belt boundary in the proposed expansion areas through the Core Strategy.
- 11.5 It is considered that the additional evidence published alongside this latest consultation addresses the points above that an Area Action Plan would have been required to demonstrate under the previous option 2.
- 11.6 In addition, PPG2 stresses the importance of establishing Green Belt boundaries that will endure. It is clear that in preparing new Development Plans, proposals affecting Green Belts should be related to a time-scale which is longer than for other aspects of the Plan. LPAs should be satisfied that Green Belt boundaries will not need to be altered at the end of the plan period and should consider ‘safeguarding’ land in this case. Although the format of Development Plans has changed since the publication of PPG2. It is clear that it is appropriate to set Green Belt boundaries which will endure over the lifetime of the Core Strategy.

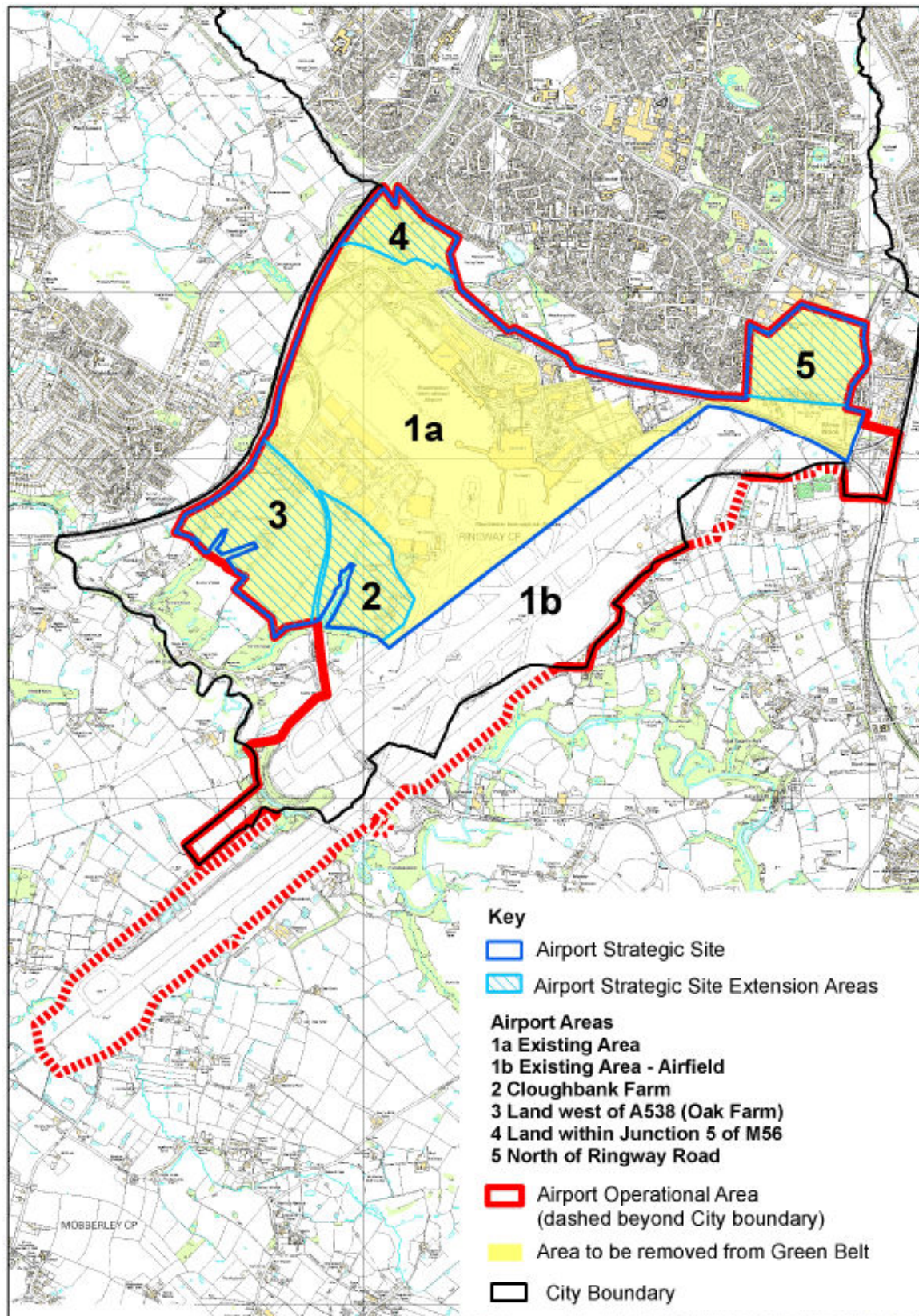
The Need For and Proposed Use of Specific Areas of Land

- 11.7 National Policy on Aviation is set out in The Future of Air Transport White Paper (2003), which concludes that capacity at Manchester Airport “*should in principle continue to grow to accommodate additional demand up to around 50 mppa by 2030*”. This figure has more recently been reduced to 45 mppa in to take into account the impact of climate change policies and economic forecasts in the UK Air Passenger Demand and CO2 Forecasts January 2009. The principle of growth of Manchester Airport to accommodate this number of passengers has therefore been set. The question is how to accommodate the growth.
- 11.8 The on-site requirements for accommodating 45 mppa by 2030 are set out in some detail in the airport’s ‘Need for Land’ document but the main principle of development is of land-use efficiency and technological improvement. The approach is for redevelopment of land within the existing boundary as far as possible and activities that do not need direct connection to the airfield moved to the site periphery, or offsite altogether.

- 11.9 For its passenger throughput, Manchester Airport is already one of the most land-efficient airports in Europe. Despite this, much of the increased capacity will come from efficiency improvements within the current operational area. When running at capacity, the airport currently processes 40,000 passengers per hectare of operational area annually. By 2030, this is projected to increase to 62,500 passengers per hectare of operational area annually.
- 11.10 Appendix A in the Need for Land document sets out how operation uses at the airport will be developed in the most efficient manner.
- 11.11 In addition to the more efficient use of the current operation area, additional land will also be required. Areas proposed for expansion are shown on the map overleaf as areas 2, 3, 4 and 5. Area 1a is the existing built area and area 1b is the existing airfield.
- 11.12 The City Council propose to designate the whole of the existing and expansion areas (excluding the airfield) as a Strategic Site. It is also proposed to remove the Strategic Site from the Green Belt.
- 11.13 The table below shows which uses are expected to be accommodated in each area in 2030:

Area	Area reference in MAG Masterplan	Uses
1a – Existing Area	N/A	Terminal, taxiways, aircraft apron, ancillary operational facilities, offices, hotels and other uses, surface access and car parking
1b – Existing Area (Airfield)	N/A	Runways, taxiways, airfield, operational and ancillary facilities, landscape mitigation, utilities and car parking
2 – Cloughbank Farm	A	Taxiways, aircraft apron, aircraft maintenance, operational facilities, cargo facilities and landscape mitigation
3 – Land to the west of the A538 (Oak Farm)	E	Operational facilities, cargo facilities and car parking and landscape mitigation
4 – Land within and adjacent to Junction 5 of the M56	C	Commercial / cargo development including airline offices and hotel with a new vehicle access to Thorley Lane
5 – North of Ringway Road	B	Surface access and car parking with new vehicle access to Ringway Road and Styal Road

- 11.14 It is considered that the evidence set out in the Airport Masterplan and the Need for Land document demonstrates the need for and proposed use of specific areas of land.



Highway & Transport Network Impacts

- 11.15 The Council's Strategic Highways and Transportation Section have been consulted and have provided the following response:

"The Ground Transport Strategy (GTS) will need to be updated to reflect the airport's growth aspirations setting out options to maximise access by sustainable modes of transport from Cheshire East. The strategy will need to reflect the decision on the South East Manchester Multi-Modal Study (SEMMMS) relief road scheme and, should the scheme not go ahead, or be substantially delayed, set out alternative options to provide improved highway access from the East. This may include capacity improvements to existing routes.

The strategy will need to demonstrate the extent to which surface access and car parking arrangements encourage the use of public transport, walking and cycling. Options should include influencing the rail franchising renewal process to maximise connectivity and support the role of the airport as an emerging public transport hub. Service frequency from Crewe and beyond is currently poor, especially at weekends. Consideration should also be given to improving bus access, including assessing the potential for express services from areas of the borough which currently have limited access to the airport, such as Poynton and Macclesfield." Other options to consider may include suitable park and ride schemes, perhaps linked to the rail network.

- 11.16 The suggested policy for the airport in the Core Strategy makes no specific mention of the need to ensure that detailed planning application proposals for airport expansion show that they would have no adverse impact on the highways network. This is considered important in view of the current uncertainty over whether the SEMMS scheme is to proceed.

Surface Access Improvements, Reductions in Noise and Impacts on Conservation, Ecology and Landscape.

- 11.17 The proposed policy wording requires that all future development proposed as part of the airport expansion would need to demonstrate that it contributes to the achievement of aims in these areas.

- 11.18 The proposed policy wording requires that:

"All development proposed as part of the Airport expansion should seek to ensure that any environmental effects of development are assessed at the planning application stage to ensure these create no greater negative impact than those identified in the Axis Environmental Baseline and Assessment reports. Any effects should demonstrate they can be mitigated or compensated, in particular:

- Minimise any adverse impact on areas of international or national conservation, ecological and landscape value. In particular, development should avoid the Cotterill Clough SSSI. Where it is not possible to avoid harm, mitigation measures to compensate for any adverse impact will be necessary. Development within the expansion areas must implement the mitigation measures agreed with the City Council, informed by an up to date environmental assessment;*

- *Retain or relocate the allotments in Area 4;*
- *Demonstrate the extent to which surface access and car parking arrangements encourage the use of public transport, walking and cycling,*
- *Seek the maximum possible reductions in noise through compliance with the Manchester Airport Noise Action Plan and Manchester Airport Environment Plan;*
- *Demonstrate that the number of people affected by atmospheric pollution is minimised and the extent to which any impact can be mitigated; and*
- *Improve access to training and job opportunities particularly for people in Wythenshawe and the local area.*

11.19 In addition, Appendix D in the Need for Land document provides a detailed summary of site constraints for each of the proposed operational area extensions and sets out proposals for mitigation measures in each case.

Review of the Green Belt

11.20 Entec has carried out a review of the Green Belt in the vicinity of Manchester Airport. The existing operational area and each of the proposed extension areas have been assessed against each of the purposes of including land in the Green Belt, as set out in PPG2. The outcomes are summarised in the table below.

11.21 Although the existing area (1a) no longer serves a Green Belt function, the report concludes that some parts of the proposed extension areas do serve a Green Belt function. However, PPG2 does state that existing Green Belt boundaries should not be changed unless alterations to the structure plan have been approved, or other exceptional circumstances exist, which necessitate such revision.

Site	Purpose of including land in the Green Belt				
	Prevent Unrestricted Sprawl	Prevent Neighbouring Towns Merging	Safeguard Countryside from Encroachment	Preserve the Setting and Special Character of Historic Towns	Assist in Urban Regeneration
1a – Existing area	No harm	No harm	No harm	Limited harm	No harm
2 – Cloughbank Farm	Limited harm	No harm	Moderate harm	Limited harm	No harm
3 – Land West of A538 (Oak Farm)	Significant harm	Moderate harm	Moderate harm	Limited harm	Limited harm
4 – Land Within Junction 5 of M56	Limited harm	No harm	No harm	Limited harm	Limited harm
5 – North of Ringway Road	Limited harm	Moderate harm	Limited harm	Limited harm	No harm

11.22 Following the change of Government, the RSS was revoked by the Secretary of State in July 2010. However, it is considered that the evidence (and debate at the Public Examination) relating to the RSS remains a material considerations and a sound basis for developing policy. The RSS required that plans and strategies should support the economic activity generated and sustained by the region's airports and emphasised the importance of Manchester Airport as a key economic driver for the North of England. Development of the Manchester Core Strategy Proposed Option had followed the requirements of the RSS prior to its revocation in that *"in determining requirements for the expansion of an airport beyond its existing boundary, plans and strategies should take account of:*

- *The scope for intensification and rationalisation of activities and facilities within the existing boundary;*
- *The scope for relocating existing activities or facilities off-site;*
- *The scope for developing proposed activities or facilities off-site."*

11.23 In addition, as a result of evidence gathered through the RSS development process, the RSS policy on Green Belts made specific reference to the possibility of making detailed changes in Green Belt boundaries to accommodate the expansion of Manchester Airport.

11.24 In the case of Manchester Airport, it is considered that there are a number of exceptional circumstances which justify the review of the Green Belt through the Core Strategy:

- 11.25 There is clearly a conflict between the national policy set out in the Air Transport White Paper for the growth of Manchester Airport, and its designation within the Green Belt. However, the Inspector at North Somerset Replacement Local Plan Enquiry confirmed that the Air Transport White Paper can be considered as an exceptional circumstance to justify an amendment to the Green Belt boundary to ensure its delivery:
“Consequently, I consider that the test of PPG2 concerning a strategic basis for a change to the Green Belt boundary at Bristol International Airport is met. Even if this were not so, then I consider that the publication of the Airport’s White Paper as a statement of Government policy constitutes an ‘exceptional circumstance’ to warrant such action”
- 11.26 By its very nature, operations at Manchester Airport are at a fixed location which cannot be accommodated elsewhere. Many operational uses require direct access to the existing airfield therefore must be on land directly adjoining the airfield. There are also no suitable non-Green Belt sites.
- 11.27 Within the city-region (including Cheshire East), Manchester Airport is a key economic driver, adding value to the attractiveness of the area for inward investment and indigenous businesses. The airport also plays an important role in attracting inbound tourism to the region, and is a significant provider of employment in its own right. The Airport have indicated that in 2009 it facilitated over 215,000 Business trips and 570,000 Leisure trips that originated in the Borough, as well as employing over 1300 of our residents i.e. almost 7.5% of the airports total workforce. Therefore, the growth of the airport can be considered a significant catalyst for the economic development of the city-region.

Access to Information

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

Name: Stewart House

Designation: Principal Planning Officer

Tel No: 01625 504669

Email: stewart.house@cheshireeast.gov.uk

- Manchester City Council Pre-publication Partial Consultation on Manchester’s Core Strategy
- Manchester Airport – The Need For Land
- Axis Environmental Baseline Study
- Axis Environmental Assessment
- Entec Green Belt Review
- Manchester Airport Masterplan
- The Future of Air Transport White Paper
- UK Air Passenger Demand and CO2 Forecasts January 2009

This page is intentionally left blank