

Cabinet Agenda

Date: Monday, 3rd October, 2011
Time: 2.00 pm
Venue: Committee Suite 1,2 & 3, Westfields, Middlewich Road,
Sandbach CW11 1HZ

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

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

1. **Apologies for Absence**
2. **Declarations of Interest**

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

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

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

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

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

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

4. **Minutes of Previous meeting** (Pages 1 - 10)

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 5 September 2011.

5. **Key Decision 17 - Carers Strategy and Implementation Plan** (Pages 11 - 56)

To consider the Strategy and Implementation plan and in doing so support and endorse the strategy for Cheshire East Council and its resident Carers and their families. (Appendix 1: Carers Strategy, Appendix 2: Implementation Plan).

6. **ICT Strategy 2011-12** (Pages 57 - 76)

To endorse and approve the corporate ICT Strategy 2011-2012 to enable it to progress to publication and enable implementation.

7. **Notice of Motion Submitted by Councillors S Jones and R Fletcher** (Pages 77 - 80)

To agree that this matter be referred to the Safeguarding Adults Board, with a view to them examining the matter and reporting back on the issues as set out in the decision requested.

8. **Draft National Planning Policy Framework** (Pages 81 - 94)

To consider the comments of Strategic Planning Board on the Draft National Planning Policy Framework and to recommend that Council approves the consultation response, as detailed in Appendix 1 of the report.

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

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

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

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

10. **Managing Workforce Change** (Pages 95 - 100)

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

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCILMinutes of a meeting of the **Cabinet**

held on Monday, 5th September, 2011 in Committee Suite 1,2 & 3,
Westfields, Middlewich Road, Sandbach CW11 1HZ

PRESENT

Councillor W Fitzgerald (Chairman) *in the chair for agenda items 1 - 8*
Councillor R Domleo (Vice-Chairman) *in the chair for agenda items 9 - 14*

Councillors Rachel Bailey, D Brown, H Gaddum, J Macrae, P Mason and M Jones.

Councillors in attendance:

Rhoda Bailey, D Brickhill, L Brown, J Clowes, K Edwards, P Findlow, R Fletcher, D Flude, S Gardiner, M Grant, P Groves, D Hough, O Hunter, L Jeuda, J Jackson, S Jones, F Keegan, G Merry, B Moran, B Murphy, H Murray, M Parsons, J Saunders, L Smetham, A Thwaite and S Wilkinson.

Officers in attendance:

Borough Solicitor and Monitoring Officer; Director of Finance and Business Services; Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development; Head of Policy and Performance; Strategic Director (Children, Families and Adults); Strategic Director (Places, Organisational Capacity).

45 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor R Menlove.

46 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors D Brown and S Jones both declared a personal interest in agenda item 5 (Transfer and Devolution to Town and Parish Councils) by virtue of being members of Alsager Town Council and Congleton Town Council respectively.

47 PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME/OPEN SESSION

1. Councillor John Crowther of Congleton Town Council presented a petition 'Say No To Cheshire East Alfresco Charges', and read out a covering letter (both of which can be viewed on the Councils Website). The petition related to the recent introduction of license charges for alfresco seating in Congleton Town Centre.

The Chairman thanked Councillor Crowther for the petition. He stated that the Council was working hard to support the future prosperity of all its town centres and would review the points made in relation to the Alfresco

Policy. He would ask officers to look again at the fees and charges contained in the policy and would respond further in due course.

2. Item 5 – Transfer and Devolution to Town and Parish Councils

Councillor Carolyn Lowe of Sandbach Town Council welcomed the progress of this policy but expressed concern at the possibility of double taxation, the proposed financial support for town centre managers in Macclesfield and Crewe, existing funding reserves of Town and Parish Councils being taken into account in the transfer process, and the importance for Sandbach Town Council of the Small Common car park.

The Chairman confirmed that the Council was aware of these concerns and that they would be explored further in the ongoing discussions and negotiations.

3. Item 7 – Improvements in the Delivery of Adult Social Care Services – Building Based Services

Dr Thompson spoke in respect of the proposal to transfer day services and short break respite care from the Stanley Centre, Knutsford to other local facilities, and requested that a full impact assessment be carried out of the effect of such changes.

Charlotte Peters Rock spoke on the same matter, on behalf of the relatives of people currently attending the Centre, and on the range of changes which were affecting both carers and the cared for. It was requested that a full assessment be made of all their needs before taking a decision to close the Centre.

4. Mr Goodwin made a statement regarding the mileage rate paid by Cheshire East Council to Councillors and Council staff which, he stated, was higher than the national recommended amount resulting in expenditure being £1m more than necessary.

48 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 1 August 2011 be approved as a correct record.

49 KEY DECISION 10/11-62 TRANSFER AND DEVOLUTION TO TOWN AND PARISH COUNCILS

(Councillors D Brown and S Jones had both declared a personal interest in this item.)

Consideration was given to the progress of negotiations with participating local authorities regarding the transfer of assets and services designed to maximise the local focus of service delivery and give each Town and

Parish Council an increasingly important role in deciding what should be delivered in its locality and how it would be best delivered.

Eight Town Councils and eighteen of the larger Parish Councils were now ready to discuss the potential transfer of assets and services the discussions on which were at an advanced stage. It was, however, stressed that this was an ongoing process and that all parishes were welcome to discuss ideas for service delivery or transfer of assets as they arose.

The report set out the current proposals for the transfer of assets and services starting from 2012 although it was recognised that it might be some time into the next financial year before the transfer took place for more complex assets. Members were asked to note that the public conveniences in the France Hayhurst Pavilion, Middlewich had been included on Appendix A in error and they were not to be included in the transfer process.

Visiting Councillors expressed concerns regarding the proposed financial support for the Town Centre Managers in Crewe and Macclesfield, the opportunity for double taxation on a range of transferred services, the need for openness and transparency regarding the precepts that might be levied by Town and Parish Councils, the intention to take the current financial reserves of existing Town and Parish Councils into account, and the proposal to apply a period of 25 years to any overage clauses.

The Chairman stressed that negotiations on all these matters were ongoing and that approval of the recommendations contained in the report were the start of the process; discussions would continue to seek to achieve a satisfactory outcome.

RESOLVED

1. That delegated authority be given to the Strategic Director (Places and Organisational Capacity), to the Section 151 Officer, and to the Monitoring Officer, to finalise agreed legal and financial terms for a package of transfers (or leases) of the assets and functions contained in Appendix A of the report, with the exception of the public conveniences in the France Hayhurst Pavilion, Middlewich, with a view to transfer taking place by April 2012 or as soon as possible following that date where that is agreed by both parties.
2. That the legal terms include those points listed in section 10.12 of the report. Both parties will be expected to complete negotiations in a reasonable timeframe. It is anticipated that Civic Halls and Community Centres will be by freehold transfer for disposal at a nominal value and that, in negotiation, both parties will agree on either a transfer or a lease arrangement for the Markets and Public Conveniences with allotments likely to be transferred by way of a long lease.

3. That the contents of Appendix B of the report be noted. At this stage these assets are not approved for transfer but will be reviewed on a case by case basis as part of the overall package to transfer. Such decisions to be delegated to the relevant portfolio holder(s). An initial analysis of these assets indicates that a number of them will not be suitable for transfer.
4. That approval be given to the transfer of “other services” as listed in section 10.4 of the report.
5. That the potential overall financial implications of the implementation of this policy and the potential impact on precept levels and on Cheshire East’s budget be noted.
6. That the new delivery model for Town Centre Management, as detailed in section 10.7 of the report, be noted.
7. That the position in the un-parished areas of Crewe and Macclesfield, and in newly parished Wilmslow as detailed in section 10.8 – 10.10 be noted.
8. That it be noted that additional support costs in property and legal services will be funded from the Ear Marked Reserve.
9. That the terms of transfer and implications be discussed with both the District Valuer and the External Auditor to ensure their relevant feedback is reflected in the agreements.
10. That the joint Officer/ member working group be thanked for its work which has been instrumental in achieving the progress to date; and that in line with the reports recommendations, and the fact that negotiations are at an advanced stage, it was considered that the group should no longer continue in its current form and therefore be dissolved.

50 KEY DECISION 11/12-3 CHESHIRE AND WARRINGTON LOCAL INVESTMENT PLAN 2

Consideration was given to the Housing Local Investment Plan 2. The first Plan for the sub region had been approved in 2010 and whilst its revision was optional the Cheshire and Warrington Sub Regional Board had decided to develop a second Plan building on the original document but responding to changes in both the policy and financial environment for housing over the last twelve months.

RESOLVED

That approval be given to the Housing Local Investment Plan 2 for 2011 – 2015.

51 KEY DECISION 11/12-10 IMPROVEMENTS IN THE DELIVERY OF ADULT SOCIAL CARE SERVICES - BUILDING BASED SERVICES

Consideration was given to a policy of improving day and short break/respite services in adult social care and to optimising the Council's building stock to improve the quality of service delivery for customers.

It was stressed that the review would not mean any loss of services but reflected the changing patterns of demand for traditional services, changes in what people wanted to be delivered from the services and in how they chose to spend their personal budgets, and that the report contained proposals for change on which the views of relevant individuals would be sought.

In response to concerns regarding the proposals, and the effect of any changes on both carers and those being cared for, the importance and value of their responses was reiterated. Care would be taken to ensure that the right people were consulted and intermediate briefing sessions updating Members would be given.

RESOLVED

1. That Cabinet notes the impact of Personalisation and in particular the changing demand for specialist traditional social care provision. There is also a requirement for the Local Authority to stimulate the independent and third sector market for a greater range of alternative service provision. A consequence of these factors is a proposal to transfer day services and short breaks from Bexton Court, Peatfields, Dean Row, the Stanley Centre and Queens Drive to other local facilities. This proposal is balanced by investment in order to enhance the facilities and services at Redesmere, Hollins View and Mountview together with the Leisure Centres in Wilmslow and Macclesfield as detailed in appendix A of the report. Similar minor investment has already taken place at Mayfields.
2. That it be noted that the proposals support the introduction of 'Lifestyle' type activities designed to broaden choice and integration for individuals whilst pursuing the corporate goal of enhancing the health & wellbeing of the population as a whole.
3. That Cabinet recognises that this is the first stage of examining Borough wide day service and short break/respite provision. It requests that follow up work is undertaken to assess the business case for further stages.

4. That officers be authorised to seek the views of relevant individuals to the proposed changes and that the outcome of this be reported to Cabinet in December 2011. This paper will also include final proposals for any service transfer and incorporate a staged approach for delivering services for those with more complex needs.
5. That Cabinet endorses the minor capital investment programme to a range of health and wellbeing buildings as set out in 7.3 of the report.

Councillor W Fitzgerald left the meeting and Councillor R Domleo took the chair for the remainder of the agenda.

52 FIRST QUARTER REVIEW OF PERFORMANCE

Consideration was given to the financial and non financial performance of the Council during the first quarter of 2011/12. The report included an update on the Councils overall financial stability, projections of financial performance for each service for the current financial year, a summary of key performance headlines to date, and an explanation of the key points emerging.

RESOLVED

1. That the following financial issues be noted:
 - the overall financial stability of the Council, including Grants, in-year collection rates for Council Tax and Business Rates, Treasury Management, and centrally held budgets detailed in Annex 1 of the report;
 - the impact on the Council's general reserves position detailed in Annex 1 of the report;
 - the forecast service revenue and capital outturn positions detailed on Annex 2 of the report;
 - the Council's invoiced debt position as shown in Annex 2 of the report;
 - progress on delivering the 2011-12 capital programme, detailed in Annex 2 and Appendix 1 of the report;
 - Delegated Decisions approved by Directors for Supplementary Capital Estimates (SCE) and virement requests up to £100,000 as shown in Annex 2 Appendix 2a of the report;
 - Delegated Decisions approved by Directors in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder and the Portfolio Holder for Resources for Supplementary Capital Estimates and virement requests over £100,000 and up to and including £500,000 as shown in Annex 2 Appendix 2b of the report.
2. That the service performance issues, contained in Annex 3 of the report, and the successes achieved during the first quarter of

2011/12 be noted and issues raised in relation to underperformance against targets be addressed.

3. That approval be given to :
- the retention of £0.4m of earmarked reserves previously identified for return to general balances;
 - a Supplementary Revenue Estimate of £3.0m to create a central contingency from additional non-ringfenced grant funding, to be the subject of bids from services detailed in Annex 1 of the report;
 - Supplementary Revenue Estimates for services of £2.2m to be met from the central grants contingency, detailed in Annex 2 of the report;
 - Capital virement requests over £500,000 and up to and including £1.0m, as shown in Annex 2 Appendix 2c of the report.

53 RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY REVIEW

Consideration was given to the Council's updated Risk Management Policy which formed part of the overall internal control framework and corporate governance arrangements. The Strategy had last been amended and approved in July 2009 and it was recommended that it should be reviewed annually.

RESOLVED

That the updated Risk Management Policy be approved and that it be reviewed annually from now on.

54 BUSINESS GENERATION CENTRES

In response to a request by the Portfolio Holder for Prosperity, a Task and Finish Group had been set up by the Corporate Scrutiny Committee to review Business Generation Centres with a view to helping to shape the Council's future policy.

In accordance with the overview and scrutiny procedure Cabinet was asked to receive the recommendations at this stage and to come back to a later meeting with a formal response to its recommendations.

RESOLVED

That the report be received and that a formal response to its recommendations be given at a future meeting of the Cabinet.

55 NOTICE OF MOTION - MEMORIAL TO ROYAL ENGINEERS, ALVASTON HALL, CREWE

At a meeting of the Council on 21 April 2011 a Notice of Motion had been submitted by Councillors D Flude and C Thorley to investigate the possibility of erecting a small memorial in the Crewe area in recognition of the bravery of the Royal Engineers killed by one of four bombs that fell in a field opposite Alveston Hall in August 1940.

Consideration was now given to the options which could be pursued; the preference for which was option 1 detailed in paragraph 10.3 of the report, namely to place a plaque or other small memorial as close to the site of the tragedy as possible. This approach was favoured by the Royal Engineers Association and by Councillors Flude and Thorley.

RESOLVED

1. That approval be given to proceed with the erection of a small memorial as detailed above.
2. In the event of the favoured location being on private land that the Borough Solicitor be authorised to enter into such agreements as are necessary to give effect to the Cabinet wishes and to agree the terms of such agreements.

56 NOTICE OF MOTION - RESIDENTIAL CARE MARKET

At the meeting of the Council on 21 April 2011 a Notice of Motion had been submitted by Councillors D Flude and C Thorley regarding instability in the residential care market in Cheshire East and its potential impact on the finances of the Council. It was requested that a Scrutiny Committee Task and Finish Group be set up to determine the best means of managing demand for residential care including demand from returning self funders.

RESOLVED

That the matter be referred to the Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee with a view to them examining the matter and reporting back on:

- The stability of the residential care market in Cheshire East
- The availability of residential care at affordable prices in Cheshire East
- The success or otherwise of current measures to manage the demand for residential care in Cheshire East.
- The success or otherwise of measures to support self funders to remain independent of Council funding for longer

57 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED

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

58 MANAGING WORKFORCE CHANGE - SEVERANCE PROVISION

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

RESOLVED

1. That the terms detailed in section 10.2 to 10.4 of the report continue to apply from 1 October 2011 until April 2012.
2. That the Council's severance scheme and related practices be reviewed again before 30 April 2012.
3. That Cabinet supports the decision of the Chief Executive to release the employees whose roles are listed as 1 to 13 of Appendix A of the report under the arrangements agreed in relation to voluntary severance provisions for employees in the Council.
4. That Cabinet notes the three employees listed as 14, 15 and 16 in Appendix A of the report, whose voluntary severance was approved by the Procurement, Assets and Shared Services Portfolio Holder under the terms of his delegated powers, in response to requests from management.

The meeting commenced at 2.00 pm and concluded at 4.45 pm

W Fitzgerald (Chairman)

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CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Cabinet

Date of Meeting: 3 October 2011

Report of: Rob Walker, Commissioning Manager CEC (Carer Lead)

Subject/Title: Carers Strategy and Implementation Plan

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Roland Domleo & Cllr Hilda Gaddum

1.0 Report Summary

1.1 This report aims to inform Cabinet of the Carers Strategy, its development and Implementation Plan.

2.0 Decision Requested

2.1 To consider the Strategy and Implementation plan and in doing so support and endorse the strategy for Cheshire East Council and its resident Carers and their families. (Appendix 1: Carers Strategy, Appendix 2: Implementation Plan).

3.0 Reasons for Recommendations

3.1 The recommendations arise from a series of consultation events where the views of Carers have been sought by members of the Carers Reference Group across Cheshire East. The strategy is the outcome of those consultations, national drivers for Carers and legislation which relate directly to Carers.

3.2 The endorsement of the strategy by Cabinet will demonstrate the commitment of the Council across all directorates for the support of Carers and their families, and will assure that services embrace the needs of Carers within their areas of responsibility.

3.3 The 2001 Census identified that there were 36,704 Carers within Cheshire East, but we anticipate a significant rise in the number identified in the 2011 Census.

3.4 It is important for Cheshire East Council to formally record its appreciation for the work done by Carers and to recognise this contribution as a vital part of the overall approach to delivering better outcomes for the citizens of Cheshire East.

4.0 Wards Affected

4.1 All wards

5.0 Local Ward Members

5.1 All ward members

6.0 Policy Implications including

- Carbon reduction

- Health

6.1 The recommendations have implications for CEC Corporate objectives and their link to policies

- **Corporate Objective One** – To give the people of Cheshire east more choice and control about services and resources **Co**
- **Corporate Objective Three** –To improve life opportunities and health for everybody in Cheshire East **Co**
- **Corporate Objective Five** – Being an excellent Council and working with others to deliver for Cheshire East **Co**

6.2 *Caring can be very rewarding and fulfilling but it can also be emotionally and physically draining without recognition and practical and emotional support.*

6.3 *There is a clear relationship between poor health and caring that increases with the duration and intensity of the caring role. Those providing high levels of care are twice as likely to have poor health compared with those without caring responsibilities. Young working age adults, for example those caring for a child with either physical or mental health problems, are more likely to have ill health than non-carers of the same age. Carers can also experience significant strain from a lack of knowledge about the nature of the problem, stigma, relationship problems and financial hardship. Carers who feel forced to give up work to care are also at particular risk of ill health. Caring for people with dementia can exact a heavy toll on the care providers, many of whom will be older people, over the course of the illness.*

6.4 *Carers can neglect their own health because they are so busy supporting someone else. But other health problems can arise that are directly associated with the caring role. Stress and anxiety can be related to concerns about the person who is being cared for, frustration about a lack of information and advice and 'battling' with systems and organisations to obtain help and services. Depression can be related to financial worries and social isolation, and loss of self-esteem and confidence. Poor physical health, for example high blood pressure and heart problems, can be attributed to the anxiety associated with caring, and musculoskeletal problems can be attributed to inappropriate lifting and moving. And bereavement can be associated with poorer mental and physical health and increased use of health services.*

Much of this ill health is avoidable or can be minimised. Supporting carers to remain physically and mentally well is therefore a key part of the prevention and public health agenda. Employers, health and social services, voluntary organisations, families, neighbours and friends can contribute in many different ways to support

carers' health and well-being and this is particularly important for older carers and carers of children with complex, long-term disabilities.

(Source: *Recognised, Valued and Supported: next steps for the carers strategy HM Government 25 November 2010*)

7.0 Financial Implications (Authorised by the Borough Treasurer)

- 7.1 The current funding for services to Carers is met through existing funding allocated to Voluntary, Community and Faith sector organisations from the former Carers Grant. The Carer's Grant was originally paid as part of the Area Based Grant, three year allocation for the period April 2008 - March 2011. The grant funded was expected to cease from March 2011, but it has currently been included as part of the 2011/12 formula grant allocation for the Council. The formula grant funding is not ring fenced and this does mean that the Council can decide to allocate this funding to other priorities within the Council. Central government have not announced the funding allocations for 2012/13 onwards and as this service is reliant on grant funding there is a risk that if funding is reduced services will need to be reconfigured.
- 7.2 The strategy and Implementation plan through review may identify future funding requirements to develop services to Carers and their families. Re-procurement and decommissioning of some services to facilitate future service development may be required as the Strategy and Implementation plan are realised.

8.0 Legal Implications (Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)

- 8.1 Carers rights are enshrined within legislation which sets the responsibility of Social Services to carry out a Carer's Assessment for all carers.
- 8.2 The legislation includes:
- The Carers (Recognition and Services) Act 1995
 - The Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act 2004
 - The Work and Families Act 2006
 - The white paper 'Our Health, Our Care, Our Say' 2006
 - Putting People First: A shared vision and commitment to the transformation of Adult Social Care (HM Government 2007)
 - Carers at the heart of the 21st century families and communities (HM Government 2008)
 - The Carers Strategy 'refresh': 'Next Steps for Carers: Recognised, Valued and Supported (HM Government 2010)

More detail of these can be found in Appendix 3

9.0 Risk Management

- 9.1 Financial - None identified as outlined in 7.1 and 7.2

- 9.2 The risks associated with the strategy and implementation plan not receiving endorsement and ratification by Cabinet would represent a view which appears the council does not value Carers and their families in Cheshire East.

10.0 Background and Options

- 10.1 The production of the Carers Strategy and Implementation plan completes the work which has been undertaken from October 2010 to March 2011 by a sub group of the Carers Interagency Group.
- 10.2 Members of the group comprised of the Chair of the Carers Reference Group, Chief Executive Officer Princes Royal Trust for carers- Cheshire Carers Centre, Head of Involvement & Patient Experience & PCT Lead for Carers. Central and Eastern Cheshire Primary Care Trust (CECPCT) and Project Officers from Cheshire East Council Carers team.
- 10.3 The endorsement and implementation of the strategy underpins and demonstrates the value the council and its partners place in supporting Carers and their families across Cheshire East boundaries.
- 10.4 In April 2011 there was a change in the lead officer for Carers within Cheshire East Council which has given the opportunity to review in conjunction with the Head of Patient Involvement CECPCT the current services to Carers and the role of the Carers Interagency Group, additionally how the Cheshire East Carers strategy can influence change for carers.
- 10.5 The Carers Interagency Group functions as a steering group and its membership comprises of Carer representatives, lead officers from a range of Voluntary, Community and Faith sector organisations, Cheshire East Council and CECPCT officers.
- 10.6 Governance of the steering group is through the Integrated Strategic Commissioning board which will also monitor the Implementation plan (Commences October 2011).
- 10.7 Prior to April 2011, the Carers Interagency Group had been working toward improving services and information to Carers across Cheshire East but without a strategy to underpin priority work streams this became more difficult to achieve.
- 10.8 It is agreed that services to Young Carers within Cheshire East will be recognised through the strategy and a **Memorandum of Understanding** has been signed by the Directors of Childrens services and Adult services. Through the work of the Carers Interagency group a sub group is being established to draft with Young Carers' an Implementation plan. This is being supported by the Commissioning Manager for Children and Families. (See Appendix 4)

11.0 Access to Information

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

Name: Rob Walker

Designation: Commisioning Manager- Integrated Strategic Commissioning Unit

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Appendix 1 – Carers Strategy

Appendix 2 – Implementation Plan

Appendix 3 – Legislation and Legal Policy

(i)The Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act 2004.

This Act was implemented on 1 April 2005 to give carers more choice and opportunities to lead a more fulfilling life. Previous legislation only offered carers support in their caring role and carer's assessments did not necessarily have to take into consideration wider issues of carers' lives, such as training, employment and leisure. This Act amended the Carers (Recognition and Services) Act 1995 and the Carers and Disabled Children Act 2000.

(ii) The Work and Families Act 2006.

The act came into force in April 2007, giving carers new rights at work. The Act builds on the right to request flexible working for parents of children under 6 year's old, or under 18 years for a disabled child, and extended this right to include employees who care for or expect to care for adults.

The white paper

(iii) Our Health, Our Care, Our Say (DoH, 2006)

This White Paper announced a New Deal for Carers with the aim of improving support for carers through a commitment to update and extend The National Strategy.

(iv)Putting People First; A shared vision and commitment to the transformation of Adult Social Care (HM Government 2007)

This paper recognises that within the context of changing family structures, caring responsibilities will impact on an increasing number of people, therefore the care and support system should be fair, sustainable and unambiguous about the respective responsibilities of the state, the individual and the family. It established the expectation that family members and carers are treated as experts and care partners and supported programmes which enable carers to develop skills and confidence and to strengthen universal information, advice and advocacy for people needing services and their carers.

(v) Carers at the heart of the 21st century families and communities (HM Government 2008) updated by the 'Next Steps for Carers; Recognised, Valued and Supported (HM Government November 2010).

These policy statements set out the Government's vision for carers and the actions required over the next 10 years, to make the vision a reality. It is expected by 2018; carers will be universally recognised and valued as being fundamental to strong families and stable communities. To achieve this it is required that support will be tailored to meet individuals' needs, enabling carers to maintain a balance between their caring responsibilities and a life outside of caring, while enabling the person they support to be a full and equal citizen.

(vi)The Carers Strategy 'refresh'; 'Next steps; Recognised, Valued and Supported' (2010)

Next steps; Recognised, Valued and Supported sets out the Coalition Governments priorities for working with carers and carers organisations to ease the responsibility of caring. The document sets out the aim to support those with caring responsibilities to identify themselves as carers at an early stage, recognising the value of their contribution and involving them from the outset both in designing local care provision and in planning individual care packages. Additionally the paper states that those with caring responsibilities should be supported to fulfill their educational and employment potential and to remain mentally and physically well. Finally it establishes the right to personalised support both for carers and those they support, enabling them to have a family and community life.

Appendix 4 – Memorandum of Understanding

STRATEGY FOR CARERS IN EAST CHESHIRE 2011 - 2015

“To support all carers to live their lives on their own terms”



A partnership between Cheshire East Council and Central and Eastern Cheshire Primary Care Trust, Carers and Voluntary, Community and Faith sectors.



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1. FOREWORD

We welcome the creation of 'A Carers Strategy' that sets out the commitment to Carers as well as clear outcomes that we plan to achieve collaboratively.

We are delighted that this has been developed with a wide range of partners, Carers, third and independent sectors.

There is still much to do as this commitment to Carers' needs will lead to a work plan that will ensure that Carers are recognised and supported by businesses, employees and whole organisations, as well as at local community level with access to services/support. This broader recognition of Carers' needs is an ambition that we need to work together to achieve.

To support this wider recognition, this Carers Strategy will be shared corporately within the council and in other areas by health and social care staff.

Continuing to work collaboratively to develop a work plan ensures that Carers –

- are recognised and valued as partners.
- have access to services that are empowering, supportive, and give choice and control.
- are assured that the allocated funding provides flexible and personalised services.

The scale of the work to be done will be challenging in the current economic climate. However, by working together, using the framework outlined in this strategy, we will be able to progress towards priorities identified by Carers themselves.



Lorraine Butcher
**Strategic Director – Children's,
Families and Adults**



Mike Pyrah
**Managing Director,
Central and Eastern
Cheshire PCT**

2. INTRODUCTION

This strategy has been developed in partnership with Carers, Central and Eastern Cheshire Primary Care Trust, Cheshire East Council and Voluntary, Community and Faith sector organisations. It sets out our commitment to Carers across Cheshire East.

Our vision is **‘to support all Carers to live their lives on their own terms’**.

To achieve this vision, this document presents our objectives and outcomes for the next four years. It will be reviewed annually to reflect the changing needs and views of Carers, and will be delivered through an implementation plan.

The Carers Strategy for Cheshire East also reflects national developments in law and policy over the last 20 years, defining and describing Carers’ rights and the responsibilities of local authorities and health services in meeting the needs of Carers.

Most recently the national strategy document “Carers at the Heart of the 21st Century Families and Communities”, detailed the Government’s vision for Carers and the actions required over the next 10 years to make it a reality. This was reinforced by the publication of ‘Recognised, valued and supported: Next steps for the Carers Strategy’ in 2010. To make a real difference for Carers requires attention to issues including breaks, income, information and advice, the workplace, access to employment and training, emotional support, the health of Carers and the specific needs of Young Carers. The personalisation of services and support arrangements recognises the expertise of Carers in enabling them to design and direct their own support and be engaged in the support plan of the person they care for. Additional policy details can be found in Appendix 2 on page 16 of the strategy.

The 2001 Census identified 36,704 Carers in Cheshire East. It is likely that the 2011 Census will show a significant increase in this number. In Cheshire East alone Carers save society an estimated £500 million each year.

The strategy will provide a framework for Carers, local statutory and Voluntary, Community and Faith sector organisations to identify develop and deliver the best possible services to meet the needs of Carers in Cheshire East.

3. VIEWS OF CARERS AND THIRD SECTOR ORGANISATIONS

In order to achieve the vision set out in this strategy it was important to engage with Carers and Voluntary, Community and Faith sector organisations to identify needs and priorities that would help shape the objectives and outcomes for local Carers. The full range of views expressed by carers can be found in Appendix 1.

Some of the key messages from Carers in Cheshire East are:



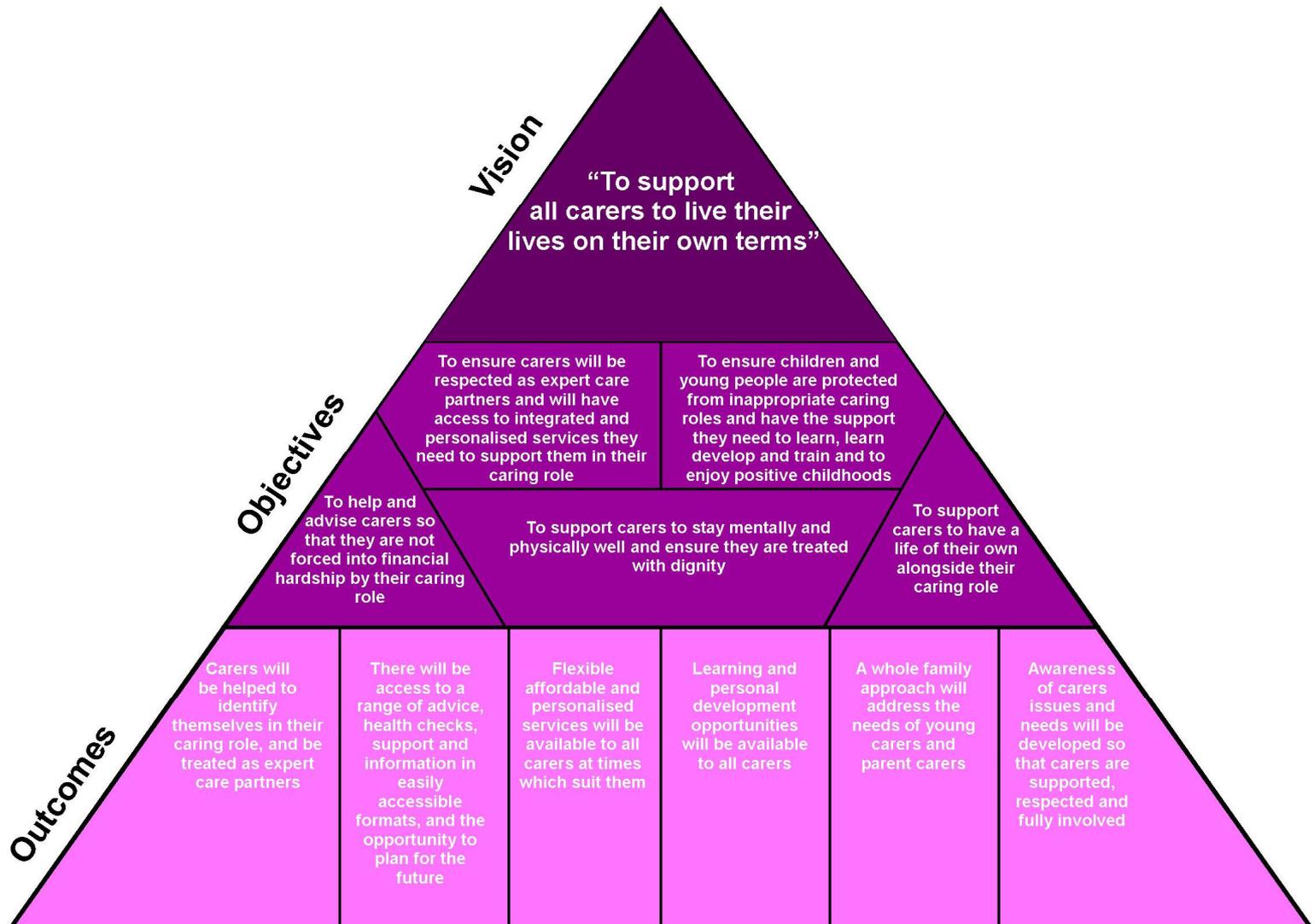
The Voluntary, Community and Faith sector plays an important strategic and operational role in supporting Carers in Cheshire East. The main Voluntary, Community and Faith sector Carers' organisations are represented on the Carers Interagency Group and collectively support around 5000 Carers. There are many Voluntary, Community and Faith sector organisations providing support for Carers in Cheshire East ranging from very small community based groups to local branches of large national charities. These groups make a substantial difference to the lives of Carers they support.

The key messages from these organisations in Cheshire East were:

- Partnership is an essential part of working to support Carers. No single agency can provide the wide range of services and support required by Carers with diverse individual needs.
- Personalisation presents both opportunities and challenges for Voluntary, Community and Faith sector organisations and at a time of considerable change they are being encouraged to extend their role and widen their services which support Carers.
- Representatives of the sector are keen to see the continued development of a range of quality, flexible and appropriate support services for Carers across the borough, reflecting each organisation's expertise.
- Avoiding duplication is essential as resources are limited but there should be choice of service providers who complement each other.
- The vast majority of Carers are unknown to any organisation and therefore helping Carers to identify themselves as Carers and to access support is a key priority.
- Voluntary, Community and Faith sector organisations recognise the importance of Carers' assessments in providing a comprehensive view of Carers' needs and ensuring they get the help and support needed.
- Voluntary, Community and Faith sector organisations will be instrumental in continuing to develop and improve support for Carers in Cheshire East.

4. VISION, OBJECTIVES AND OUTCOMES

The vision, objectives and outcomes set out in this strategy are demonstrated in the pyramid below.



The objectives shown in the pyramid are taken from the National Carers Strategy: 'Carers at the Heart of the 21st Century Families and Communities'.

The outcomes identified relate directly to the views of Carers and the priorities of Voluntary, Community and Faith sector organisations as well as addressing the national objectives.

Underpinning these outcomes are a set of work areas that will be met by Cheshire East Council, Central and Eastern Cheshire Primary Care Trust and a variety of Voluntary, Community and Faith sector organisations. Full details can be found at www.cheshireeast.gov.uk



5. HOW WILL WE DELIVER THIS?

Central and Eastern Cheshire PCT and Cheshire East Council have responsibility for commissioning services for Carers in Cheshire East.

Putting the strategy into practice involves planning, contracting, provision and monitoring of services. This will be managed through the Carers Interagency Group which meets every two months. Members of the group come from the PCT, the Council, other local Government organisations, local Voluntary, Community and Faith sector organisations and Carers.

The outcomes of the strategy will be delivered and measured through an action plan. This plan shows the detail of the steps that will be taken to achieve the outcomes. The Carers Interagency Group will monitor and review the action plan with Carers at their bi-monthly meetings. It will also be informed by the national Carers' survey which is due to take place every two years.

It has been agreed that the strategy will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Carers Interagency Group and independently through Cheshire East Carers Reference Group.

6. RESOURCES

Cheshire East Council commissions a range of services from Voluntary, Community and Faith sector organisations. These include information, advice and support, breaks for Carers, an Emergency Response Service and respite care services. Council resources are also used to provide community care services, including day and respite care for cared for people.

On a national basis the Government has provided additional funding to support the needs of Carers which will be made available through Primary Care Trusts. Central and Eastern Cheshire PCT will continue to provide services through many Voluntary, Community and Faith sector organisations. A number of diverse projects to support Carer breaks are delivered across the central and eastern Cheshire area.

The Department of Work and Pensions also provides services to help Carers into work and training.

7. LOCAL STATUTORY CONTENT

Cheshire East Council's Corporate Plan 2011-13 sets out key targets and priorities for the council based on what our communities have told us they want and need. The key objectives identified across the whole council are:

- a. To give the people of Cheshire East more choice and control about services and resources
- b. To grow and develop a sustainable Cheshire East
- c. To improve life opportunities and health for everybody in Cheshire East
- d. To enhance the Cheshire East environment
- e. Being an excellent Council and working with others to deliver for Cheshire

These objectives form the basis of the council's strategies, priorities, and service plans, and underpin this Carers' Strategy.

The council will be monitored against the performance of other councils through the national Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework. This will allow all residents of Cheshire East to see how their council is performing on certain measures against the performance of other councils around the country. Two specific measures relating solely to Carers are the extent to which:

- Carers can balance their caring roles and maintain their desired quality of life; and
- Carers feel that they are respected as equal partners throughout the care process.

Cheshire East Council continues to be committed to providing quality Carers' assessments and increasing the number of these over the next four years. The council will report on the percentage of service users whose Carers have an assessment of their needs and support plans for the year 2011/12.

Central and Eastern Cheshire PCT is statutorily accountable for ensuring that the key requirements set out in the 'Operating Framework for the NHS in England' are fully implemented to meet the needs of the local population.

The Operating Framework 2011/12 clearly sets out priority areas for supporting Carers. PCTs are accountable for agreeing policies, plans and budgets to support Carers with local authorities and local Carers organisations, and for supporting the provision of Carer breaks.

An equality impact assessment is available on the Carers' pages of the Cheshire East Council website:
http://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/social_care_and_health/carers_service_information.aspx

8. DECLARATION OF APPROVAL

Cheshire East Carers Interagency Group has been involved and engaged throughout the development of this strategy and fully supports the vision that Carers should live their lives on their own terms.

Cheshire East Interagency Group will ensure that the outcomes described are delivered through close monitoring of the implementation plan which underpins this strategy and supports the development and delivery of the best possible services to meet the needs of Carers in Cheshire East.



9. WORKING TOGETHER TO SUPPORT YOUNG CARERS

‘Working Together to Support Young Carers’ – a Memorandum of Understanding between Statutory Directors for Children’s Services and Adult Social Services – December 2009

This protocol, drawn up between the Association of Directors for Adult Social Services (ADASS) and the Association of Directors for Children’s Services (ADCS), encourages statutory Directors of Adults and Children’s Services to ensure that children who are Carers

“should be able to learn, achieve, develop friendships and enjoy positive, healthy childhoods just like other children.”

Directors of Adults and Children’s Services should make sure that:

- Young Carers are identified, assessed, and their families supported in ways that prevent inappropriate caring roles - regardless of which service is contacted first, children’s or adults.
- Earlier, better integrated and more effective responses to Young carers and their families are available.
- Children are protected from excessive or inappropriate caring roles; further inappropriate caring is prevented; parents feel supported in their parenting role, and that transition to adulthood is supported.
- No care or support package for a parent or sibling relies on excessive or inappropriate caring by a Young Carer to make it sustainable.
- Young Carers are helped to achieve their potential, and to have the same access to education, career choices and broader opportunities as their peers.

Cheshire East Council, Central and Eastern Cheshire Primary Care Trust are committed to working with Children’s Services staff and partners to ensure that the needs of children and their families across East Cheshire are met through this strategy to ensure that young carers **“are able to learn, achieve, develop friendships and enjoy positive, healthy childhoods just like other children.”** Work is in progress across Children’s Services to identify a work plan for Young Carers, children and families.

APPENDIX 1: CARER VIEWS

The following are the views provided by Carers in Cheshire East which have been used to form the outcomes that we will work towards in the next 4 years.

- There is a need for Carers to identify themselves in the caring role so that they will be able to access available help and support.
- GPs, other medical professionals and community services workers need to be trained to identify Carers and recognise the role that they play and to be able to signpost them to the vital support services.
- Education of all workers on Carers' issues should be a priority, with particular emphasis on senior managers to bring about a culture change towards Carers within organisations.
- Carers want people to take the time to understand their needs and the best way in which they can be supported, and to develop services to reflect this.
- All Carers' situations are different, and a range of services are needed to suit the individual – personalisation does not suit everyone.
- Carers require access to a range of information relevant to their needs in a timely manner and easily accessible formats.
- There should be access to a range of breaks for Carers which are flexible, affordable and at times that suit them.
- Services should enable Carers to design and direct their own support, have access to direct payments and be engaged in the support plan of the person they care for.
- Both generic and specialised support groups are needed. These provide an opportunity to gain mutual support, share information, advice and caring experiences, and help to reduce isolation.
- Support needs to be in place in case of an emergency.
- There is concern about what will happen to the cared for person when they can no longer care for them – long term planning is essential.
- Young Carers need to be identified and supported to ensure that they do not take on inappropriate caring roles.
- Carers and service user needs should be considered in the context of the whole family.
- Parent Carers often feel that services do not meet their needs, and they have difficulty in accessing social care support and communicating with education services.
- There are major concerns around the transition from Children's to Adults' Services.
- To help maintain good health and wellbeing, health checks should be offered to Carers through GP practices. These should include support in developing coping strategies.

- Learning and development opportunities should be available for Carers about a range of issues including Carer health, health of the cared for person, personalisation and direct payments, coping strategies, and what it means to be a carer.
- Carers want to be involved in co-production, working on the design of services from the start, not consulted at the end of the process.
- How can individual Carers or small groups of Carers get access to funding for work that they want to do to?

APPENDIX 2:

POLICIES AND LEGAL RESPONSIBILITIES RELATING TO CARERS

Carers' rights are enshrined within legislation which sets the responsibility of Social Services to carry out a Carer's assessment for all Carers. This legislation includes the Carers (Recognition and Services) Act 1995, the Carers and Disabled Children Act 2000, and the Carers (Equality Opportunities) Act 2004.

The Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act 2004

This Act gives Carers more choice and opportunity to lead a more fulfilling life. Previous legislation only offered Carers support in their caring role and Carers' assessments did not have to take into consideration wider issues of Carers' lives, such as training, employment and leisure.

The principle aims of the Act are to:

- Ensure that work, learning and leisure are considered in a Carer's assessment.
- Give local authorities new powers to enlist the help of housing, health, education and other local authorities in providing support to Carers.
- Ensure that Carers are informed of their rights.

The Work and Families Act 2006

This Act gives Carers new rights at work. It builds on the right to request flexible working for parents of children under 6 years old, or under 18 years for a disabled child, and extends this right to include employees who care for or expect to care for adults.

The white paper **Our Health, Our Care, Our Say** (DoH, 2006) announced a New Deal for Carers to improve support, reflecting developments in Carers' rights, direct payment regulations, Carers' assessments and grants. It also announced plans to:

- Establish an information service/helpline for Carers.
- Ensure that short term, home based emergency care is established for Carers in crisis or emergency situations.
- Allocate specific funding for the creation of an Expert Carers Programme.

Putting People First: A shared vision and commitment to the transformation of Adult Social Care (HM Government 2007)

This protocol sets out the Government's commitment to independent living for all adults. It recognises that the care and support system should be fair, sustainable and unambiguous about the responsibilities of the state, the individual and the family. This includes treating family members and Carers as experts and care partners; supporting programmes where Carers develop skills and confidence, and strengthening universal information, advice and advocacy for people needing services and their Carers.

Carers at the heart of the 21st century families and communities (HM Government 2008)

This gives the Government's vision for Carers and the actions required over the next 10 years to realise it. Support will be tailored to meet individuals' needs, enabling Carers to maintain a balance between their caring responsibilities and a life outside of caring, while enabling the person they support to be a full and equal citizen.

Specifically, by 2018:

- Carers will be respected as expert care partners and will have access to the integrated and personalised services they need to support them in their caring role.
- Carers will be able to have a life of their own alongside their caring role.
- Carers will be supported so that they are not forced into financial hardship by their caring role.
- Carers will be supported to stay mentally and physically well and treated with dignity.
- Children and young people will be protected from inappropriate caring and have the support they need to learn, develop and thrive, to enjoy positive childhoods and to achieve against the *Every Child Matters* outcomes.

Next Steps for the Carers Strategy

This document was published by the Government in November 2010. It identifies the actions that the Government will take in the next four years to ensure the best outcomes for Carers and those they support, including:

- supporting those with caring responsibilities to identify themselves as carers at an early stage, recognising the value of their contribution and involving them from the outset both in designing local care provision and in planning individual care packages
- enabling those with caring responsibilities to fulfil their educational and employment potential

- personalised support both for Carers and those they support, enabling them to have a family and community life
- supporting Carers to remain mentally and physically well

Carers and personalisation: improving outcomes

This document was published by the Department of Health in November 2010. It provides practical examples for achieving better outcomes for Carers through greater involvement, choice and control for Carers and by adopting whole family approaches.

The personalisation of services and support involves tailoring solutions as far as possible to the specific needs of Carers and their families. Universally available services should also be flexible in their approaches in order to respond to the variety of ways in which Carers can be supported. To achieve this, there is a need to recognise the expertise of Carers and enable them to design and direct their own support, have access to direct payments, and be fully engaged in the support plan of the person they care for.

The document identifies four key themes in personalising support including:

- Carers as expert care partners and whole-family approaches
 - *Ensuring that Carers' expertise is recognised and utilised in assessing, planning and reviewing support to the person they care for, and in determining and meeting their own support needs.*
- Early intervention and prevention
 - *Ensuring accurate, up-to-date and reliable information is easily available from a broad range of sources. This involves having a range of services and support that is available to all Carers.*
- Making self-directed support processes work for carers
 - *Personal budgets and self-directed support can contribute to a greater independence for both the Carer and the person they support, and enable Carers to have a life outside caring.*
- Market and provider development
 - *Giving people more choice and control through personalisation means the market and providers need to ensure that a range of quality, personalised support is available. This should be based on the strong engagement of carers in setting the direction for local commissioning.*



**If you require this document in a different format, i.e. large print or a different language, then please call
0800 5877 888.**

DRAFT Carers Strategy Implementation Plan - July 2011

In the "Strategy for Carers in East Cheshire 2011 - 2015", 6 outcomes for carers were identified as a priority. This plan shows the projects being undertaken across East Cheshire to achieve these outcomes. It is used to measure the performance of services provided and identify any gaps in provision. The Carers Interagency Group monitor and review the action plan at their meetings every two months.

Outcome 1. Carers will be helped to identify themselves in their caring role, and be treated as expert care partners

Outcomes	Action	Responsibility	Timescales / Milestones	Outputs & evidence	
1.1 There will be improved access to information for carers at GP surgeries	Have information boards at all GP surgeries, and ongoing training to keep GP and other carer link workers up-to-date. ■ Carer Development Link Worker, GP surgeries	PCT, Cheshire Carers Centre, GPs	End 2011	100% of surgeries will have carers' notice boards. There will be dedicated carer link workers, with training sessions undertaken and evaluations assessed. Verbal evidence will be recorded of individual outcomes.	
1.2 Making sure that the support carers receive is holistic and person-centred. Carers will be valued as expert care partners. Carers overall experience of services will be improved.	To increase the number of carers receiving an assessment in their own right and the quality of these assessments and outcomes ■ Carers Needs Assessments.	Cheshire East Council/Making Space	Apr-12	An increase to 35% (need to check) of community care assessments will have a corresponding Carers Assessment. Carers verbal testimony on value of this. [NI 135 Target 2010/11 was 22%).	Cheshire Esat Council, Making Space

Outcome 2. There will be access to a range of advice, health checks, support and information in easily accessible formats, and the opportunity to plan for the future

Outcomes	Action	Responsibility	Timescales / Milestones	Outputs & evidence	
2.1 Carers will be supported to look after their own health	Courses for adult carers who care for someone living with a long-term health condition or disability - relaxation, planning for the future, better communication etc. ■ Looking After Me Courses	PCT	Ongoing to end 2011	Number of carers taking up a place on courses. Verbal evidence of the value gained from the course by individual carers	
2.2 Carers will be supported to look after their own health	Carers will be encouraged to have regular health checks to protect their own health. ■ Carers' health checks	PCT, GPs, Cheshire Carers Centre	Ongoing	Number of carers taking up health checks, and the type of advice being sought by carers linking in to improved service provision.	PCT
2.3 Carers will feel supported both practically and emotionally and know where to seek help when needed. Peer-group support will be developed to complement more formal support.	Hold Carer Support Groups (including lunch groups, café groups, evening groups, new men's group) offering peer support, emotional and practical support. Some groups cater for the "carer and cared for". Also several health condition related support groups (MS, Parkinsons, Stroke Association) ■ Carer Support Groups	Cheshire Carers Centre, Crossroads Care, Making Space, Alzheimers Society, St Luke's Hospice, Neuromuscular Centre	Ongoing	Number of carers attending carer groups and the range of groups available. A verbal record of the value of services to individual carers.	

2.4 Carers will be better informed about the health condition of the person they care for and have strategies for dealing with this now and for the future.	Deliver carer training aimed at informing the carer of the implications of the health condition of the person they care for, both now and for the future <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Carers Training on Health Conditions (of the person they care for) 	Alzheimer's Society, Making Space, NeuroMuscular Centre, St Luke's Hospice	Ongoing	Number of carers attending carer training on health conditions. Verbal feedback on the value of this to individual carers.	
2.5 All carers given accurate, timely and up to date information to help them in the caring role.	Free helpline for Cheshire East Carers. Drop-in sessions, one to one casework, home visits with carers, outreach sessions and events. All organisations contribute to information and awareness raising (both general and specialist information) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Information and Advice to Carers 	Cheshire Carers Centre, Alzheimers Society, Making Space, Crossroads Care, NeuroMuscular Centre, St Luke's Hospice	Ongoing	Number of carers accessing the service. Verbal feedback on the value of this to individual carers	Job Centre +, Neuromuscular Centre
2.6 Carers who use the CEC website will have access to full and clear information on services available and where to go for more information.	Give all relevant information, making sure it is up-to-date. Making linkages to national sources of information as well as local partners, who in turn will make linkages as appropriate and make sure that their information remains up-to-date. Linking to the CEC Information Gateway project. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Cheshire East Information Gateway 	Cheshire East Council Carers Team, Strategic Commissioning, All	March 2012	All information on the website is up-to-date. Carers are supplied with links to timely information for all stages of caring.	Cheshire East Council
2.7 Carers will be supported to stay out of financial hardship	Welfare rights advice is available at the Cheshire Carers Centre, carers training courses, workers undertaking Carers Assessments, articles written in newsletters, reporting of benefits and targeted activity for carers regarding their rights. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Promoting the provision of information to carers of the benefits they are entitled to. ■ Providing good quality information, advice and support to maximise carers' incomes. 	Cheshire Carers Centre, Job Centre Plus, Individual Commissioning, , Citizen's Advice Bureau, Disability Information Bureau, All	Ongoing	Carers will have full access to the range of Job Centre activities, programmes and replacement care. Gather evidence from Carers courses, Carers centre and maximise income, report number of benefits appeals etc Number of carers assisted, individual evidence of support given. Evidence of work done to promote this service to carers.	Job Centre +
2.8 Physical and emotional wellbeing will be promoted and carers will have opportunities to be involved in wellbeing activities as part of their support plans.	Find opportunities to open up the Options card to all carers for affordable leisure activities, vouchers and access to sport to promote wellbeing. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Options card to access leisure and wellbeing activities 	Cheshire East Council Strategic Commissioning, Cheshire Carers Centre, PCT	March 2012	Availability of the Options card to all carers. Take up from carers of Options card vouchers / sporting and leisure activities to promote wellbeing.	
2.9 Carers will gain advice and information as well as peer support from other carers. There will be opportunities to have complimentary therapies, try out new activities and enjoy a well deserved break from their caring role.	To hold a Carers Day event for carers annually	Cheshire Carers Centre, Cheshire East Council Carers Team.	May 2012	Number of carers attending the event and the geographical spread of carers to ensure we reach a wider spread of people as possible. Testimonies from carers on the day.	

2.10 Carers will be signposted to information and services relevant to them. Carers issues will be highlighted. There will be an opportunity for people working with carers to meet one another and make common connections in their work.	To hold an annual Information/ health event	All	Carers Week annually	Evidence of publicity for the event. Numbers attending and evidence from feedback forms.	Care4CE
Outcome 3. Flexible, affordable and personalised services will be available to all carers at times which suit them					
Outcomes	Action	Responsibility	Timescales / Milestones	Outputs & evidence	
3.1 Carers will be enabled to have individual choice over specific services or essential items that will help them in their caring role.	Carers are able to apply to the Carers Fund which allows carers a one off payment for specific services or essential items and relaxation vouchers. ■ Carers Fund	Cheshire Carers Centre	To end 2011/12 financial year	Number of carers receiving a grant from the fund each year. Verbal testimony of the impact on individual carers. Evidence of the promotion of the fund.	
3.2 Carers will be provided with the means to have a break from the caring role, which is beneficial to health and wellbeing as well enabling the carer to have a life and interests outside of the caring role.	Promote and deliver breaks for carers allowing them to pursue leisure and wellbeing activities while their cared for person is looked after. ■ Carer Breaks	Crossroads Care, Making Space, Neuromuscular Centre, Alzheimers Society, Cheshire East Council Individual Commissioning, St Luke's Hospice	Ongoing	Number of breaks provided, number of carers supported, number of new carers joining schemes, verbal reports/case studies on the benefit to individual carers. Evidence of the promotion of these schemes through Carer Assessments and support plans as well as other avenues.	Making Space, Care4CE, PCT
3.3 Carer peace of mind to live a life of their own, knowing that their preplanned fallback support for a given period in case of emergency.	To provide a responsive service to carers in an emergency using established systems. The project will also identify carers who may only have emergency cover at the moment, but who may need further services in the future. ■ Carers Emergency Response Service (CERS)	Crossroads Care	Mar-12	In 2011/12 approximately 600 carers will be signed up for this service across the borough. A total of 975 carers had registered with the service to March 2011. A responsive service will be provided to carers in an emergency and details of emergencies responded to will be recorded	Neuromuscular Centre
3.4 Carers will be able to choose the support which is most appropriate to their situation and to buy it through their personal budget. * Pilot project limited to Crewe/Nantwich Local Independent Living Team area	Pilot the development of Personal Budgets to enable carers to buy services which support them in their caring role. ■ Personalised services for carers.	Cheshire East Council Carers Team, Strategic Commissioning, Individual Commissioning, Cheshire Carers Centre, PCT	To end 2011/12 financial year	The number of carers receiving a personal budget. A target of a minimum of 200 carers of adults/older people to receive a personal budget over 15 months. Evidence of concrete outcomes from carer assessments. Verbal/written reports from individual carers.	
Outcome 4. Learning and personal development opportunities will be available to all carers					
Outcomes	Action	Responsibility	Timescales / Milestones	Outputs & evidence	
4.1 Carers will be supported to cope with the caring role as well as being encouraged to have a life and interests outside caring. Enabling the family unit to continue longer.	Promote and deliver carer training, both in formal sessions commissioned to help in the caring role as well in as non carer-related training to assist carers have a life of their own. ■ Carers Training ■ Caring at Home and Educational Workshops	Cheshire Carers Centre, Making Space, Alzheimer's Society	Ongoing	Number and range of training courses available. Evidence of the promotion of the courses. Number of carers attending. Verbal testimony from individual carers. Improve coping strategies which delay access to long term services.	Making Space

4.2 Financial wellbeing and quality of life will be improved by supporting carers to have a life outside their caring role.	Assisting carers and former carers into employment, offering advice and guidance on vocational training and activities as well as signposting to funding sources and assistance. Carers and former carers can remain in or return to work, through the development of carers employment policies and the provision of good quality information, services, advice and support to carers and employers. ■ Supporting carers to stay in work/helped into work/education/voluntary	Commissioners, strategic / individual commissioning teams. Job centre plus/ Making Space	3 year review, links to funding streams and influenced by them.	Number of carers supported. Individual outcomes. Carer testimony on the impact of services provided.	Making Space
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Outcome 5. A whole family approach will address the needs of young carers and parent carers

Outcomes	Action	Responsibility	Timescales / Milestones	Outputs & evidence	
5.1 Young Carers will be identified and supported in their caring roles. They will receive practical and emotional support "to achieve and reach their full potential" in all areas of their lives.	The Young Carers Project provides ongoing emotional and practical support which facilitates peer support, recreational and social opportunities. Regular group sessions tackle issues such as bullying, negative self esteem and isolation. YC's spend time in a fun, informative and relaxing environment. Support with education, family life, finances and coping with their caring role. Attending any relevant meetings on behalf of the young carer. The well being of the Child and Young Person is paramount. ■ Crossroads Care Cheshire East Young Carers Project	Crossroads Care Cheshire East	Mar-12	Number of breaks Young Carer received. Number of Young Carers supported. Evidence by consultation and feed back. Annual reviews.	
5.2 Young carers will be considered as a part of the whole family, making sure that they do not fall into inappropriate caring roles	The Council and its partners will work together towards a whole family approach to carers, providing joined up support across adults and children's services, health and social care. ■ Whole family approach	Cheshire East Council / all	Ongoing		Cheshire East Council

Outcome 6. Awareness of carers' issues and needs will be developed so that carers are supported, respected and fully involved

	Action	Responsibility	Timescales / Milestones	Outputs & evidence	
6.1 There will be better awareness of carers' needs at GP practices	Implementing best practice guidance around identifying carers and providing information and signposting ■ Carer Development Link Worker (Primary Care)	PCT, Cheshire Carers Centre, GPs	End 2011	Increase in number of carers registered with Cheshire East practices and increase in referrals to other organisations by Carer Link Worker. Carers' perceptions of how they are treated and signposted appropriately	

6.2 The carers agenda in Cheshire East will be strengthened by having direct carer involvement. Carers will feel valued in their position as expert partner.	Operation of the Carers Reference Group. They will be recognised and given the opportunity to raise issues and provide carer views. The group will recruit new carers and make contact with other related groups. Continued financial support will allow the ongoing viability of the group. ■ Carers Reference Group	Carers Reference Group, Cheshire East Council Carers Team and Strategic Commissioners, All	End 2011	The group will aim to recruit 12 new carers to represent the diversity of the caring population. Number of carers as representatives on groups, providing a voice for carers and involved in developments across CEC Health and Third Sector partnerships.	
6.3 The carers agenda in Cheshire East will be strengthened by having direct carer involvement. Carers will feel valued in their position as expert partner.	Some third sector organisations run their own Carer Reference Groups and consultation arrangements to enable carers to express their views and issues. Carers are also invited to give personal testimony of their experience as carers and of the services provided to them. ■ Organisation's own individual Carer Reference groups	Individual organisations e.g. Crossroads Care	Ongoing	The individual carer reference groups will aim to make links to the Cheshire East wide Carers Reference Group.	
6.4	Making Space will continue with this work with care link workers, though protected time needs to be agreed by senior management for care link workers ■ Carer Link Training for professionals	Making Space			
6.5 Minority groups will be represented in planning and provision of services to ensure that they are relevant to the needs of all.	Working jointly to ensure that carers services are available to all in Cheshire East. Picking up issues from the Cheshire East Council Participation and Consultation Team events, targeting actions to address identified issues. Service providers to monitor take-up of services among whole spectrum of the population, and address any inequalities.	Cheshire East Council Carers Team / Equality & Participation Teams, All	Jan-12	Working with partners and other CEC departments to ensure that services, help and information are available to all carers who need them. Take up of services among minority groups monitored, and remedial action planned	
6.6 Support will be available for all carers in Cheshire East	There will be a requirement for services for carers funded by Cheshire East Council to monitor who is using their services.	All	April 2012	Figures on the amount of carers from different strands of the Single Equality Scheme accessing services and information for carers.	
6.7 Carers working for Cheshire East Council will feel supported at work and able to continue in this side of their life. This will also give increased financial stability.	Work alongside Human Resources and Policy to ensure that conditions for carers working within CEC are fair and that carers issues are understood. Promote and implement workplace policies which support carers in their caring role.	Carers Team, Policy, Human Resources	December 2011	Work with Job Centre Plus and CEC Policy department to agree a policy regarding carers working for Cheshire East Council	
6.8 The role and number of carers working within Cheshire East Council will be monitored.	Monitor staff by equality group to ascertain representation of those recruited, trained, promoted, disciplined and those that leave the Council. Any employee grievances should also be monitored. This includes carers working within Cheshire East Council. n Cheshire East Council Staff Monitoring	Cheshire East Council Human Resources	September 2011	Existing staff monitoring information will be refreshed. An appropriate process for gathering this information will be established.	

<p>6.9 Stronger links will be forged with future GP Commissioners, and awareness of carers' issues will be highlighted for them.</p>	<p>The PCT, Council, third sector partners and carer volunteers will run a series of training workshops at GP surgeries to raise awareness of carers issues and the benefits to GPs of identifying and supporting them.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Carers Awareness Training for GP surgeries 	<p>All</p>	<p>End March 2012</p>	<p>Number of GPs / practices training sessions. Evaluation forms. Individual feedback.</p>	
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MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING – YOUNG CARERS

1. Joint Statement of Intent

The cross government Strategy for Carers launched in 2008 sets out a clear and challenging vision for young carers. It is that:

*“children and young people will be protected from inappropriate caring and have the support they need to learn, develop and thrive; to enjoy positive childhoods and to achieve against all the **Every Child Matters** outcomes.” [p.123]*

The vision’s overriding priority is prevention: ensuring young carers are actively protected from excessive or inappropriate caring and parenting roles are supported. This vision has been central to preparing and the anticipated operation of this joint Memorandum of Understanding. This memorandum builds on the positive joint work that takes place now. It sets out our shared understanding of the issues. This is based on a shared set of aims about how we can deliver better integrated support for families with care needs that ensures better protection from harm and improved outcomes for young carers. It is our joint intention to ensure that all children are better supported not to undertake inappropriate caring by the provision of effective care and support for siblings and parents who need it. We will strive to achieve this within the resources available to us and the national and local policies and priorities that guide us.

2. Key Aims and Outcomes

Our main aim is to promote and improve the health and well-being of young carers and their families by preventing and protecting children and young people from undertaking excessive and inappropriate caring roles and responsibilities and preventing the continuation of inappropriate caring. This will be grounded in effective use of supportive practice guidance such as the **Key Principles of Practice** and within the outcome frameworks provided by **Putting People First** and **Every Child Matters**. Where a parent or another family member has care or welfare needs arising from physical or mental illness, substance misuse, or disability we will work together and with our partners in health and carers organisations to ensure that:

- there are no “wrong doors” and that young carers are identified, assessed and their families are supported in ways that prevent inappropriate caring and support parenting roles regardless of which service is contacted first;

- risks to independence, safety and welfare are responded to in line with **“Think family”** concepts and guidance on **“Working Together to Safeguard Children”**;
- earlier, better integrated and effective responses to young carers and their families are available using **“whole family pathway”** approaches and during transition to adulthood;
- children are protected from undertaking excessive or inappropriate caring roles; further inappropriate caring is prevented; emotional support is available where needed; and parents feel supported in their parenting role;
- no care or support package for a parent or sibling relies on excessive or inappropriate caring being undertaken by a young carer to make it sustainable;
- young carers are helped to achieve their potential; and, to have the same access to education, career choices and broader opportunities as their peers; and,
- there is better recognition and greater participation of young carers and their families in shaping what we do and in the development and delivery of responses that promote greater choice and control and prevent further inappropriate caring.

3. Young Carers: A Shared Understanding

We are agreed that the term “young carer” should be taken to include children and young people under 18 who provide regular and ongoing care and emotional support to a family member who is physically or mentally ill, disabled or misuses substances. The term does not apply to the everyday and occasional help around the home that may often be expected of or given by children in families. The key features for us are that the caring responsibilities persist over time and are important in maintaining the health, safety or day to day well-being of the person cared for and/ or the wider family.

We will continue to work together to develop a shared and more detailed understanding of the different types and levels of caring in our area. Our main focus, however, will be to ensure we

develop better ways of identifying where caring by children risks becoming excessive and/or inappropriate and putting in place the support that prevents this happening.

The central issues for us are those of recognition, adverse impact and support, including emotional support. Our approach relies on the premise, within a whole family approach, that:

“a young carer becomes vulnerable when the level of care-giving and responsibility to the person in need of care becomes excessive or inappropriate for that child, risking impacting on his or her emotional or physical well being or educational achievement and life chances”

4. Having a Multi-Agency Strategy

We will work together to ensure that, within the overall framework of our Local Strategic Partnership and Children’s Trust, there is a specific multi-agency strategy to meet the needs of young carers. We will ensure this strategy interfaces clearly

with both current and future local Children and Young People's Plans and planning frameworks for Adult Social Care.

The strategy will be developed in collaboration with key partners in health and local support projects for carers and families. It will embrace the views of young carers and their families and reflect the vision that is part of the national strategy. The resulting local strategy will be kept under review and progress shared with local people, young carers, families and partners.

5. Promoting Early Identification

It is our shared intention to review local practice and where appropriate to refine it to ensure that it:

- promotes positive images of adults living with long term conditions or disabilities that encourage families to seek information and assistance and identify those children with caring responsibilities;
- provides appropriate and accessible information for families about services that support parenting capacity, independence and well being;
- enables access to self directed support; including direct payments to meet the needs of parents where appropriate;
- reaches out to families to offer support that avoids inappropriate forms of caring developing or continuing;
- reflects principles of partnership working with communities, in particular, the need for sensitivity to cultural needs;
- supports schools in their key role of identifying children with additional support needs and early intervention and support of young carers.
- supports the **National Healthy Schools Programme**; the ability of the local NHS and PCTs in identifying young carers; and ensures that young carers have the same access to health provision, education and career opportunities as their peers;
- recognises the existence of "hard to reach" groups or families and creates opportunities to meet their needs;
- recognises that care needs can vary significantly and that local processes offer emergency advice and support where usual care arrangements risk breaking down; and,
- engages with local young carers' projects on early support and whole family working.

Support delivered effectively and early for the person requiring care and support that takes account of the needs of dependent children in the family should, in many cases, be sufficient to protect young carers. Almost inevitably, however, there will be some families whose support needs come to light late and when caring by the child is deeply entrenched. In such cases, it may well be necessary to consider the unmet care or parental support needs of the person cared for and determine what tailored support young carers require immediately and in the longer term, to improve their situation and to reduce the pressures on them.

6. Assessment

We are agreed that the key to ensuring better support and outcomes for young carers is effective assessment. As Statutory Directors we will ensure that when a referral is made about a parent with a disability, dependency or illness, agencies consider whether there is a child in the family who is providing personal care or practical help. In doing so, practitioners will also be expected to consider, within a **whole family approach**, the impact of the disability or illness on each child within the family; including whether any of them are or could be providing some form of care or not. We expect action would be taken to assess:

- What additional services may be needed to ensure care needs are met and to prevent a child taking on or continuing to hold inappropriate caring responsibilities.
- Whether the parent needs support in his or her parenting role or in developing parenting capacity.
- What can be offered to help the whole family or to maximise the broader support which others in the family are able to provide.
- Whether the impact on the child indicates that it would be appropriate to undertake an assessment under the **Framework for Assessment of Children in Need and their Families** or under the Carers and Disabled Children Act 2000
- Whether there are additional needs falling within the **Common Assessment Framework for Children [CAF]** [updated 2009].

We expect appropriate use of the **"Think Family"** toolkit and protocol and, where consistent with the aims of this Memorandum of Understanding, that we embed this and ensure that:

- The primary responsibility for responding to the needs of young carers derives from the person in need of care and support. This means that whichever service identifies there is a young carer in the family, whether it is children's or adults' social services or PCT led, is responsible for assessing the needs of that young carer within that family context.
- Practitioners will seek advice and support where necessary from colleagues, whether it is children's or adults' social services or a partner agency, to support discharge of our joint and separate responsibilities towards young carers and their families.
- Practitioners will be aware of the prejudices and stereotypes that may exist around cultures, and disability, or about adults who misuse drugs/alcohol or have mental health needs and in terms of their parenting capacity and competence.
- Practitioners will reach their conclusions on the basis of the evidence of their observation of both parents and children; including any young carers.

Joint assessment by adult, child and family and health staff will be expected where this is appropriate. We also expect that relevant staff from local agencies will be available to provide specialist advice and support as needed. Finally, we are clear that staff should never ignore any aspect of a situation that indicates there are concerns about children's safety and they require protection from harm.

7. Safeguarding

We accept a joint responsibility to work in partnership with others to identify and respond to any young carers who are suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm and to protect them from this harm. We will ensure discharge of our responsibilities in ways that focus on working together, early intervention and prevention; reflect practice guidance; do not stigmatize families or risk increasing the number of hidden young carers; and do not discourage young carers and their families from seeking information and advice, or an assessment and provision of services. We will:

- State clearly the responsibilities of staff under local safeguarding children procedures to make referrals where children are considered to be suffering or likely to suffer significant harm and emphasise the principle that safeguarding is everyone's business.
- Ensure staff in all sectors have undertaken appropriate training in recognising harm, reporting concerns about a child's welfare and safety and confirming referrals they have made to children's social care within 48 hours.
- Ensure staff across all sectors have undertaken appropriate training in relation to mental health and substance misuse issues.
- Make sure our arrangements for young carers and their families reflect any requirements of local multi-agency and single agency policies for safeguarding children and seek inclusion as necessary.
- Ensure awareness of safeguarding adults' policy and practice; the ability to recognise and respond to safeguarding adults' concerns; and promote confidence and consistency in using local multi-agency procedures by staff in across all agencies.

8. Schools and Young Carers

Your Child, your schools, our future emphasised the importance of early intervention as one of the founding pillars of all schools. The intention is that all children and young people who have additional support needs can be identified early on. Consistent with this and our joint approach, schools will be encouraged and supported to:

- Have a named staff member with lead responsibility for young carers and to recognise this role within continuing professional development.
- Have in place a policy to encourage practice that identifies and supports young carers such as adapting school arrangements if needed, provision for personal tutors and private discussions and access to local young carers' projects.
- Promote open communication with families that supports parenting capacity and encourages the sharing of information.
- Raise awareness about young carers and promote understanding of the caring issues that will touch all families at some point; linking with other agencies as appropriate
- Ensure school policies such as those for enrolment, attendance, bullying, behaviour and keeping safe afford recognition to young carers.

- Ensure Caldicott principles on confidentiality and information sharing are understood and followed.
- Ensure the provision of personalised and effective school-based support that incorporates the principles of awareness, inclusion, understanding and support for young carers to achieve their full potential.
- Incorporate into individual pupil plans recognition and support for the positive aspects of the young carer's role, as well as providing the supports necessary to enable young carers to attend and enjoy school.
- Include positive messages and images about people with disabilities; including, mental ill health within the wider school curriculum.
- Consider and where reasonably practicable take action to remove barriers to physical access and communication and promote inclusion.
- Be sensitive to cultural and religious needs.
- Take advantage of guidance and support in relation to young carers which is available as part of the **21st Century Schools** and **National Healthy Schools Programme**.
- Consider scope for school staff to adopt lead professional roles within the **CAF** process.

9. Health of Young Carers

Consistent with our wider responsibilities under the **National Service Framework for Children, Young People and Maternity Services** to develop co-ordinated approaches for all children and young people, in partnership with health, we will explore the scope for more integrated working in relation to young carers that will:

- Promote and sustain healthy cooking, eating and fluid intakes
- Encourage regular exercise and doing about 60 minutes of physical activity each day
- Ensure good oral health
- Raise awareness and reduce risks of substance misuse (alcohol, volatile substances and illicit drugs) and smoking and support young carers interested in giving up.
- Raise awareness of personal stress and how this may be managed
- Highlight the role of doctors and other health professional in identifying or supporting young carers in primary healthcare settings and as part of hospital discharge processes.
- Ensure child and adolescent mental health services support the emotional well being of young carers who are seriously troubled by their caring role
- Provide breaks and activities to enhance mental health and social networks
- Enable young people to assess risks about lifting and handling and provide information, advice and support to remove or reduce risk of injury as necessary.
- Ensure safe procedures exist for the holding and control of medication at all times.

10. Information, Advice & Advocacy

Together with our partners, we will work towards a position where, if not already in place, information and advocacy services are available to all young carers and their families offering:

- Information
- Advice
- Advocacy
- Representation
- Support; including peer support through local young carers' projects.

We will encourage local use of the following core principles, which were developed originally by the Department of Health , for use when people act as advocates for young carers:

- Advocates should be the young carer's person of choice and can be informal, peer as well as professional advocates.
- Advocates should work for the best interests of the young carer
- Advocates should value and respect young carers as individuals and challenge all types of unlawful discrimination.
- Advocates should work to make sure that young carers understand what is happening to them, can make their views known and, where possible, exercise appropriate choices when decisions are being made.
- Advocates should help young carers to raise issues and concerns about things they are unhappy about. This includes making complaints under the Children Act 1989.
- Advocates should be familiar with requirements regarding the safeguarding of children and know what to do if they become aware of abuse or neglect or risk of it occurring.

As Statutory Directors we accept there are challenges inherent in this commitment. We recognise that from time to time tensions may arise between young carers and those whom they support. We will work to find ways of resolving them. We will commit to meet with young carers not less than once a year to find out what has gone well, what has not and what might make a difference in future. Opportunities for Elected Member involvement will be identified. We will explore the scope for having a designated Elected Member[s] who would champion the interests and concerns of young carers, and to meet with them at regular intervals consistent with the constitutional arrangements of our Council.

11. Equalities & Diversity

This Memorandum of Understanding applies in all situations irrespective of age, disability, gender, race, cultural or religious beliefs and sexual orientation. It is an underpinning principle within the protocol that, as with abuse or neglect, inappropriate caring responsibilities, cannot be condoned on religious or cultural grounds. We will ensure that appropriate people are readily available to provide advice on such matters.

12. Language Barriers

When considering translation services we will consult with families as to who could fill this role appropriately. Where possible bi-lingual advocates will be used and

account taken of any relevant factors around gender or locality. We are agreed it is not good practice to expect young carers to interpret for their families, particularly when it involves someone with an illness and will discourage this. We expect interpreters to be used.

13. Information Sharing

We are agreed that effective and timely information sharing between our own agencies and with our partners is critical to the provision of early intervention and preventative work; to support transitions; and, for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of young carers. Earlier national guidance on information sharing from 2004 issued as part of *Every Child Matters* was replaced by new cross government guidance in 2008 [15]. Within the framework of existing local information sharing protocols, our aim is to ensure there should be specific recognition of the position of young carers. This will cover their identification and support. Local arrangements for information sharing under this protocol will be consistent with national guidance. We will expect practitioners to follow the seven "golden rules" that are in place:

- Understand Data Protection legislation is not a barrier to sharing information
- Be open and honest
- Seek advice when necessary
- Share with consent where appropriate
- Consider the child's safety and welfare
- Gather and keep information that is necessary, proportionate, relevant, accurate, timely and secure.
- Keep a record of information shared.

14. Young Carers: Related Themes and Issues

There are a number of other issues that may apply to the circumstances of some young carers. We will ensure these inform the need for joint working and shared understandings/processes between adult social care, children's services and partners within health. They are:

- Transitions to adulthood
- Parents with mental health needs
- Parents who misuse substances (alcohol, prescribed or illicit drugs)
- Parents with a learning disability
- Refugee Young Carers

We accept that this listing is not definitive. We will continue to work together on these and other identified issues. Our local arrangements will ensure these and other relevant issues are kept under review and that up to date information is available to all staff. This may include the preparation and dissemination of further information to support joint and separate effective action and good practice in these areas. We will ensure that any additions are consistent with the considerable body of national guidance and best practice materials that are available and which staff are expected to follow.

15. Audit and Assurance

We expect the adoption and operation of the memorandum to be consistent with the ***Good Governance Standard for Public Services***. To this end, we will put in place arrangements for periodic audit and the provision of reasonable assurance to the Council, partners, young carers, their families and the community on how it works in specific areas or as a whole. These audit arrangements will be located within wider Council processes for the management of risk and provision of reasonable assurance. The information arising from these audits will be used to inform performance priorities for development and delivery of the key processes and outcomes that the memorandum has been designed to help secure.

16. Funding responsibilities

The internal allocations of funding by the Council should not become a barrier to timely and appropriate support. We recognise that disputes about where funding responsibility lies can be deeply damaging to families: they were one of the concerns voiced by families and young carers in the Carers Review national consultations. We will act to ensure that staff have a clear understanding of joint and separate responsibilities to support parenting roles, respond to needs and reduce the need for inappropriate caring by young carers. The following general principles apply to the expected whole family and joint approach to meeting needs:

- Adult social care is responsible for commissioning care and support services for adults to reduce or prevent inappropriate caring responsibilities by young carers.
- Children's social care is responsible for commissioning services to respond to specific needs of the child or young person; including, those relating to the impact of their caring role on them
- Shared responsibility exists between us for commissioning services that would support or sustain adults in their parenting role having regard to the individual circumstances.

17. Resolving Disagreements

Young carers have identified that difficulties in adult and children's social care services working together are a source of concern to them and require resolution. We believe that if the holistic, family centred approach we support is to be followed, then significant disagreements between adult and children's services should be the exception. Almost inevitably, however, there may be occasions when professional staff encounter difficulties in relation to assessment, service provision or funding responsibilities.

Two potential areas are:

- Disagreements about whether the need relates to the young carer or the adult or sibling who is supported by him or her; and/or,
- Disagreements about respective responsibilities or thresholds for adults or children.

We intend to reduce the risk of disagreements by:

- ensuring that staff are appropriately trained and supported in understanding and in the exercising of joint and separate responsibilities towards young carers and those whom they support;
- being as clear as we can about our joint and separate responsibilities;
- ensuring young carers and parents have access to information and advocacy services to support them in the exercise of their rights; and,
- ensuring that effective arrangements for consultation, communication and feedback to young carers and those they support are available and acted upon.

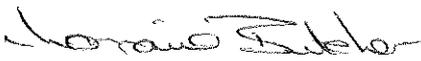
There are a number of mechanisms that could be used to resolve disagreements. We have noted the SCIE guidance of 2005 [17]. This suggests the designation of a senior lead for young carers with responsibility to *"...resolve promptly disputes between adults' and children's services."* We accept that how local issues are resolved is a matter for us as the Statutory Directors to determine within the context of our corporate responsibilities within the Council.

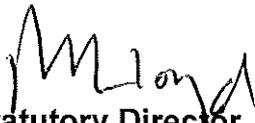
The following principles will inform action and decision-making should disputes arise:

- Disagreements about funding responsibilities must not get in the way of responding in a timely manner to situations where it is evident that inappropriate caring responsibilities are being undertaken.
- Disagreements about funding must not be allowed to become a problem for the young carer or the person supported and not be argued about in front of them.
- Disagreements about responsibilities must not leave the needs of family members unmet because they seem to fall between internal administrative boundaries.
- Dispute resolution procedures relating to the joint and separate responsibilities of Statutory Directors for young carers and the people they support will be put in place.
- Statutory Directors have final operational responsibility for ensuring that any disagreements about funding are resolved in a reasoned, timely and appropriate manner with better outcomes for young carers being a primary consideration.

18. Commencement, Publication, Variation and Review

The commencement date for this memorandum of understanding is **1st April 2011**. The review date is **31 March 2015** and thereafter every three years or as agreed between us. Variations may be agreed to reflect changing legislative, policy and local requirements and evidence of what works best for young carers. This document falls within the Council's Publication Scheme. It will be placed on the Council's web site and with partners as part of our commitment to work together on these issues.


**Statutory Director
Children's Services**


**Statutory Director
Adult Social Services**

Department/Service		Adults Strategic Commissioning		Equality Impact Assessment Form Template	
Ref		Officer responsible for the assessment	Rob Walker		
Name of policy procedure function being assessed		Carers Strategy		Start date of assessment	18/05/2011
Are there any other policies or procedures associated or linked with this one.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Carers Strategy • Memorandum of understanding ' Working Together to Support Young Carers' • Corporate Plan • Sustainable Community Strategy • Dementia Strategy 			
Briefly describe the aims, objectives and outcomes of the policy / procedure / function		The strategy details the priorities for services to carers across Cheshire East. It is a joint strategy with the health service. It outlines how we will meet our requirement to address local carers' needs and respond to the public health agenda and National Carers Strategy.			
Who is intended to benefit from this policy –procedure – function?		Carers, service users.			
What factors could contribute to or detract from the outcomes?		Contribute: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership working with carers and partner organisations • Ability to build on work already done in Cheshire East to support carers Detract: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insufficient resources in current economic climate • Instability of third sector organisations due to short term contracts 			
Who are the main stakeholders in relation to the policy – procedure- function? (Please consider key equality groups)		Carers, service users, third sector providers, health service			
Who is responsible for the policy – procedure – function?		Rob Walker, Strategic Commissioning Manager			
To take us forward in:					
(a) eliminating discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;					
(b) advancing equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;					
(c) fostering good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it					
Please identify any impact (Positive / Negative) this policy, procedure, function or service will have on the following protected characteristics:					

Data Methods/Collection to Support Decision Making		
Please indicate what methods of research, information and intelligence will be/have been used e.g. consultation, reports, comparisons with similar organisations	Internally Cheshire East Carers Survey 2010 National Carers Strategy 2008 National Carers Strategy Refresh 2010 Corporate Plan Sustainable Communities Strategy	Externally National Carers Survey 2010
Please state who will be/who was involved/engaged/consulted	Internal (Staff/Members/Service/Dept) Carers Survey November 2011 – Adult Services Consultation & Participation team Adults Services – Strategic Commissioning; Individual Commissioning	External (stakeholders/service users/partners) Carers Reference Group CEC PCT Third Sector Organisations
Please indicate any significant expected costs & resource requirements for completing the data collection		

Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) Action Plan: Making Changes					
REF	Action	Responsible Person/s	Action Deadline	Tasks	Progress

Please state the date the policy/procedure/function will be reassessed? (generally 1-3 yrs)			Comments/Date:		
May 2012					

Signed (Service Manager)

Date.....

Signed (Head of Section)

Date.....

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

Quarterly Progress and monitoring

REF	Action	Progress	Completed

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

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

Measuring Impact & Reporting

Ref	Action	Impact	Outcome	Review Date
	The changes that you have made to remove the gaps you have Identified (simply cut and paste these from the action plan).	<p>What has been the overall impact of making the particular changes?</p> <p>(could include wider community involvement in policy development or greater use of service by diverse communities).</p>	<p>What are the concrete results of having changed your policy or service? Could include improved service use, reductions in complaints or increased satisfaction. These will be based on detailed data and should outline how the changes have brought about improvements for different communities and groups</p>	

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

Appendix 1

Service Reference Index

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

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

REPORT TO: CABINET

Date of Meeting: 19th September 2011
Report of: ICT Strategy Manager – Gareth Pawlett
Subject/Title: ICT Strategy 2011-12
Portfolio Holder: Cllr Brown

1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 The Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Strategy document, that was published last year, has been updated and Cabinet are asked to consider the ICT Strategy 2011 – 2012 for approval. This strategy sets the corporate direction for ICT within the Council and supports corporate priorities.
- 1.2 The ICT Strategy 2011-2012 is recommended for Cabinet approval.

2.0 Decision Requested

- 2.1 To endorse and approve the corporate ICT Strategy 2011-2012 to enable it to progress to publication and enable implementation.

3.0 Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 An ICT Strategy is a key success factor for a modern organisation. This strategy summarises how the ICT Strategy team, in conjunction with ICT Shared Services, partners and external providers; contributes to the success of Cheshire East.

4.0 Wards Affected

- 4.1 All

5.0 Local Ward Members

- 5.1 All

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

6.1 None identified.

7.0 Financial Implications (Authorised by the Borough Treasurer)

7.1 Within current budgets – there are no additional financial implications

8.0 Legal Implications (Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)

8.1 There are no specific Legal implications.

9.0 Risk Management

9.1 A fragmented approach to ICT, conducted outside of a structured framework, will restrict the ability of Cheshire East Council to achieve value for money. A clear ICT strategy mitigates this risk.

10.0 Background and Options

10.1 The ICT Strategy sets out the ICT direction for the Council and how it supports the Council vision. The ICT Strategy is reviewed and updated on an annual basis to ensure that it is in line with corporate objectives and improving technologies. Cabinet is invited to approve the ICT Strategy 2011-2012.

11.0 Overview of Year One and Term One Issues

11.1 None identified

12.0 Access to Information

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

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ICT Strategy 2011 - 2012



ICT Strategy 2011-12

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1. Summary

An ICT strategy is a key success factor for a modern organisation. This strategy summarises how the ICT Strategy team, ICT Shared Service and partners contribute to the success of Cheshire East. The strategy is based on three key principles:

- To transform services through prudent investment in technology
- To drive costs down
- To work with partners in ways which maintain Cheshire East's freedom to innovate and act, while at the same time achieving the benefits of economies of scale and understanding of industry good practice that come from sharing services

An ICT Strategy ensures that everyone who needs to be is aware of the vital importance of ICT to the achievement of business objectives. At the end of the strategy there is a glossary which explains acronyms and technical terms.

2. Business Context

Cheshire East has broken new ground in using Information and Communications Technology (ICT) to improve processes and much more importantly, it can bring about improvements for citizens in their daily lives. It used to be said that ICT is a key enabler of local authority services. Now it is more than that – it is at the heart of everything the council does.

The ASPIRE core values of the Council are embedded in our approach to the delivery of ICT services. For example, we:

- Take **action**, by implementing new technology to support new, lean business processes
- **Support** clear and effective communication with service users using the internet and phones
- Put **people** at the heart of what we do by engaging directly with citizens and providing ICT services to the community
- Demonstrate **integrity** in our dealings with our staff, as we rationalise arrangements for the delivery of ICT
- **Recognise** the contribution that investment in ICT makes to the achievement of corporate objectives
- Draw on industry best practise to deliver **excellent** ICT solutions in response to customer requirements.

Every service Cheshire East provides, benefits from the innovative approach to ICT, to which Cheshire East is committed. This includes the development of partnerships with other organisations ranging from our immediate geographical neighbours such

as Cheshire West and Chester, through partners in service delivery such as the NHS, Police and Fire, to partnerships with the voluntary and private sectors.

Environmental considerations are at the forefront of the Council's approach to ICT, reducing carbon footprint assisting in the delivery of the Council's policy on the environment and to drive down costs, achieving both objectives through measures such as investing in the Council's ICT estate to reduce electricity usage.

The local agenda

Localism values the unique local features which give strength to a community. This ranges from local culture to local enterprises, especially in the agricultural and food industries. Cheshire East is an area of contrasts, from remote sparsely populated areas, to major townships. The local agenda is a concept with a long provenance that has received broad support over many years from a wide variety of political opinion. However, too often in the past the financial argument of economies of scale has meant that the specific needs of local communities have not been reflected in local, national and regional policies.

Digital communications and superfast broadband, which can reach and empower local communities, is a technology which can change that. For the first time we can reflect local needs, drive costs down and remove the digital divide which exists between urban and rural areas

Cheshire East is working with BDUK, local communities and partners in all sectors of the economy to bring affordable high capacity digital communications to all the citizens of Cheshire East. This will embrace not only existing technologies such as smart meters and broadband over power lines using fibre optic cable, copper telephone line and wireless, but will also explore new technologies to increase the capacity and coverage to citizens and businesses. Furthering the local agenda achieves some of the other objectives set by Cheshire East, for example the economic development of local businesses in rural areas by affordable digital communications.

To underpin multi agency, collaborative working (endorsed by Government agenda and specifically with respect to Health and Public Health) the vision is to create a ubiquitous Public Service Network (PSN) infrastructure across the Cheshire sub-region for all public sector bodies that is cost sustainable, secure, compliant, resilient, scalable and future proof.

3. ICT Contribution to business success

Appropriate and cost-effective use of ICT is essential to the success of any local authority. Effectively without this the Council does not exist as far as a majority of citizens are concerned.

There are many services which become dramatically better and cheaper with the effective application of technology. These range from registering a birth, through to arranging a funeral and encompass a huge range of other services which impact on the daily lives of citizens.

The Cheshire East website is one of the key means by which the public transacts with the Council. This high quality website has been recognised by SOCITM, and has been awarded three star status.

Cheshire East is committed to prudent and cost effective financial management and the only way that this can be achieved is through investment in technology. Cheshire East will, at the same time, be proactive in seeking out investments in technology that will benefit the citizen.

National strategies and initiatives which will be driven by technology include:

- Superfast Broadband Britain: 2011
- Treasury National Infrastructure Plan: 2011
- Government ICT Strategy 2011
- Our health, our care, our say: a new direction for community services (white paper)
- Children Act 2004
- Every Child Matters
- Harnessing Technology and Next Generation Learning
- Connecting the UK: the Digital Strategy
- Transformational Government Enabled by Technology
- Service Transformation: A better service for citizens and businesses, a better deal for the taxpayer, electronic data sharing between professions, citizen access to electronic records, modern methods of accessing services/choice of channels, access to broadband for citizens and businesses.

Of crucial importance is the Council's belief in electronically enabling every citizen through broadband technologies. These will include the more familiar means of communication such as DSL technology, but will embrace new technologies such as ethernet over power lines which use the existing electricity distribution infrastructure to bring high capacity broadband into all homes with mains electricity. This new technology has the power to dramatically reduce power consumption not only of the Council itself – but, much more importantly, for local communities in their entirety. Because it achieves much more effective capacity planning, it reduces the need for power generation.

So vital is digital communications that a new emphasis will be placed on business continuity through the development of innovative ways of providing data centre services which locate processing and data storage simultaneously in more than one geographical location to safeguard against service outage.

To contain the cost within what can be afforded; this will be done through partnerships with other organisations. Potential partners will be chosen from the public, private and voluntary sectors.

4. ICT principles

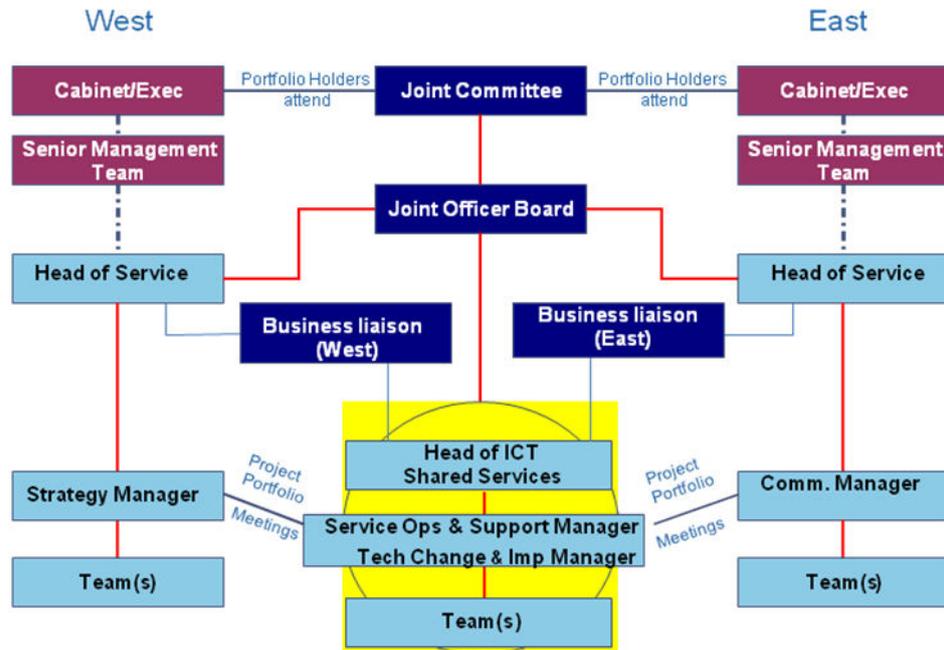
- ICT services are aligned with the organisational development and business transformation agenda
- We deliver value for money by sharing services and costs with partners
- Our contribution to business change initiatives is achieved through alignment with a corporate project and programme management methodologies
- Technology is selected and deployed in a way that reflects the environmental agenda and thereby ensures environmental sustainability as well as driving down running costs
- We provide a single point of contact
- ICT services are integrated with mobile/flexible working initiatives
- Service delivery is client-focused, offering local training and support
- We provide a timely response to problems
- Service metrics are integrated with corporate performance management processes
- Technology is used to enable the corporate policy to centralise common business processes and comply with government standards
- Technology is used to standardise, streamline, automate and optimise business processes across organisational units
- We design systems and processes so that data entered once is applied many times thereby significantly reducing manual handling
- We continue the consolidation and optimisation of the underlying infrastructure, supporting ICT and delivery business processes to achieve efficiency savings
- We continue to identify best practice in the marketplace and strive to optimise to best of breed performance standards
- We will create capacity to develop and expand services to include additional partners and customers

5. ICT governance

Cheshire East is committed to the concept of shared ICT services across and beyond the public sector. Schools are already an important component of this shared service. An ICT Shared Service has been developed with, and hosted by, Cheshire West and Chester.

The diagram below illustrates the current governance arrangements for ICT Shared Services:

Cheshire ICT Shared Service Governance Structure

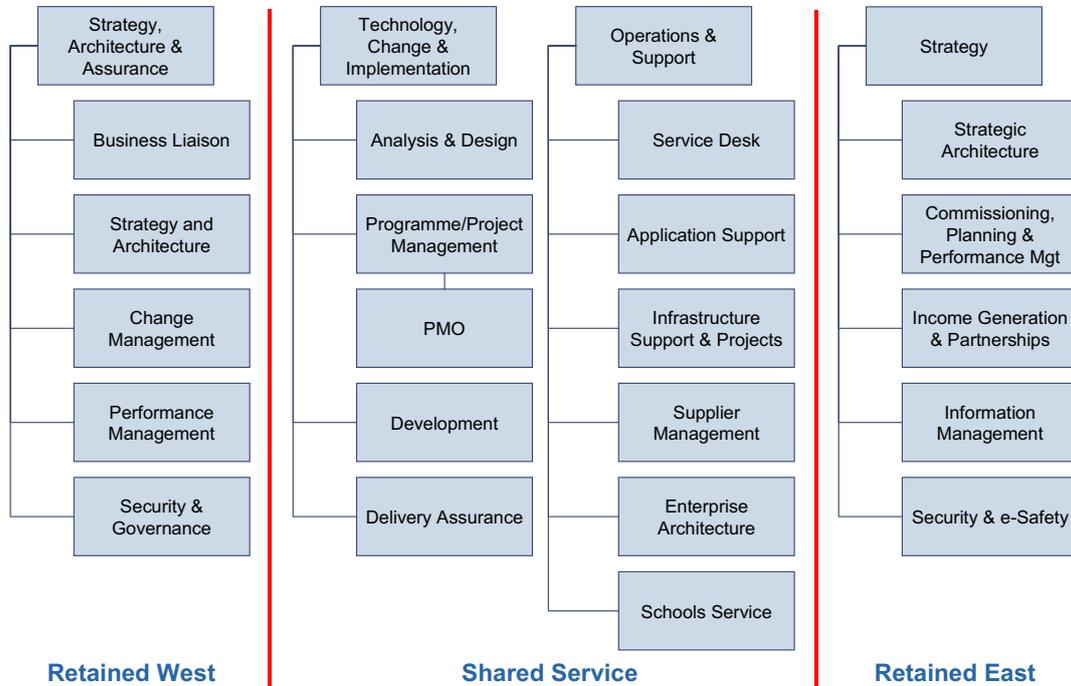


The two main bodies that formally govern all shared services are:

Joint Committee (JC). This is a formal governance body, consisting of members from each client, with constitutional powers delegated from each authority so is, effectively the ultimate power for these services and all shared services are accountable to the JC. This committee mirrors the role of shareholders in a business, i.e. they are investing the resources of the two Councils to get a return on their decision to share, through a more efficient and effective set of services; and

Joint Officer Board (JOB). ICT Shared Services is accountable to a formal JOB which is chaired jointly by the section 151 officers of both councils. The JOB's role mirrors that of a board of directors and oversees business strategy and planning, operational and financial performance, issue management and transformation.

The diagram below shows the structures of the Cheshire East, Cheshire West and Chester and the ICT Shared Service organisations:



The current ICT shared service arrangements have had to be developed from scratch. This has taken time and is a maturing model, with all parties learning and adapting as we go.

The main purpose of the ICT Shared Service is to develop, operate and deliver a cost-effective, quality and efficient ICT service, reducing costs through the introduction of lower cost technology while enabling each authority to pursue their transformation agendas and introduce fundamental business change. In order to drive efficiency and further progress the collaborative working agenda, the ICT Shared Service will actively identify opportunities for implementing common and shared applications and infrastructure between the two authorities. The shared service promotes a single infrastructure that is flexible enough to meet the needs of both CE and CWAC.

For equipment, the scope of the shared service can be summarised as:

- Procure, install, maintain and operate ICT-related assets and equipment at data centres and other agreed core processing locations, including servers and related ICT equipment;

- Procure, install, maintain and operate a data and voice network, including Wide Area Network (WAN) and Local Area Networks (LANs) at each site along with remote access functionality; and
- Procure, install, maintain and operate ICT-related desktop assets including desktops and/or portable computing equipment, telephony equipment and other agreed peripheral equipment.

Once commissioned by ICT Strategy; for ICT project and development services, the scope of the shared service can be summarised as follows:

- Provide resources to undertake research, requirements analysis, systems analysis, and develop requirements, design and test specifications;
- Provide programme and project management specialist skills, using standard programme and project management methodologies based on good practice and industry standards;
- Provide development and configuration resources for new infrastructure and applications; and
- Undertake robust and coordinated assurance of business solutions to ensure that testing is robust and fit for purpose and that systems are accepted by users.

For support services, the scope of the shared service can be summarised as follows (including other external organisations and schools, in accordance with agreed service levels and funding arrangements):

- Provide support for, and attempting to resolve, issues and problems, including issues associated with ICT and telephony equipment, applications and information maximising ICT Service Continuity
- Handle requests for additional, replacement or disposal of ICT and telephony related assets and equipment, in accordance with agreed approval and budget arrangements;
- Maintain technical documentation;
- Manage joint ICT-related suppliers, contracts and licences, as commissioned, by the ICT Strategy team.

Generally the ICT Shared Service will adhere to all legal and statutory obligations, including operating to recognised standards, supported by certification of industry bodies as required by the client authorities and maintaining the appropriate level of security for data and ICT equipment as documented in the ICT security policies developed by each authority.

These sharing arrangements have been in place and operational for 2 years. During this time significant work has been done to address corporate ICT issues, such as finance and procurement protocols and manage a large programme of work required to disaggregate transitional shared services and drive changes through shared services to reduce costs and increase efficiency to benefit all involved.

At the Shared Services Joint Committee on 31st March 2010, Members recognised the achievements of the ICT Shared Service over the first year of operation; through a period of great transition and upheaval for both Cheshire East and Cheshire West and Chester councils and confirmed their ongoing commitment to these arrangements. Looking to the future, however, it was agreed that, in principle, ICT Shared Services should form a separate legal entity to the Councils which would allow ICT to adopt a more commercial approach to service delivery. ICT Strategy will work with ICT Shared Services (and others) to develop the new entity; and ensure its successful implementation by September 2012.

6. ICT financial management

The adoption of a sound financial model for ICT services is as important as the choice of the right technology. A key objective over the 2011/12 financial year is to simplify this picture and streamline the financial management of ICT.

The ICT service currently relies on revenue and capital from a number of different sources in order to run services and deliver its programme of work. The permanent resources for the central ICT services are funded by:

- Base budget
- Charges to schools
- Staff recharges to capital
- Other recharges to services

Two thirds of revenue is spent on staffing costs. Not all permanent employees are funded from revenue. Instead, they are recharged to the capital programme. An annual capital programme of approximately £900k is required to provide sufficient funding for all these staff.

Capital costs are funded by capital reserves, unsupported prudential borrowings and grants. The use of the capital reserve to fund significant new ICT investment is probably not sustainable over the medium term. As a result, the use of unsupported borrowings is likely to increase. This has a revenue impact.

In addition to ICT Strategy, many individual Services hold significant budgets covering licences, maintenance contracts and staffing. We continue to exploit opportunities for consolidating these budgets.

7. ICT infrastructure strategic direction

The technical strategy for Information Technology should meet the following principles:

- Cost effective and value for money (including total cost of ownership)
- Environmentally friendly
- Manageable
- Agile
- Innovative
- Scalable
- Sustainable
- Secure
- Resilient Interoperability including standardisation
- Maximise use of resources

Generally ICT Strategy will try to select the most suitable, widespread and / or the de-facto industry standard products. Harmonisation of the standards from the legacy councils will be continued to ensure that there is common functionality to maximise continuity, good practice and lower support costs.

8. ICT services and processes

Cheshire East, in conjunction with partners, adopts a flexible approach to the use of international standards and methodologies. We avoid a bureaucratic approach and use simple processes with clear documentation. Where it is beneficial we will obtain accreditation for our processes. ICT Strategy is looking to achieve ISO 38500.

Cheshire East ICT Strategy has worked with the ICT Shared Service's Service Improvement Group to ensure that national best practice is adopted in project and programme management, using PRINCE2 to manage projects and MSP to manage programmes. ITIL is used to support the management of ICT services. A Technical Design Authority and Change Advisory Board are operating to ensure that new systems can interoperate with existing technology and that they conform to the Council's standards.

An internal Quality Management System is operated and has been accredited through ISO 9000 within the ICT Shared Service. Cheshire East ICT Strategy is keen to work with ICT Shared Services to adopt ISO 20000 standards in relation to the Service Catalogue.

ICT services and processes will also be judged against the Council's green agenda.

Subscriptions to representative bodies will be maintained where these give good value. These will be limited in number to ensure focus on benefits. They will include NWeGG and the Gartner Group.

9. ICT application portfolio

Business applications are integrated into the front-line business processes and are essential for everything the Council does. The current application infrastructure encompasses both shared and CEC specific systems, support tools and common technical services inherited from the four predecessor authorities.

The application portfolio has evolved through the implementation of bespoke systems, packages and self service applications. These have different life spans, support requirements and business continuity capabilities.

There have been significant opportunities for the consolidation and convergence of systems over the past year. These continue to be exploited to drive out economies of scale and improve operation and support.

Partnerships with other agencies are being explored to strengthen delivery and maximise agility and flexibility.

We have developed and will maintain roadmaps for business applications, designed to support the business processes of the authority. These plans are aligned with the IT infrastructure principles described in section 5 and also address:

- business application harmonisation requirements
- environmental considerations
- business continuity requirements
- the demands of a mobile workforce
- growing data volumes within a national data sharing context
- the need for flexibility to support an agile business

10. ICT infrastructure

The existing ICT infrastructure consists of the following layers:

A Wide Area Network, which has capacity to meet the current needs of Cheshire East, its present partner Cheshire West and Chester, and other potential partners such as the Fire Service, for some years to come. It will require ongoing investment to introduce network segmentation and access control technologies in order to achieve a consolidated and fully converged network. A strategic review will be undertaken in 2011 to ensure the wide area network will support future business requirements and strategic aims and objectives.

Cheshire East inherited three data centres which are wholly owned and used exclusively by Cheshire East (Macclesfield Town Hall, Sandbach and Crewe). It also shares the use of other data centres with Cheshire West and Chester (Backford Hall, Minerva Avenue and Chester Town Hall). This mixed estate of data centres presents a clear opportunity to reduce ongoing costs and to improve resilience through rationalisation and harmonisation.

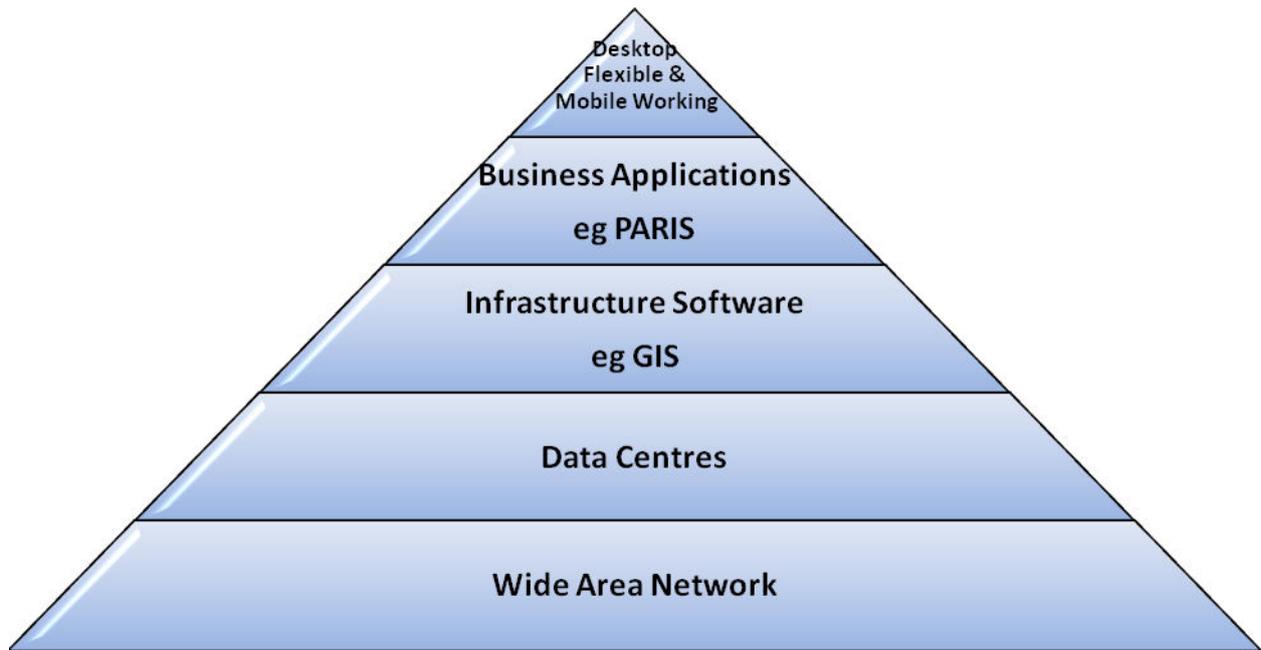
The Data Centre in Macclesfield Town Hall is being refurbished. This is being undertaken as a project integral with the development of a new CCTV monitoring centre which will be based on the Macclesfield Town Hall Data Centre.

Cheshire East inherited an estate of servers and storage which is mixed but comprises for the most part Oracle on an AIX Unix platform and Microsoft SQL. Significant virtualisation has already taken place. With about 75% of servers virtualised this represents industry best practice already, but even greater benefit can be achieved from further virtualisation and harmonisation.

Opportunities are being taken to reduce cost and reduce the impact on the environment through adopting best practice in energy management and where possible these are synchronised with the harmonisation of business applications. Underlying infrastructure software such as geographical information systems (GIS) will be further developed and maintained in partnership.

Cheshire East inherited an estate of some 6000 desktop computers and laptops from the previous councils. A next generation desktop strategy is being finalised to achieve rigorous standardisation to drive down running and support costs and to improve the overall experience of the user. From the beginning of the 2011-12 financial year the budgets for replacement and new desktop equipment have been unified and centralised under the control of the Cheshire East ICT Service. This includes desktop and laptop PCs.

The following diagram represents the different layers that make up the ICT Infrastructure:



11. Information Management

The scope and portfolio for Information Management (IM) covers the following broad areas:

- Governance
- Security
- Data Quality
- Records Management
- Compliance

IM considers information in any format – paper and electronic documents, email, photographs, maps, throughout its lifecycle from when it is received, created or captured until it is archived or destroyed.

Through a programme of work we will provide a set of corporate tools, standards, and protocols to enable this to be done in the most efficient and effective way to support the business and ensure that the authority's legal and statutory obligations are observed. This will ensure that the right people have the right information at the right time to do their jobs while being mindful of data security requirements and the risks of data loss.

There will be a long term strategy to ensure that the majority of information being created and retained by the authority is electronic. This will ensure flexible and mobile working initiatives are supported as well as reducing the pressures upon the authority's estate.

12. ICT structure, staffing and sourcing

Effective workforce planning is fundamental to the achievement of ICT Strategy service goals and objectives in the short and longer term. It's about, understanding the people implications of achieving service priorities and putting in place plans to ensure the right people, with the right skills are available at the right time, in the right place. This helps ICT to develop a workforce profile which continues to be 'fit for purpose' and is 'agile' in supporting the service to initiate and adapt to change.

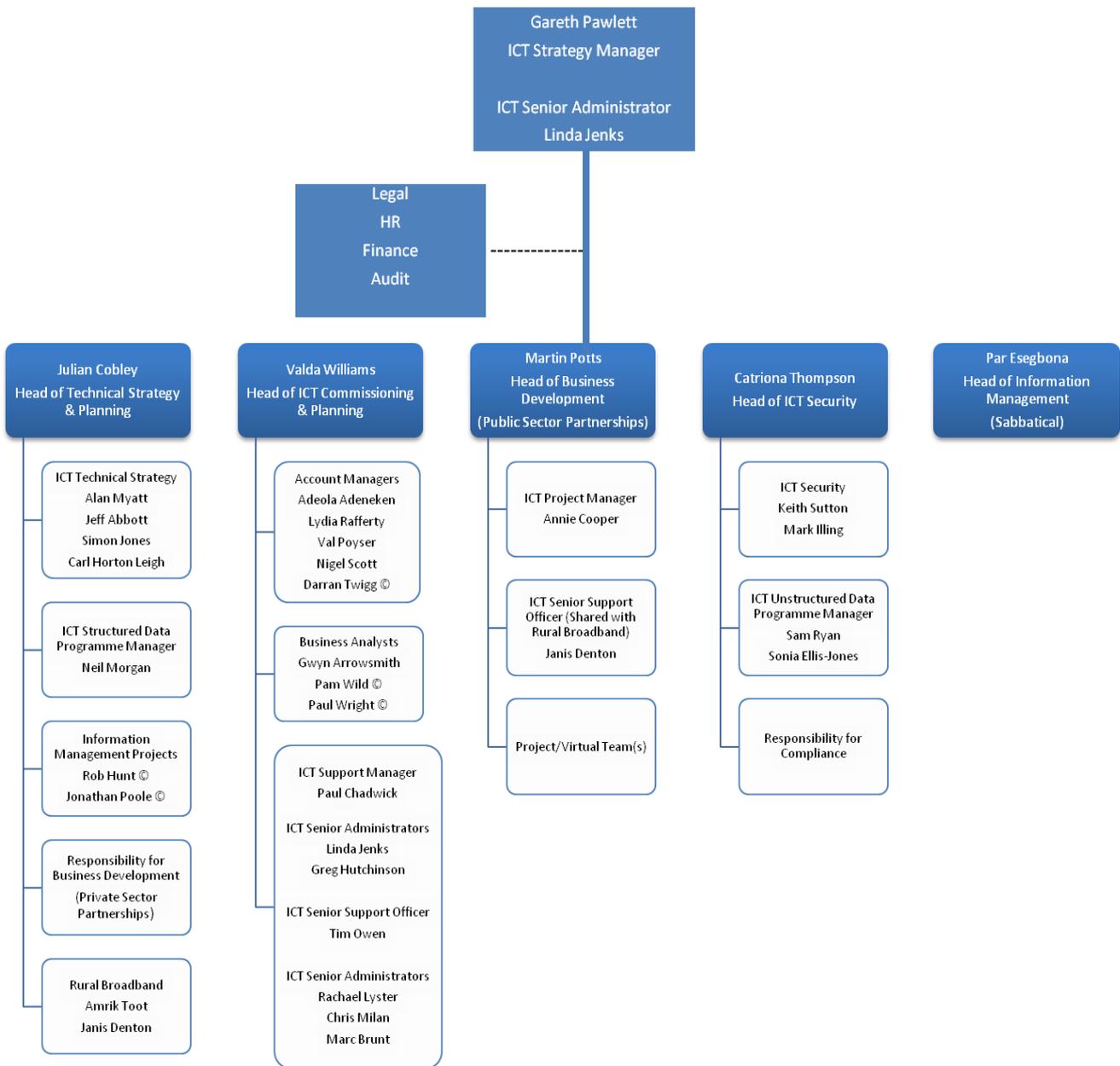
The skills and resources available within the ICT Shared Services and ICT Strategy teams are supplemented by the use of contractor, consultants, temporary staff including student placements and implementation partners. In addition, some work is commissioned externally. ICT managers use their knowledge of industry trends and corporate plans to consider the immediate and long term resource requirement of the department before deciding how to fill vacancies.

The ICT Strategy team is staffed predominately by ICT professionals; people who have graduated, have ICT qualifications or have trained and worked within an ICT department for a number of years. Key skills include:

- ICT infrastructure and application awareness
- ICT security awareness
- Business & local Government understanding
- Strategic visioning
- Business analysis
- Commissioning and planning
- Negotiation skills

The ICT Strategy Team is also committed to supporting the Corporate Apprenticeship Scheme and apprentice placements for 2011-12 have been established.

The diagram below shows the Cheshire East ICT Strategy structure and roles:



ICT Strategy currently employs 28 full time and 1 part time permanent staff. It is a strategic ICT service that commissions the delivery of an ambitious ICT work programme which supports corporate transformation in 2011/12. It has also:

- Worked with public and private partners to create a green and innovative ICT infrastructure that puts Cheshire East on the map. Activities include the development of a state of the art Data Centre, lead membership on the EURIM Information Society Alliance, and collaboration of superfast broadband activities with Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK).
- Made significant inroads into major efficiency opportunities through partnership working with both the public sector and private sector, building on the foundation work that has been done to date. Examples of this are data centre resilience with

Warrington BC and network infrastructure integration with Fire & Rescue (to optimise internet service provision and station service performance).

- Continues to strive for improvement in the delivery of service to Cheshire East from the ICT Shared Service through effective liaison with ICT Shared Service and by contributing to the development of a new separate entity
- Continues to support the Council in complying with the stringent Government Connect requirements, all the time seeking to minimise the negative impact on day to day business

In principle, the ICT work programme is financed through Service held capital funding, and the ongoing work is funded from revenue. The ICT work programme changes in magnitude each year. There is active management of the proportion of contract staff and directly employed staff employed to deliver the ICT work programme.

The ICT Shared Service has skills in the following areas: project management, systems analysis, ICT technical infrastructure, ICT solution infrastructure, Microsoft development, web developments, SQL database administration, Social Care application development, Oracle eBusiness suite functionality and development, Oracle database administration, desktop hardware and software, flexible and mobile working solutions, networks, telephony, servers, geographical information systems, Business Objects reporting, service management and data centre operations.

Staff potential is maximised through formal training, coaching and providing role based developmental opportunities. The cost of training to developing new technical skill sets is built in to the capital cost of programmes.

13. ICT risk management

Risks are managed at project, programme, service and departmental levels. ICT risk management and business continuity approaches are aligned with corporate risk management and corporate business continuity procedures.

Rapid change increases risk and ICT service continuity arrangements are in place for key applications. However, resilience comes at a cost and a balance needs to be struck between the cost of engineering away a risk, and the likelihood and consequences of it happening. With the development of technical strategies which cover topics such as data centre services and infrastructure, decisions will need to be made by Cheshire East about what levels of service continuity can or should be funded.

Technical solutions are in place to reduce the risk of virus infection, malware distribution and data compromise. As cyber attacks become ever more inventive and complex, it is important that the ICT security infrastructure continues to be upgraded and enhanced in line with Government and National standards and good practice guidelines.

14. Supporting documents

Further supporting documents are being developed. For timescales, please refer to the ICT Strategy Communications Plan.

- Applications – Strategic Direction
- Infrastructure – Strategic Direction
- ICT Finance
- Information Management – Strategic Direction
- ICT Sourcing Strategy
- Green ICT Strategy
- FMW Strategy
- Data Centre Strategy
- Desktop Strategy
- Telephony Strategy

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

REPORT TO: CABINET

Date of Meeting:	3 October, 2011
Report of:	Lorraine Butcher, Director of Adults, Children and Families
Subject/Title:	NOTICE OF MOTION , Submitted by Cllrs S Jones and R Fletcher
Portfolio Holder:	Cllr Roland Domleo

1.0 Report Summary

1.1 NOTICE OF MOTION , SUBMITTED BY CLLRS S JONES AND R FLETCHER.

This Council is concerned about the capacity of the Quality Care Commission (QCC) to carry out its functions effectively. The Council resolves to ask the Chief Executive to register our concerns, at Ministerial level and with the Chief Executive of QCC, with copies of correspondence to our local MPs.

This Council asks Cabinet to refer to the relevant Scrutiny Committees with a view to establishing an all-party Task/Finish group to investigate the position in Cheshire East regarding the interface between the QCC and our own safeguarding service to ensure that our vulnerable residents, particularly those in receipt of domiciliary care, are properly protected.

- 1.2 This report addresses how the Council might respond to the issues raised in this motion and responded to by Councillor Roland Domleo at the Council Meeting on 21 July, 2011.

2.0 Decision Requested

- 2.1 Cabinet is recommended to:

Refer this matter to the Safeguarding Adults Board with a view to them examining the matter and reporting back on

- The effectiveness of arrangements in Cheshire East between the Councils own a adult safeguarding function and that of the Care Quality Commission
- How well safeguarding provision has responded to personalisation
- The trends in safeguarding activity and the factors affecting it.
- Whether there are deficits in the arrangements such as to make the representations suggested in the motion necessary.

3.0 Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 The Council is not complacent though and there may well be a case to take a look at the relationship between CQC and our own arrangements and those of key partners to ensure full coverage of risk to vulnerable people. We meet with CQC quarterly to review compliance with regulations for the regulated services in our area and have worked closely with CQC on a number of higher profile issues.
- 3.2 It is probably best to ask the Adult Safeguarding Board to give us a view as they are there to give an overview of such matters. A task and finish group on this subject would tend to duplicate the work of the Safeguarding Adults Board. It may be that the Board may wish to invite a member or members of the Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee to joint any consideration of this matter.
- 3.3 If our consideration of the motion demonstrates to us that there is indeed an major issue that deserves national attention then we will look at the value of writing to key people to secure their support and awareness of the matter and encourage them to provide a solution.
- 3.4 It is also worth noting that CQC have themselves reported a keenness to move to annual regulatory monitoring moving away from light touch regulation in an article published recently in Community Care:
- 3.5 In relation to domiciliary care specifically we monitor all domiciliary providers. When a safeguarding concern is raised this is investigated we then meet with the provider following the investigation to ensure all the learning and proactive actions needed have been concluded. We also meet with domiciliary providers collectively to share and develop ' Best Practice Approaches' and to build and support collaborative working. This assures effective provider relations and indeed the safeguarding of vulnerable adults. This approach could be reviewed by the Safeguarding Adults Board.

4.0 Wards Affected

- 4.1 All

5.0 Local Ward Members

- 5.1 All

6.0 Policy Implications including - Carbon Reduction - Health

- 6.1 These issues clearly affect health colleagues and the strategic response has been and remains to engage health colleagues at a senior level in this agenda

7.0 Financial Implications (To be authorised by the Director of Finance and Business Services)

There are no immediate financial impacts but the impact of safeguarding issues on providers and provider failure is a financial risk to the authority.

8.0 Legal Implications (To be authorised by the Borough Solicitor)

8.1 There are no legal implications in carrying out such a review but it is worth noting that safeguarding is a growth area for the legal department of the Local Authority.

9.0 Risk Management

9.1 No risks in reviewing safeguarding issues

10.0 Background and Options

We have strong safeguarding arrangements in Cheshire East building from the 200k investment put in via the 2009/10 budget. This has helped develop the safeguarding unit and the safeguarding board complete with an independent person. In the local teams staff are well trained and alert to the issues. This approach has created a situation in which we have one of the best profiles of good and excellent residential and nursing care homes and domiciliary care services in England.

The options for dealing with this matter are essentially:-

- Conclude that current arrangements are sufficient and no action is necessary;
- Refer matter to Scrutiny with a view to setting up a Task and Finish group;
- Use the existing body designed to oversee safeguarding issues which is the Safeguarding Adults Board.

The reason for adopting the last option is described in 3.2 above.

Access to Information by contacting the report author

This is the link to Community Care article on CQC resources

<https://www.wp.dh.gov.uk/carecommission/files/2011/07/Fairer-Care-Funding-Report.pdf>

<http://www.communitycare.co.uk/Articles/2011/07/15/117185/cqc-to-double-inspections-of-adult-care-services.htm>

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CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

CABINET

Date of Meeting: 3 October 2011
Report of: Strategic Director - Places
Subject/Title: Draft National Planning Policy Framework
Portfolio Holders: Cllr David Brown & Cllr Rachel Bailey

1.0 Report Summary

1.1 This report introduces the draft National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), outlines some of the issues it raises for planning in Cheshire East and suggests a proposed response by the Council to the current consultation. The matter is scheduled to be considered by Full Council on 13 October.

2.0 Decision Requested

2.1 That the Cabinet consider the comments of Strategic Planning Board on the Draft National Planning Policy Framework.

2.2 That the Cabinet considers the report in the light of these comments and recommends that Council approves the consultation response detailed in Appendix 1 of the report.

3.0 Reasons for Recommendation(s)

3.1 To enable the Council to influence the development of the National Planning Policy Framework.

4.0 Wards Affected

4.1 All

5.0 Local Ward Members

5.1 All

6.0 Policy Implications

6.1 The National Planning Policy Framework will replace the current suite of existing national Planning Policy Statements, Planning Policy Guidance notes and some Circulars with one single document. The Local Plan will need to be prepared in accordance with the policies in the NPPF to ensure that the future development of the Borough is planned in a sustainable

manner and supports sustainable economic growth. The policies in the NPPF will also apply to development management decisions.

7.0 Financial Implications

7.1 The NPPF refers to neighbourhood plans which are a new element to the planning system being introduced through the Localism Bill and to the need for the Council to undertake viability assessments for individual sites within its 5 year housing supply. These proposals will have resource implications for the Council.

8.0 Legal Implications

8.1 The provisions of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 already cover the status of national planning policy in plan preparation and decision making. Therefore, the NPPF will have the same legal status as current Government policy documents.

9.0 Risk Management Implications

9.1 Significant risk that the existing Local Plans are not found to be in conformity with the National Planning Policy Framework and that Development Management decisions would be reliant on the NPPF, rather than local planning policy, until a new Local Plan is adopted.

10.0 Background and Options

10.1 The Government considers that the amount of central direction within the planning system is too great, and with more than 1,000 pages of national planning policy, the system has become unwieldy and complex. It has recently published the draft National Planning Policy Framework for consultation until 17th October 2011, which streamlines national policy into a consolidated set of priorities to consider when planning for and deciding on new development. The draft NPPF is presented in one single document written in plain English with the view that it can be understood and used by everyone who has an interest in shaping the development of their area.

10.2 The draft Framework sets out the Government's requirements for the planning system 'only to the extent that it is relevant, proportionate and necessary to do so', and in the spirit of localism, leaves scope for local areas and neighbourhoods to develop their own policies and proposals in accordance with the general approach set out in the NPPF. In many areas, policy has been streamlined but the core approach and principles remain the same. However, there are some areas where a completely new approach is being introduced.

10.3 The draft NPPF does not cover planning for Travellers. A separate draft Planning Policy Statement on Travellers was published on 13th April 2011. Consultation on this document has now ended and it is intended that the final policy will be incorporated into the NPPF. It also does not cover

planning for waste. This will be incorporated into the National Waste Management Plan and until that plan is finalised, Planning Policy Statement 10: Planning for Sustainable Waste Management will remain in force.

- 10.4 Under the draft NPPF, the purpose of the planning system is “to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development” and the definition of sustainable development is “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”. For the planning system, delivering sustainable development means planning for prosperity (an economic role), planning for people (a social role) and planning for places (an environmental role).
- 10.5 The Government is clear that the planning system should operate to encourage growth and not act as an impediment. The NPPF introduces a new presumption in favour of sustainable development where the default answer to development proposals is “yes”. Local planning authorities should plan positively for new development and approve all individual proposals wherever possible.
- 10.6 The plan-led system remains where Local Plans should be prepared on the basis that objectively assessed development needs should be met. Development proposals that accord with statutory plans should be approved without delay, and permission should also be granted where the plan is absent, silent, indeterminate or where relevant policies are out of date.
- 10.7 Although the draft NPPF is a consultation document and, therefore, subject to potential amendment, it does give a clear indication of the Government’s ‘direction of travel’ in planning policy. The draft document is capable of being a material consideration in the determination of planning applications, although the weight given to it is likely to be limited at present, and will be a matter for the decision maker’s planning judgement in each case.
- 10.8 **POTENTIAL ISSUES / IMPLICATIONS FOR CHESHIRE EAST:**
- 10.9 **Presumption in favour of sustainable development.** It is very difficult to define what does and what does not constitute sustainable development, and the draft NPPF’s definition that it is “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” is open to interpretation. There is potential for a real lack of certainty in the planning system for many years to come as what is and what isn’t sustainable development is defined through case law and tested through planning appeals.
- 10.10 **Requirement to grant permission where the plan is absent, silent or where relevant policies are out of date.** Up-to-date Local Plans (i.e. plans that are consistent with the NPPF) should be in place as soon as practical, but in the absence of an up-to-date and consistent plan, planning

applications should be determined in accordance with the NPPF, including its presumption in favour of sustainable development.

- 10.11 It will be open to local planning authorities to seek a certificate of conformity with the Framework for their Local Plans. In the absence of further guidance on how this would work, it is considered unlikely that any of the existing Cheshire East Local Plans would be in overall conformity with the Framework, and would therefore be accorded very little weight in the planning process.
- 10.12 The planning system works best when there is certainty and consistency in the decisions that it delivers. The relative brevity of the draft NPPF which covers such a wide range of topics is not consistent with providing clarity and certainty in the planning system.
- 10.13 The NPPF has been drafted with the intention of providing “a framework within which local people and their accountable councils can produce their own distinctive local and neighbourhood plans, which reflect the needs and priorities of their communities”. The local element of policy should add locally-distinctive detail and clarity to the overall approach set out in the NPPF.
- 10.14 In the short term, prior to the adoption of an up-to-date plan that is in conformity with the NPPF, the Council would be almost entirely reliant on the simplified policies in the NPPF to make decisions on planning applications. The removal of the existing local tier of planning policy (although temporary) would lead to:
- inconsistent planning decisions;
 - no requirement for development in the most sustainable locations to come forward first;
 - planning by appeal rather than decision making through a plan led system; and
 - the potential imposition of unwanted development that does not reflect the needs and priorities of communities.

This is of particular concern due to the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the NPPF and the difficulty in defining what does and what does not constitute sustainable development.

- 10.15 It is suggested that the Council’s consultation response expresses concerns over the potential for a temporary absence of meaningful local planning policy and advocates the need for a transition period, whereby the presumption to approve development will be applied flexibly and local circumstances and evidence base will be taken into account, even if there is not a relevant or up-to-date local plan policy.
- 10.16 **Five-year supply of land for housing.** The draft NPPF continues the existing requirement for local planning authorities to identify a rolling supply of deliverable sites sufficient to provide five years supply of land for

housing. However, it also introduces a requirement to identify a further 20% in addition, to provide choice and competition in the market for land.

- 10.17 Cheshire East does not presently have a five year supply and has introduced an interim policy in an attempt to encourage applications in sustainable locations to increase the land supply. This is a response to the current situation, but is not a substitute for properly planned development coming forward through the development plan, which will ensure that new development enables the comprehensive provision of appropriate community and physical infrastructure.
- 10.18 It is suggested that the consultation response should note that the requirement of an additional 20% in the housing land supply could lead to more development coming forwards in an unplanned manner that may not be in the most sustainable locations and which may not deliver the required infrastructure arising from the cumulative impacts of development.
- 10.19 The draft Framework has also introduced a new definition for determining whether a site is 'deliverable' which will place a greater onus on local authorities to carry out expensive and time-consuming evidence base work. The definition will require councils to carry out a detailed viability assessment of each individual site within its 5 year housing land supply. This requirement could introduce greater uncertainty in the development process, with assessments being susceptible to challenge. Developers promoting their own less suitable sites for development could seek to undermine the Council's 5 year land supply by casting doubt on the viability assessments at appeal.
- 10.20 **Delivery of community facilities and local services.** The policy requirement to ensure that housing is developed in suitable locations which offer a range of community facilities and good access to key services and infrastructure is welcomed. However, it is considered that the subsequent wording (para 126) "where large scale development is proposed in less sustainable locations, local planning authorities should require investment to improve the sustainability of the site" does not adequately reflect the fact that development should only be approved in less sustainable locations as a last resort. The requirement to only 'improve' sustainability provides a degree of latitude which may not be helpful when negotiating with developers on the provision of essential infrastructure.
- 10.21 **Protection of employment land or floorspace** (para 75). The draft NPPF requires that "planning policies should avoid the long term protection of employment land or floorspace, and applications for alternative uses of designated land or buildings should be treated on their merits having regard to market signals and the relative need for different land uses".
- 10.22 The requirement not to protect employment land or floorspace is supported where it is no longer able to fulfil a useful economic function. However, in areas of high demand for housing such as Cheshire East, there is a need

to protect good employment sites that fulfil a useful economic function from other competing, higher-value land uses. It is suggested that the Council's consultation response should indicate the need to reword this paragraph so that the protected designation afforded to employment land or floorspace be subject to regular reviews to ensure that the land or floorspace still performs a useful economic function.

10.23 Removal of offices from town centres first policy. The promotion of vital and viable town centres is welcomed, but there is concern over the removal of B1a office development from the 'town centres first' policy. It would no longer be necessary to demonstrate that there are no more central sites available for office development. Office workers make a valuable contribution to the vitality and viability of town centres, and town centre locations are usually the most accessible by sustainable transport modes. The lack of suitable in-centre sites should not preclude office development elsewhere but the complete removal of the sequential test for office development is likely to lead to less sustainable patterns of development and may damage the vitality and viability of existing centres. It is suggested that the Council's consultation response raises this issue as an area of concern.

11.0 Access to Information

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

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RESPONSE BY CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL TO THE CONSULTATION DRAFT ON THE NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

General Comments

Cheshire East Council welcomes the consolidation and simplification of the national planning policy and guidance. Over successive years the planning system has grown too cumbersome and we welcome the opportunity to redress this balance.

The Council also supports the presumption in favour of sustainable development – and the concept that development should be viewed as a positive, necessary and beneficial contributor to a successful society. In particular we are keen to dispel the creeping cultural aversion to development – and are pleased that the Framework adopts a pro-active approach to building and development.

However, the Council also has some concerns about the approach set out in the draft NPPF

Local Context

Cheshire East Council is a unitary authority established in April 2009. The Borough has a population of 360,000 and is located to the south west of Manchester. Since its inception the Council has worked closely with stakeholders to develop a new and very positive approach to the future planning of the Borough. We have adopted our Sustainable Community Strategy entitled “Ambition for All”. As its name suggests this sets out a clear vision and ambitious strategy for the future growth and improvement of the Borough.

We are now moving forward rapidly with the preparation of our local plan which is to be strongly focused on delivering the economic growth that the Borough needs and can offer. We have been mindful of the need for a comprehensive programme of community engagement to ensure that we fully appreciate the needs of each town and the opportunities and constraints available. This programme is currently underway through our Place Shaping consultation.

We are following this by working closely over the next three months with four of our market towns which have been awarded Neighbourhood Planning vanguard status in the preparation of plans for each of these towns to shape the vision, strategy and proposals to deliver their future growth. The town councils and partnerships of these towns have been very supportive of the new approach to work closely with the Borough Council to develop the plan to steer the future development of their towns.

All four of these towns are attractive locations for economic and housing growth, indeed many proposals have been put forward by potential developers for consideration within the local plan on sites within and around these towns. The Council has been working closely with developers and landowners to assess the potential sites and to bring together development options that would help to deliver the employment, housing, community and infrastructure requirements of each town.

It has to be recognised that the preparation of a new local plan by a new authority will take time, particularly as in the case of Cheshire East we are seeking to change from the former authorities' restricted approach to development to a more pro-active one. We are looking at how we can streamline our approach whilst ensuring that we comply with legal requirements so as to avoid any risk of failure at the examination or of a legal challenge.

So far, we have been working successfully through the process with the support of prospective developers. To help ensure that we have an adequate supply of housing land in the period until the local plan is adopted, Cheshire East Council has introduced interim measures to control the release of sufficient land to meet the housing needs of the Borough in the short term.

The Role of Existing plans

Our first concern relates to the role of existing plans and the way the presumption in favour of sustainable development is currently drafted. Currently we rely for the majority of planning decisions on Local Plans dating from the past decade. Whilst all have a formal lifetime which ended earlier this year many of their policies and provisions remain relevant to the Borough as it now is – and will be for some time to come.

The Council is, therefore, very concerned that the stance set out in the draft NPPF para 26 which states the local planning authorities should “**grant permission where the plan is absent, silent, indeterminate or where relevant policies are out of date**”, This risks leaving a ‘policy void’ which will undermine public confidence in the whole system. It is understood that the NPPF deliberately does not prescribe what is an ‘up to date’ Local Plan so as to allow for local circumstances and variations. However it would be helpful if it had more to say on this – and particularly made the point that ‘old’ local plans need not automatically be considered as out of date

The Favourable Presumption and Plans under preparation

Our second concern relates to the impact that the NPPF will have on plans under preparation. All agree that an up to date adopted Local Plan is highly beneficial. However there is a risk that the current wording of the NPPF is likely to de-rail the preparation of the local plan. Since the publication of the draft NPPF, many developers have indicated that they are considering whether to submit planning

applications for their proposals on a variety of sites outside current settlement boundaries in advance of the adoption of the local plan.

The current wording of the NPPF would leave the local planning authority or the planning inspectorate little option but to grant permission for many of these proposals, thus undermining our approach to plan making especially with regard to creating an effective development strategy and the coordination of much needed infrastructure.

Such an approach would without doubt raise significant local opposition at a time when we are endeavouring to build support from local communities to a plan led approach to determining the growth strategy for our towns. Furthermore, ad hoc planning decision making in this manner will prevent us from drawing up a properly considered approach to planning the infrastructure needs of community and threaten the development of our approach to the Community Infrastructure Levy.

As a Council we are eager to provide the development necessary to support economic prosperity – but this prosperity will only succeed if it comes forward at the right place and the right time. Perhaps incorrectly, the NPPF is being seen as a reason to grant permission more widely – and at almost any price.

We feel that this impression can be overcome if the NPPF strengthened and clarified its definition of sustainable development – and also if there was recognition for both the role of existing local plans, the work that may be ongoing to create a new Local Plan and any interim measures democratically approved which bridge the gap between the two.

Cheshire East Council therefore strongly opposes the approach that permission should be granted for development where the adopted plans are not in conformity with the NPPF. Account should be taken of any interim measures that local planning authorities have adopted to manage development and pay greater heed to existing plans.

Detailed comments on specific paragraphs are set out below:

NPPF para	Cheshire East Council Comment
9- 18	<p>Delivering Sustainable Development</p> <p>The underlying principle that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development is supported. However, there are concerns that the very strong position taken in the NPPF within the presumption in favour of sustainable development will no doubt lead to arguments, appeals and legal challenges about the interpretation of the term “sustainable development” and whether a development is or is not considered to be sustainable.</p> <p>It is acknowledged that economic considerations have for too long been ignored and therefore merits much greater prominence. However the current wording risks over stating the economic case to the detriment of the social and environmental considerations. The balance can and should be restored - but we will simply repeat past mistakes if there is over emphasis of one consideration over the other two.</p> <p>There is a conflict between para 14 second bullet and section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act which refers to decisions on planning applications “<i>having regard to the provisions of the development plan, so far as material to the application, and to any other material consideration</i>”. This enable normal consideration to be given to a wide range of guidance in making development management decisions.</p>
17	<p>Neighbourhood Planning</p> <p>Support stance on neighbourhood plans, in particular that they must promote and not restrict development</p>
19	<p>Core Planning Principles</p> <p>These are generally supported, however, the following points are of concern:</p> <p>The 2nd bullet point should be more focused on striking a balance between delivering development in the most suitable locations, ensuring that the necessary infrastructure is provided and that it is designed to be of a high standard so as to create places where people want to work and live and thereby be attractive to investment.</p> <p>The 5th bullet on protecting and enhancing environmental assets is considered to be too weak. Development should definitely be located in areas of poorer environmental quality; this is part of ‘sustainability’.</p> <p>The core planning principles fail to make any reference to planning to address climate change or moving to a low carbon economy.</p>
21	<p>Supplementary Planning Documents</p> <p>We oppose the limitation on SPD’s set out in this paragraph. SPD’s by definition must conform to the adopted Local Plan – and so cannot impose any additional burdens. However clear and well prepared SPD’s can do much to explain policies and clarify them – to the benefit of all concerned.</p>

	SPD's can also have a particular role in articulating a communities local vision for its area – most especially through village design statements and related documents
26	<p>Conformity of Local Plans to the NPPF</p> <p>This is going to introduce more uncertainty and delays into the plan making process for those authorities who have recently adopted Local Development Frameworks and those in the process of preparing new plans.</p>
39	<p>Ensuring viability and deliverability</p> <p>The NPPF sets out a requirement to demonstrate that sites should be deliverable and that their viability is not threatened by planning obligations and policy burdens. It is considered that this requirement should be amended to make it clear that this should relate to “<i>normal market conditions</i>”.</p>
73-75	<p>Economic Development</p> <p>Support the approach to supporting economic development. However, there is conflict between paras 73 and 75. If land is not safeguarded it will be snapped up for other high value uses and there will be insufficient land available for business. There should be a proportionate safeguarding of land such that realistic provision is made for the future. Unless land and buildings are reserved for business development we will be unable to take advantage of investment opportunities when they arise.</p>
76 - 80	<p>Town Centres</p> <p>Support the stance on town centres. However, it is considered that paragraph 78 is too weak – there should be more unequivocal support for town centres</p>
81	<p>Rural Economy</p> <p>There should be a clearer and stronger stance to the protection of the countryside – it is the unspoilt attractiveness of the countryside that sustains the tourist industry. People visit rural areas outside of national parks and AONBs for their natural beauty and this should be recognised.</p>
107 - 108	<p>Housing</p> <p>Support overall objectives on housing; however, the NPPF should be clear that the release of major sites on green field land should only be through a plan-led allocation where the implications of the development for the local community and the infrastructure needed to support the development can be properly planned for.</p>
109	<p>Increase Housing Supply</p> <p>The Council recognises the importance of providing sufficient housing – to meet local needs and support economic growth. In that regard we support the policy to maintain a rolling 5 year supply of housing land.</p> <p>However the introduction of an additional allowance of at least 20% is</p>

	<p>opposed as it unnecessarily complicates the position and makes it harder to explain land supply to the public at large – a task that is not always easy at the best of times. In our experience it is the availability of finance rather than lack of competition that constrains housing supply.</p> <p>There is also a risk that this provision may lead to local authorities seeking to plan for a lower housing requirement figure. The requirement that local plans should ensure that there is an adequate supply of developable sites for years 6-10 years should ensure that sufficient sites are allocated and are capable of being brought forward for development as and when required. Reference should be added to this paragraph about the need to monitor and manage the release of housing land to ensure that there is an adequate supply of deliverable sites.</p> <p>The current position on maintaining a supply of ‘deliverable’ sites is especially difficult in a recession and takes no account of current restrictions on finance. There needs to be more balanced in the approach to maintaining housing land supply. It needs to be recognised that current limits on the delivery of housing is not primarily due to a lack of deliverable sites, but rather the uncertainties of the financial markets.</p> <p>Consequently we would encourage a rewording of footnote 5 on page 30. For the most part this sensibly indicates that the five year supply has to be based on sites which reasonably can come forward in that time. The difficulty comes in the reference to ‘current values’. If these are severely depressed then in fact it may prove nigh on impossible to provide a 5 year supply. It would be preferable to rely instead on a sensible and proportionate judgement of likely values over the 5 year period.</p>
110	<p>Increase Housing Supply</p> <p>This paragraph should be redrafted to strike a better balance between delivering development in the most suitable locations, ensuring that the necessary infrastructure is provided and that it is designed to be of a high standard so as to create places where people want to work and live and thereby be attractive to investment.</p> <p>The NPPF should be clear that the release of major housing sites on green field land should only be through a plan-led allocation where the implications of the development for the local community and the infrastructure needed to support the development can be properly planned for.</p>
123	<p>Outdoor Advertising</p> <p>There needs to be stronger control on outdoor advertising outside of towns as they can result in significant impact on the appearance of the countryside. One of the cherished characteristics of the English countryside is the absence of hoardings and bill boards that sadly blight the periphery of towns and villages elsewhere. The current wording is too permissive; it could be strengthened without detriment to business activity.</p>
133 -	<p>Green Belts</p>

147	<p>We welcome the guidance on Green Belts within the NPPF. Whilst in some respects the length of the guidance is considerably longer than is devoted to other subjects, this is justified by the particular issues that green belt poses. Almost by definition these areas possess significant development pressures which often require complex judgements of impact to be made. Accordingly it is appropriate that the NPPF has detailed guidance on the topic.</p>
163-167	<p>Natural Environment</p> <p>This section is not comprehensive enough. The landscape section only refers to National Parks and AONBs. The vast majority of the English Countryside is neither green belt nor covered by one of these designations.</p> <p>There should be recognition of the need to protect the countryside for its environmental, cultural and economic value and to ensure that the landscaping and design of any development in the countryside respects the recognised landscape character.</p> <p>We acknowledge that in order to meet development needs that greenfield sites will need to be built on and that not all countryside can be protected. However the Framework does not say enough about the more profound rural areas in particular. Reference in paragraph 24 to areas of protection is too obscure. The Countryside contributes enormously to the attractiveness of our nation – both as a place to live - but also as a place to visit and invest in. The Countryside has economic as well as merely scenic value. We would therefore encourage a more positive statement within the NPPF about the role of Countryside – and this can be drafted so as not to be an obstruction to each and every Greenfield development.</p> <p>Whilst the reduction in the amount of prescriptive national planning policy guidance is welcomed, there are concerns about the loss of much valued guidance on the approach to planning to safeguard and enhance environmental and heritage assets. This guidance has ensured that local authorities apply a common approach to safeguarding and enhancing these assets of international and national importance. There is a concern that without this guidance, local authorities will have to develop their own local approaches which will mean that developers will have a plethora of differing approaches to take account of in preparing their proposals.</p> <p>As a constituent Authority of the Peak District National Park the Council is concerned to ensure that the special character of Peak District and other National Parks is adequately maintained. The normal favourable presumption may not be compatible with the statutory purposes of the National Parks – and requires at the very least strict clarification of what constitutes ‘sustainable development’ in the peculiar context of a National Park.</p>

<p>176 - 191</p>	<p>The Historic Environment</p> <p>The Recent Publication of PPS5 has already slimmed down guidance on the historic environment – and the NPPF has reduced it still further to the extent that strength of the previous advice is substantially enfeebled.</p> <p>The historic environment is a unique national asset– which once lost cannot be replaced. We submit that it deserves more attention than it is currently afforded within the NPPF</p>
	<p>Omissions</p> <p>There is no reference to:</p> <p>Monitoring the effectiveness of local plans</p> <p>Promoting the reuse of previously developed land and redeveloping older urban areas for new uses</p>

SPD's

By virtue of paragraph(s) 1, 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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