

Environment and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Agenda

Date: Monday, 15th June, 2020

Time: 10.00 am

Venue: Virtual Meeting

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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.

It should be noted that Part 1 items of Cheshire East Council decision making meetings are audio recorded and the recordings are uploaded to the Council's website

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

1. **Apologies for Absence**
2. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting** (Pages 3 - 10)

To approve the minutes of the previous meeting held on 16 March 2020.

Contact: Mark Nedderman
Tel: 01270 686459
E-Mail: mark.nedderman@cheshireeast.gov.uk

3. **Declarations of Interest**

To provide an opportunity for Members and Officers to declare any disclosable pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests in any item on the agenda.

4. **Declarations of a Party Whip**

To provide an opportunity for Members to declare the existence of a party whip in relation to any item on the agenda.

5. **Public Speaking/Open Session**

A total period of 15 minutes is allocated for members of the public to make a statement(s) on any matter that falls within the remit of the Committee. Individual members of the public may speak for up to 5 minutes, but the Chairman will decide how the period of time allocated for public speaking will be apportioned, where there are a number of speakers.

Members of the public wishing to make a statement should provide notice in writing at least three clear working days before the meeting takes place.

6. **Covid-19 Response** (Pages 11 - 36)

To consider the report as considered by Cabinet on 9 June 2020.

7. **Procurement of a Housing Framework** (Pages 37 - 50)

To consider the report as was considered by Cabinet on 5 May 2020.

8. **Cleaner, Greener Crewe** (Pages 51 - 66)

To consider a presentation.

9. **Forward Plan** (Pages 67 - 74)

To review the council's forward plan.

10. **Work Programme** (Pages 75 - 80)

To review the committee's work programme

Membership: Councillors Q Abel (Vice-Chairman), L Braithwaite, S Brookfield, J Buckley, T Dean, A Farrall, P Findlow (Chairman), P Groves, M Hunter, D Jefferay, C Leach, K Parkinson.

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL**Minutes of a meeting of the Environment and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

held on Monday, 16th March, 2020 at Committee Suite 1,2 & 3, Westfields,
Middlewich Road, Sandbach CW11 1HZ

PRESENT

Councillor JP Findlow (Chairman)
Councillor M Hunter (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors S Akers Smith, L Braithwaite, J Buckley, T Dean, A Farrall,
P Groves, S Hogben, C Leach and K Parkinson

In attendance

Councillor C Browne-Deputy Leader of the Council
Councillor L Crane-Portfolio Holder for Highways and Waste
Councillor N Mannion-Portfolio Holder for Environment and Regeneration
J Bakewell-Director of Governance and Compliance
P Bayley-Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services
G Bubb-Transport Manager, TSS
M Davenhill-Contract Asset Manager
S Davies-Operations Manager, Maintenance and Localities
R Hibbert-Interim Head of Transport
C Hindle-Head of Infrastructure
R Kemp-Head of Environmental Services
A Ross-Director of Highways & Infrastructure
P Skates- Director of Growth & Enterprise

Visiting Councillors

Councillor D Brown
Councillor J Clowes
Councillor S Corcoran
Councillor H Faddes
Councillor A Gage

Prior to the start of the meeting the Chairman asked for clarification regarding meetings in the current crisis and what if any advice was there in relation to Coronavirus for Members and the public.

The Director of Governance and Compliance advised that

66 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors S Brookfield and D Jefferay.

67 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 10 February 2020 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman subject to the deletion of Councillor L Crane as Vice Chairman and replaced with Councillor M Hunter and subject to it being noted that Councillor S Hogben was a substitute.

68 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor M Hunter declared a pecuniary interest in respect of item 8' Review of TSS Commissioning including Flexi-Link Service by virtue of the fact that he had recently been appointed as a Director of TSS. In accordance with the Code of Conduct he left the room prior to consideration of the item.

69 WHIPPING DECLARATIONS

No declarations of a party whip were received.

70 PUBLIC SPEAKING/OPEN SESSION

Two statements submitted by ADAPT and Gawsworth Parish Council were read out by the Democratic Services Officer.

The statement by ADAPT related to items 6 and 7 on the agenda. In respect of item 6 ADAPT's Transport Group wished to request reconsideration of the proposal to discontinue precautionary gritting on Coole Lane and Longhill Lane, near Audlem. With support from Cheshire East Council, the group had been progressing the development of a safer all-year cycle link between Audlem and Nantwich to enable connectivity with the Cheshire East cycle network, which was at the heart of Cheshire East's cycling strategy. Coole Lane was a key part of this route. Alongside this Longhill Lane was an integral part of the only bus service serving Audlem. Discontinuing the Winter gritting of these roads would reduce the practicality of sustainable travel options in the area under Winter conditions.

In respect of item 7, they were encouraged that the response had stimulated a comprehensive redraft of the policy but were concerned that the highlighting of Priority Actions with delivery dates did not appear in the latest draft. The removal of dates was at odds with one of the main acknowledged outcomes from the consultation, namely the call for greater urgency. The removal of the annual status reporting from the strategy was considered to be another step backwards in relation to the urgency of the matter which could potentially threaten the achievement of the 2025 carbon neutrality ambition. It was suggested that these points be addressed prior to adoption of the Strategy by the Council.

The statement submitted by Gawsworth Parish Council related to item 6 on the agenda. The Parish Council considered that the Well Managed Highway consultation was inadequate when it came to the decision to cut gritting routes. The Parish Council considered the consultation thoroughly but did not recall suggesting that routes would be cut from rural areas. It was felt that there should have been proper consultation with parish and town councils in advance of the decision to change gritting routes, and whilst the Parish Council were made

aware of proposals in late 2019 through the area highways group (and had lodged a request for meaningful engagement to understand the rationale behind changes) the council was not consulted. It was considered that for changes such as these, consultation with the parish and town councils was essential.

The Parish Council was also concerned that a number of roads were either not gritted or had been removed from the gritting schedule and urged the Council to reconsider the decision and undertake a meaningful consultation with parish and town councils to identify the most important gritting routes in their areas.

71 CALL IN OF CABINET DECISION-CE19/20-17 WELL MANAGED HIGHWAY INFRASTRUCTURE

Consideration was given to the call in of Cabinet decision-CE19/20-17 Well Managed Highway Infrastructure.

The Chairman introduced the report. Councillor J Clowes who was the spokesperson then explained the reasons for the call in which focused on the inadequate consultation processes conducted prior to the Cabinet decision to approve the Well-Managed Highways Infrastructure Strategy and the impact on Cheshire East Highways Gritting Policies. In addition she raised concerns that information which should have been disseminated to partners in a more effective manner was not done so and therefore crucial information was not made available to Members and partners which included the availability of a grit bin policy and the Risk Assessment scoring criteria which determined which roads were to be gritted.

Councillor C Browne, the then Portfolio Holder at the time the decision was made outlined the reasons for the decision. He explained in detail the consultation processes which had been undertaken from 2018 to present as well as the legal and financial impact on the Council as a result of the delay in implementing the decision made by Cabinet back in February 2020. Councillor L Crane the current Portfolio Holder supported the case of Councillor C Browne stating that when she had been a Member of the Committee there had been no requests to rerun the consultation process at any point during the periods the Committee had considered the matter.

Members of the Committee then asked a number of questions of Councillor C Browne which were responded to relating to:-

- The consultation process with particular focus on the removal of gritting routes located near to primary and secondary schools and whether or not local Councillors should have had more involvement in the removal of these routes;
- General lack of local Member involvement in the consultation process;
- Lack of a single document containing the methodology;
- The £230,000 financial pressure within the place directorate;
- Further scope for Ward Councillors to challenge the scoring criteria which officers used and applied;
- The criteria for removing winter gritting routes;
- Cabinet Member awareness of ongoing consultations;
- Attendance at Area Highway Groups and why Parish/Town Councils weren't invited;

- Possibility of holding further Area Highway Group meetings with invites to these meetings being extended to all schools and Parish/Town Councils to discuss the routes without going out to a full consultation.

Visiting Members, Councillors S Corcoran and D Brown attended the meeting and made a number of comments. Councillor Corcoran reiterated that each criteria had been assessed in detail and there had been no objections to the consultation process previously. In addition he stated that the Area Highways Groups had had the opportunity to make comments and changes had been made as a result of the feedback.

Councillor M Simon, one of the call in Members then made a statement which reiterated the concerns of Councillor J Clowes stating the first she was aware of the consultation process was back in June 2019 which left only one week to feedback any comments before the consultation closed. She considered that local knowledge was vital and that Cabinet should be urged to contact all those Ward Councillors impacted by the reduction in gritting routes.

Further questions were then raised asking for clarification if there would there be a further delay should the Committee offered advice to Cabinet, how long the consultation process would take, how would it be undertaken if the call in was successful given the current situation with meetings being cancelled and would it be appropriate to make use of CHALC?

Councillor J Clowes confirmed she was happy to consider a streamlined consultation process, however she emphasised it was critical that people were aware that it was happening. She agreed that the link with the Area Highway Groups would help to satisfy the need for further consultation.

The matter was then opened up for debate. The Committee considered the two options available to them, which was to either offer no advice in which case the decision could be implemented, or offer advice, which would be submitted to Cabinet for a decision to be made on the matter.

Following consideration of the issues raised in the call in request, the responses given, Members felt it appropriate to offer the following advice to Cabinet:-

Given the delay already to implementing the policy there would be sufficient time for a further streamlined consultation process with the Area Highways Groups and Town/Parish Councils to be undertaken as part of the annual review of the wider Well Managed Highways Infrastructure policy.

RESOLVED

That Cabinet be advised to:-

- (1) To undertake a further round of streamlined consultation on the winter service element only as part of the annual review of the wider Well Managed Highways Infrastructure policy;
- (2) That this annual review process be carried out through the Area Highway Groups, including the involvement of all Parish and Town Councils and relevant community/cycle groups as appropriate, with supporting information to be supplied to the AHGs in advance of the meetings and shared with the schools;

(3) That a letter be sent to all schools within the Borough informing them of this additional round of consultation as part of the first annual review;

(4) That all schools will be given (X) week period to respond to the consultation as part of the first annual review.

The meeting was adjourned for lunch from 12.20pm until 1.00pm).

72 ENVIRONMENT STRATEGY AND CARBON ACTION PLAN

Consideration was given to a report on the Environment Strategy and Carbon Action Plan.

Members raised the following matters:-

- (i) There was a lot to be welcomed from the strategy, however the Council could and possibly should do more not least to have a chance of achieving carbon neutrality by 2025. Only two other Councils in the country had gone for a 2025 target date;
- (ii) The plan needed to be more specific on what the 'inset' actions were or would be;
- (iii) Active Travel/sustainable travel wasn't referred to throughout the document and this was an issue;
- (iv) The publication of a Bus Strategy was urgently required;
- (v) More needed to be done to support cycling around the Borough and making it safer. It was important to think cycle in everything that was done.
- (vi) In order to achieve this more Capital Funding would be required and if it wasn't available in the current budget it should be made available in the next one in order to be more carbon neutral by 2025;
- (vii) Should at least have a timeline of what the Council was going to do in terms of projects up until 2025 and an annual review of where the Council was, what it had achieved, what it said it was going to do and what it hadn't done;
- (viii) No public electric charging points in Macclesfield and this needed addressing;
- (ix) The programme was too ambitious and the professional view was that a target date of 2025 was unachievable and that 2034 would be more realistic;
- (x) Was the planting of 6,000 trees the first tranche of the process for planting;
- (xi) Scheme or expo for electric cycles to be spearheaded by the Council or some other body;
- (xii) The 2025 target would help the Council to focus;
- (xiii) No reference to wildflower planting;
- (xiv) Measures identified to contribute to a reduction in CO2 levels, some good ideas but not specific enough;
- (xv) Inclusion of measurements for cycleways;
- (xvi) Timescales for cutting of road side verges and was it included within the strategy;;
- (xvii) More pressure needed to be placed on central Government by local MPs with regard to the funding of electric buses.

RESOLVED

1. That the draft Environment Strategy and Carbon Action Plan be noted.
2. That the above comments be reported back to Cabinet for their consideration.

73 REVIEW OF TSS COMMISSIONING INCLUDING FLEXILINK SERVICE

Consideration was given to a report on the delivery and performance of the FlexiLink service.

Visiting Councillor, Councillor H Faddes attended the meeting and spoke in respect of the FlexiLink Service with a specific request for ??

Members queried when the bus strategy would be published and could they comment on it once it was made public. Concerns were raised that the service was limited to Cheshire East and that it was important to lobby MP's so that there was more cross boundary liaison whereby expanding the service out of the Borough could be looked at. It was suggested that the local MP's did meet regularly with the Leader and therefore this matter could be raised at one of their meetings.

The Deputy Leader suggested that the bus strategy and charging structure for cancellations was something that the Committee may wish to look at in the future. Currently users were not charged for cancelling the service on the day.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

(Prior to consideration of the following item the meeting was adjourned for a short break).

74 PERFORMANCE SCORECARD

Consideration was given to the performance data for services within the Council's Place directorate for quarter 3 of 2019/20. Particular focus was given to any areas of poor or worsened performance.

In respect of Performance Indicator PEN024, concerns were raised that the wording for this indicator was confusing and it was not??

RESOLVED

That the performance scorecard be noted.

75 FORWARD PLAN

Consideration was given to the areas of the Forward Plan which fell within the remit of the Committee.

RESOLVED

That the Forward Plan be noted.

76 WORK PROGRAMME

Consideration was given to the work programme.

It was agreed that the Bus Strategy and Charging structure for the Flexi-Link Service be included on the work programme.

RESOLVED

That the work programme be approved subject to the addition of the Bus Strategy and the Charging structure for the Flexi-Link service be included on the work programme.

The meeting commenced at 10.00 am and concluded at 2.43 pm

Councillor JP Findlow (Chairman)

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Working for a brighter future together

Key Decision: N

Date First
Published: N/A

Cabinet

Date of Meeting: 9 June 2020

Report Title: Responding to COVID-19

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Sam Corcoran, Leader of the Council and Cllr Craig Browne, Deputy Leader of the Council

Senior Officer: Lorraine O'Donnell, Chief Executive

1. Report Summary

- 1.1. This report provides a summary of the Council's work in response to the current national and international public health emergency on COVID-19.
- 1.2. These are unprecedented times for the Council, our residents and businesses of the borough. The sub-regional response has been led by the Cheshire Local Resilience Forum, which includes Cheshire East, Cheshire West and Chester, Halton and Warrington Councils, working with key partners including health, police and fire and rescue.
- 1.3. In addition to the response, this report outlines how the Council is planning for the initial stages of the lockdown restrictions being lifted. Furthermore, the Council is planning for the longer-term recovery from the pandemic and a progress report will be presented to the next Cabinet meeting.

2. Recommendations

The Cabinet is asked to:

- 2.1. Note the issues outlined in this report;
- 2.2. Note the financial implications of COVID-19 to date and the ongoing lobbying to ensure that the Government fund the total financial impact of the pandemic on Cheshire East Council; and

- 2.3. Continue to lobby Government and raise concerns as appropriate.

3. Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1. To put on public record a summary of the Council's response to date. To explain the financial and other implications, and the ongoing pressures.

4. Other Options Considered

- 4.1. Not applicable.

5. Background

5.1 Virus and disease

Coronaviruses (CoV) are a large family of viruses that cause respiratory illness.

Coronaviruses were identified in the mid-1960s and are known to infect humans and a variety of animals (including birds and mammals). Since 2002, two coronaviruses infecting animals have evolved and caused outbreaks in humans: SARS-CoV in 2002, and MERS-CoV in 2012¹.

On 31 December 2019, a cluster of pneumonia cases of unknown cause was reported in Wuhan City, Hubei Province, China. The novel coronavirus has been named by the World Health Organisation (WHO) as 'severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2' (SARS-CoV-2), while the coronavirus disease associated with it is referred to as COVID-19².

As with other respiratory illnesses, symptoms of COVID-19 can include a runny nose, loss of smell, sore throat, cough, and fever. It can be more severe for some people and can lead to pneumonia or breathing difficulties. More rarely, the disease can be fatal. Older people, and people with pre-existing medical conditions (such as diabetes and heart disease) appear to be more vulnerable to becoming severely ill with the virus³.

5.2 Spread

On 31 January 2020, the WHO declared the outbreak as a public health emergency of international concern (PHEIC). At that stage, there were 9,847 confirmed cases globally, with 9,826 in China.

On 11 March 2020, the WHO declared the COVID-19 outbreak as a pandemic, signifying that the new disease was now spreading globally. At that time, there were 124,101 confirmed cases globally and 4,583 confirmed deaths.

¹ <https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/2019-ncov-background-disease>

² [https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/technical-guidance/naming-the-coronavirus-disease-\(covid-2019\)-and-the-virus-that-causes-it](https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/technical-guidance/naming-the-coronavirus-disease-(covid-2019)-and-the-virus-that-causes-it)

³ <https://www.who.int/news-room/q-a-detail/q-a-coronaviruses>

The outbreak initially occurred in China and spread rapidly throughout the country and then into neighbouring Western Pacific states. It spread to Iran and Italy, with Europe taking over from the Western Pacific as the epicentre for the disease by mid-March. The outbreak has spread rapidly globally since, with the Americas, and principally the United States, recognised as the next potential epicentre since late March.

As at 27 May 2020, 213 countries/territories have been affected; there were 5,488,825 confirmed cases globally; and 349,095 confirmed deaths⁴. In the UK, as at 27 May 2020, there were 267,240 confirmed cases and 37,460 confirmed deaths⁵.

Here in Cheshire East there were 1,214 confirmed cases and 376 confirmed deaths as at 27 May 2020.

The latest international, national and local statistics are available from the following data dashboards:

- <https://covid19.who.int/>
- <https://coronavirus.data.gov.uk/>
- <https://lginform.local.gov.uk/reports/view/lga-research/covid-19-case-tracker>

6 Response

6.1 National

In the UK, the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC), Chief Medical Officers, NHS England and Public Health England, supported by staff at regional centres have led the national response. The council has been in regular contact with these agencies and local health and care organisations in the county.

In the initial stages of the outbreak, the NHS and Public Health England were proactive in contacting people who had been at risk of being infected, testing them, and where people tested positive, tracing who they may have come into contact with and managing and treating risk cases.

DHSC launched a UK-wide public information campaign to advise the public on how to slow the spread of the virus and reduce the impact on NHS services. Information promoting important hygiene messages appeared in print, broadcast and social media.

DHSC worked across government to produce sector-specific guidance, to reflect the different challenges across a number of different settings for example, transport, education, social care and hospitality. As the outbreak

⁴ <https://covid19.who.int/>

⁵ <https://coronavirus.data.gov.uk/>

spread, more guidance was published, and existing guidance revised as the national strategy to tackle the pandemic evolved.

The most significant policy announcement milestones are as follows.

On 3 March 2020, the government published its coronavirus action plan which was based on four strategic phases – contain; delay, research; and mitigate.

On 12 March 2020, the government published its ‘Stay at home’ guidance which set out what individuals should do if they experienced coronavirus symptoms, however mild. At this point the government recognised that the virus was spreading generally throughout the country and could no longer be contained through international travel restrictions and by contact tracing around suspected or confirmed cases. In terms of its action plan, this signified the shift from ‘contain’ to ‘delay’.

Following announcements in relation to the closure of schools, pubs and restaurants, a UK-wide lockdown was announced on 23 March 2020, backed by police powers to enforce social distancing and closure regulations.

Emergency legislation was introduced and passed in just four days, with the Coronavirus Act 2020 receiving Royal Assent on 25 March 2020. The legislation gives further powers to government to slow the spread of the virus; reduce the resourcing and administrative burden on public bodies; and limit the impact of potential staffing shortages on the delivery of public services.

On 6 April 2020 the government confirmed that local authorities would be allowed to hold remote council meetings and that the 2020/21 annual general meetings of councils could be postponed. Where an appointment would otherwise be made or require to be made at an annual meeting of a local authority, such appointment continues until the next annual meeting of the authority or until such time as that authority may determine. In addition, all forthcoming local elections and other polls including the police and crime commissioner elections were postponed to 2021.

In terms of financial support, the Chancellor announced a £330 billion support package on 17 March 2020 including business rates relief support for small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs). And on 27 April 2020 the Chancellor announced a loan scheme underwritten by the government which would offer SMEs loan finance of up to £50,000 with the government meeting the interest payments in the first year.

On 20 March 2020 the introduction of a Job Retention Scheme was announced, whereby the government would pay the equivalent of 80 percent of the wages of staff put on ‘furlough’ (a period of temporary leave of absence on reduced pay) during the lock-down.

On 12 May 2020, the Chancellor made a further announcement that the furlough scheme would be extended by a further four months with workers continuing to receive 80 percent of their current salary through to the end of

July. In addition, from the start of August, furloughed workers will be able to return to work part-time with employers being asked to pay a percentage towards the salaries of their furloughed staff. The employer payments will substitute the contribution the government is currently making, ensuring that staff continue to receive 80 percent of their salary, up to £2,500 a month. The government also announced that it is shortly to publish proposals for how furloughed workers can be supported to undertake additional training and learn new skills while on furlough.

The government has made a number of announcements in relation to supporting local government financially, either by making available additional funding or by bringing forward previously announced funding programmes⁶. In terms of additional funding, the government has made available two amounts of £1.6 billion COVID-19 grant, announced on 19 March and 18 April 2020. Hardship funding to support local council tax support schemes was announced on 11 March 2020 totalling £500 million, and more recently on 15 May 2020, a £600 million fund was also announced for care homes support. See paragraph 8.2 also.

On 11 May 2020, the government published 'Our plan to rebuild: the UK Government's COVID-19 recovery strategy'. This set out a five-point scale to indicate the level of threat posed by COVID-19 to society and a phased approach to recovery, with incremental steps to relax control and public protection measures.

On 13 May 2020, the government amended its existing regulations under the Coronavirus Act to enable the phased relaxation of lockdown measures including allowing people to visit HWRCs, the re-opening of garden centres and some outdoor sports facilities.

On 27 May 2020, the government amended regulations further to allow small gatherings of 6 people in parks or gardens and re-opening of dentists from early June. Further announcements are expected shortly.

6.2 Sub-regional

These are unprecedented times for the sub-region of Cheshire, our residents and businesses. In terms of the response, Cheshire East Council is a statutory Category One Responder under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004.

The sub-regional response has been led by the Cheshire Local Resilience Forum (LRF), which includes Cheshire East, Cheshire West and Chester, Halton and Warrington Councils, working with key partners including health, police and fire and rescue.

The council is a major LRF partner and has played a significant role at all levels of response – participating in the strategic coordinating groups (SCG)

⁶ <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/insights/coronavirus-support-for-local-government/>

and tactical coordinating groups (TCG) and resourcing all of the multi-agency support cells established to manage the county's response.

7. Local Response

Cheshire East Council has responded rapidly to the Coronavirus pandemic and has continued to provide a co-ordinated response. During this time the council has delivered essential local services, protected our most vulnerable people, and supported communities, businesses and the economy.

Cabinet has been meeting informally on a frequent basis to provide political leadership.

The Executive Leadership Team has led the operational response, which has been co-ordinated by a bespoke Council Emergency and Response Team (CEMART), ably supported by officers from the Joint Emergency Planning Team.

This report summarises key issues from the response to date under a number of service areas and topics.

7.1 Communities

Cheshire East Council launched the People Helping People (PHP) Service on 20 March. This was our rapid response to support residents out in the community who found themselves required to socially isolate and through that, have become vulnerable due to government advice to stay at home to protect themselves.

The service provides residents who have underlying health issues and/or who were above the age of 70 who do not have the available support networks with the option to request help for tasks such as food shopping or prescription collection. To meet the needs of residents the service also allows local people to offer their availability and support hence the PHP. The scheme was also extended to vulnerable children and their families. To give an indication of the reach of PHP:

- We have contact with 2,037 volunteers
- We have matched 3,196 people with a volunteer
- 255 families have requested support through the Children and Families PHP initiative specifically.

7.2 Adult Social Care

Adult Social Care social work services have continued to offer assessments and support planning to those requiring services, the majority of these assessments being undertaken via telephone or skype calls. Where it has

been deemed necessary to undertake face to face contact for example safeguarding issues, mental health assessments, and urgent Occupational Therapy assessments, the staff have been provided with appropriate PPE, and risk assessments have been undertaken. The service has averaged between 300 and 400 initial contacts per week. The service has maintained offices however, in the main staff are able to work successfully from home using the IT equipment and telephones supplied to them.

There is evidence of pressure on families struggling to cope with challenging behaviour in the confined space of their homes this has been particularly evident in Learning Disability services. Support has been provided and, in some cases, respite has been offered. There has been an increase in the numbers of people who have become very anxious during the period and contacts to the Mental Health Service have increased, however support has been offered without the need to move towards statutory interventions of Mental Health Act Assessments.

Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards referrals have started to increase as more people object to placement within care homes due to the increasing number of deaths in care homes. This will eventually lead to more Court of Protection applications and Best Interest assessments. We are seeing 60 – 70 referrals per week.

Care4CE services have remained resilient during the crisis. All day care provision has been closed following the government advice on gatherings, alternative assistance has been offered in one to one activity and in some cases respite provision together with offering carers breaks. Discussions regarding the reopening of day services have begun, however, there is no date as yet for when the service will resume. Networks and reablement have maintained services with support from the Council for PPE and the commitment and dedication of staff have maintained services throughout the crisis.

Staff from Adult Social Care and Communities have assisted in the areas of People Helping People and Shielding Hub, acting as an interface with statutory service of Adult Social Care and the volunteers. This has been supported by the voluntary, community and faith sector who have been supportive throughout the crisis.

We have maintained our support to Gypsy and Traveller communities, we have ensured that welfare checks and support with portable toilets, fresh water and rubbish removal are provided, together with information regarding prevention and infection control. Whilst we have not issued any court

proceedings to move people on, we have suggested that people move to areas where there is less impact on local communities.

Hospital Social Work Teams have supported with discharges from hospital into 'step down' beds and domiciliary care to enable assessments to take place away from an acute setting. Delayed transfers of care have significantly reduced, and capacity remains well able to meet demand.

7.3 Commissioning

The commissioning team have ensured that every adult and children's social care and public health contract/services was able to deliver services in line with the Government guidelines. A huge effort has been undertaken to support the adult social care market and in particular, the care home sector. The commissioning team started to undertake preparatory work in responding to COVID-19 with social care providers back in February 2020. Every contract was reviewed, and a commissioning strategy was put in place to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic as stated in the following paragraphs.

Collaboration and Communication: - There was a recognition that the situation would be fast moving and would create an uncertain operational environment. To respond to this, we worked with the social care providers to create channels that gave them the ability to raise issues and get answers back quickly, and to be able to solve problems collaboratively both with commissioners and each other.

A weekly mutual aid call takes place with each segment of the care market – Accommodation with Care, Care at Home and Complex Care. The purpose of these calls is to ensure that issues and problems get heard and solutions are sought. These are currently working well, particularly within the care at home segment, where providers are working much more collectively to support the care and support needs of service users requiring that service.

At the start of the COVID-19 pandemic the commissioning team undertook daily calls to all providers however, once the situation became more serious and we started to see an increase in outbreaks the team had to implement and operate a risk-based approach to all providers. The rationale for this approach is that providers have told us they want to focus on delivering the best possible care for the residents. All other commissioned Adult Social Care and Public Health services receive a twice weekly or once a week call unless they inform us that they need support.

A weekly briefing is sent to all care providers operating in Cheshire East (whether commissioned or not) which summarises the latest guidance, processes and support available to providers. In addition, a Care Provider portal has been established on the Council's website to store information for providers.

All providers understand the need to inform the Council of any issues, suspected or confirmed COVID-19 cases and any PPE requirements and there is a well-established process for this which is understood by providers.

Business Continuity Plans -The Commissioning team worked with the social care providers to ensure that we had an up to date copy of all business continuity plans and these were analysed to ensure we could identify, and risk assess services.

Cashflow- To mitigate against the pressure on cashflow for providers, a commitment was made in March that Cheshire East Council would continue to pay for 'commissioned' care and would not claw back and hours that were undelivered due to the COVID-19 pandemic. We also committed to ensuring prompt payments.

Hospital retainer- When a service user is admitted to hospital, Cheshire East Council continues to pay the provider for 7 days. This is to enable the package to remain open and facilitate a fast discharge with their original provider. This offer has been extended to 14 days to align with the infection period of the virus.

Hospital discharge- To facilitate the implementation of the COVID-19 hospital discharge guidance several actions were taken. We block booked 26 beds across the Borough and these are funded by the NHS. In addition to this the current beds commissioned to support winter pressures, 9 beds were also extended. The rapid response (care at home) contracts were also extended and enhanced. We also undertake a daily vacancy count and at the time of writing have 151 beds available across the Borough.

Infection control- As a Council we recognised the need for increased usage of personal protective equipment (PPE) and the difficulty in supply. To mitigate this, we have and will continue to purchase the relevant PPE, and we distribute this to all services that are running low on supplies. This has been an additional cost to the council, circa one million pounds

The commissioning team also set up new programmes to support vulnerable groups during the pandemic:

- Hidden Carers
- Job Matching Service
- Mental Health Information Point

7.4 Public Health data and messaging

Leadership through the early stages of the COVID-19 outbreak was provided by the Acting Director of Public Health and the Health Protection team. This included engagement with Local Resilience Forum partners and Public Health England to ensure a timely activation of our emergency response processes including implementation of the CEMART structure that has been used throughout the Cheshire East Council Response.

The Health Protection team have provided timely support and communication to key teams throughout the council on the government guidance around PPE and safe working. Public Health Officers also direct support to schools, care homes and other partner organisations where additional support was needed.

Communication of key public health messages to the public has been prioritised throughout COVID-19 and both the Acting Director of Public Health and the Public Health Team have played an active role in ensuring key messages are timely and accurate.

7.5. PPE

COVID-19 has caused a huge surge in demand for Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). It is essential to keep up levels of supply so that our key workers, including care staff, can use the equipment they need to protect themselves and those they care for. We have worked tirelessly to source and provide essential PPE for care homes and domiciliary care providers.

Nationally, there have been well-publicised shortages of PPE and delays in securing sustainable supplies. Cheshire East Council has welcomed the PPE drops arranged by the Government. However, like many councils, we have had to supplement that several-fold with locally-sourced supplies which we have funded. This has been and continues to be a real challenge. Securing enough PPE will remain a priority for the foreseeable future, particularly as number of settings increases, for example, schools.

7.6 Testing

The Government initially set up arrangements to test hospital in-patients and then front-line health and social care staff. This has been expanded to cover community testing, including swabbing and home testing kits. Mass testing centres were set up across the North West to increase access to testing using private lab capacity. The Army has facilitated local testing in our localities. Four mobile testing sites have been agreed within the Borough, namely Crewe, Knutsford, Macclesfield and Nantwich. These locations have been chosen to achieve a balance of access for our communities whilst minimising traffic congestion.

On 23 April, the Government announced the establishment of a National Contact Tracing Service (NCTS) as part of a Test and Trace approach. Local Authorities will have a key role to play in delivering this service. The local element of the national contact tracing programme will be led by Cheshire East Council working with Public Health England when there is a local outbreak of COVID-19 requiring significant local action.

Local Authorities in England have been asked to develop Local Outbreak Plans by the end of June describing how they will tackle outbreaks in their areas. Local Directors of Public Health will provide a leadership role in local outbreak response.

7.7 Support for customers

Whilst face to face Customer Services points are closed, the team moved quickly so that staff could work from home and to provide support, information and advice via the telephone and the website.

We have updated our website as the definitive source of information on services and available support on Coronavirus.

7.8 Shielding Hub

As part of the Government's response to shielding people most at risk of need of hospital treatment if they catch Coronavirus and who have been asked to stay at home for at least 12 weeks, we set up a Community Shielding Hub, and Distribution Centre. This is an entirely new service that wasn't in existence before the pandemic.

The Hub has so far engaged with over 3,000 residents and issued in excess of 250 emergency parcels of food and toiletries. Local companies and supermarkets have contributed through providing supplies which have been greatly appreciated.

7.9 Support for business

We have been working with local businesses, the local chambers of commerce, the Federation of Small Businesses, the Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership and Marketing Cheshire to channel business-based support to meet local need and to enable businesses to support each other.

To date, we have allocated over £76m of Business Grants to almost 6,000 small businesses in the last few weeks.

In addition, we have urgently developed another Discretionary Grant scheme to support small local business which haven't been able to access other funding. The new scheme opened to applications on 1 June 2020, with funds of circa £4.28m available.

Furthermore, we have established a weekly meeting with key businesses and business representatives to ensure we understand the key issues facing the local economy. In addition, we launched a Business Helping Business

service where the council has brokered support to businesses from local businesses.

7.10 Children's Services

Children's services have continued to operate to ensure our children and families are supported during this time. Services have been creative and have adapted to be able to offer support remotely, for example our parenting journey is being offered through our Facebook page, with online tips, videos, advice and activities, receiving very positive feedback from parents. We have established new procedures across Children's Services to ensure that children are effectively safeguarded and supported which are available on our COVID-19 page on Centranet for all Children and Families staff. Some services have continued offering face to face support to ensure our most vulnerable children are safe.

Almost all our schools and some early years settings have remained open for the children of key workers and those defined as vulnerable. We have had positive feedback and thanks from the NHS for providing places for all their key workers.

Guidance has been changing rapidly, and services have needed to be responsive and flexible, working closely and supportively with our partners to implement changes.

We have been able to support our NHS colleagues during this time by enabling Midwifery services to be run through our Children's Centres. This has meant these services have been able to be provided in safe places in local communities, rather than in busy local hospitals.

7.11 Children's Social Care

At the outbreak of COVID-19, we assessed all cases open to Prevention and Children's Social Care, RAG rated the risk to children, and reviewed plans in light of the new situation. All children who were assessed as high risk have had face to face visits to ensure they are effectively safeguarded. Weekly operational meetings were established to discuss high risk children to ensure the right support is in place for these children and there is senior manager oversight of those most at risk. Support is being provided in line with the DfE guidance for Children's Social Care which acknowledges that meetings and contact with families may need to take place in alternative ways.

All partners in the Safeguarding Children Partnership have affirmed that safeguarding children remains a key priority and weekly meetings were established to ensure the partnership offer is strong and we can respond

flexibly to emerging needs or building pressures for individual agencies. This includes support and challenge between agencies as required.

Maintaining contact with children continues to be a multi-agency priority, with other key professionals involved with the family remaining in contact with children as well as social workers. School and early years settings have been crucial in this and we have a rolling process of contacting all schools and settings on a weekly basis to discuss any concerns. This has supported strong relationships between services.

Education, Prevention and Children's Social Care have been working in partnership to support vulnerable children to attend schools and settings. We are working together with families and encouraging attendance, and as a result, the number of vulnerable children attending schools and settings continues to increase. Helplines have been established for practitioners and families to contact and report any issues in returning vulnerable children to school which are enabling quick resolutions.

Cared for children and care leavers have been impacted by COVID-19. Some children who are currently in the Public Law Outline (PLO) process will experience significant delays of between 3-6 months in agreeing their permanency plan as a result of COVID-19. This is due to challenges for the Court in delivering fair justice for complex cases where there is a finding of fact or final hearing. Children who are at most acute risk due to the delay in achieving permanence are children with a plan of adoption, and children who are not currently living in their long-term placement.

The number of cared for children is likely to increase due to Coronavirus and the resulting challenges in progressing children's care plans. We have been working to ensure placement stability for children and young people is maintained throughout this time. In line with DfE guidance, where it is in their best interests to do so some cared for young people who have turned 18, and some care leavers, have remained in their placement to ensure they are safe. We have contingency plans in place to ensure we will have sufficient places for cared for children and care leavers.

As some children and young people will be staying in placements longer than they would otherwise, this will be a continued upward pressure on cared for children expenditure. We have seen an increase in the use of external foster care placements. It is likely that there will be increased demand for placements, and there is a risk that providers will uplift placement costs in response. Foster carer allowances have been temporarily increased to support the additional costs of having children at home as a result of coronavirus, and we have increased the support available to foster carers through regular phone contact, which carers have appreciated. As time

progresses, it is likely that the increase in costs as a result of COVID-19 will rise further.

Care leavers potentially present as the most vulnerable cohort during this period due to the risk of social isolation, lack of employment, financial hardship and deterioration in mental health. The service is working hard to stay in touch and offer support as a priority for these young people. We have adapted our local offer in light of COVID-19 to ensure care leavers have the support they need.

To ensure Members are informed and can effectively exercise their corporate parenting responsibilities, a regular briefing has been established for the members of the Corporate Parenting Committee.

Now we are moving into recovery, all children open to Children's Social Care will receive a face to face visit in the next few weeks if they have not already received one during lockdown.

Some families have coped exceptionally well during this time. However, we know that lockdown has been a challenging time for some, and will have allowed issues to remain hidden, preventing early identification and prevention.

We expect to see a rise in referrals to Prevention and Children's Social Care once more children return to schools and settings. This could result in a significant increase in demand to services over the coming year.

7.12 Early Help and Prevention

A significant number of childcare settings in Cheshire East decided to close as a result of Coronavirus and the ability to furlough staff. We wrote to every setting advising them that we have interim legal authority to request them to re-open if needed. As a result, the number of settings open doubled. Regular calls are in place with early years settings to check their status and that sufficient places are available for keyworkers and vulnerable children. Concerted effort continues to be made to support vulnerable under 5's who are open to Children's Social Care back into settings in order to support families and reduce family pressures.

All early years settings were encouraged to be in regular contact with families whether they were open or closed, to ensure that families were aware support was available if they wanted advice, or if they wanted to access childcare in the future.

The DfE guidance for settings has been complex and we have established a helpline to support settings and childminders with their queries, which has

been well received. We are working closely with settings and childminders to plan for reopening and have established focus groups to drive this work forward.

The Youth Support Service is carrying out joint work with PCSOs in local communities targetting hot spots where young people are gathering. This has been positively received by young people and parents.

7.13. Education and Skills

We have worked closely with schools throughout this period, and have supported schools through school closure. Overall, Cheshire East schools have been very responsive and flexible to changing the way they work to accommodate vulnerable children and children of keyworkers. All but six of our schools were open over Easter compared to just 60% nationally.

We have established a range of support for schools, initially providing daily calls to offer support and check on their wellbeing, which has now reduced to twice a week. This has ensured we have strong communication and concerns are shared and resolved together, and schools have reported that they feel supported and listened to. We have developed specific guidance for schools on safeguarding, testing and HR matters, and send out daily bulletins to schools sharing the latest advice and guidance. We have provided PPE to schools. We are continuing to provide intensive support to schools to those that need it. We have established attendance monitoring arrangements to enable oversight of pupils numbers and the number of vulnerable children attending, including schools liaising with Children's Social Care if children are not attending, and if they are unable to make contact with them, so that this can be pursued by other services.

We have ensured free school meals are provided both to pupils who are continuing to attend, and increasingly for those who are not in school. We have cancelled the majority of school transport, but ensured that transport arrangements have remained in place for those who are continuing to attend, including where vulnerable children have been increasingly supported back into school.

The Virtual School for cared for children has provided additional guidance and resources to carers and children to ensure they can continue to make progress educationally while they are not in school. We have also been coordinating work around the DfE offer to supply equipment and 4G to support remote education for Year 10 and vulnerable pupils.

We have received risk assessments from schools for children with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) who are not in school. We have regular

contact with the Parent Carer Forum and have provided learning resources tailored to different types of needs to support children, along with a helpline for parents with children with Autism and support via video conferencing for children with sensory impairments. Health partners have also looked at different ways of meeting children's needs from home. Support and equipment has been provided for families where needed to enable them to support remote education. We know that many parents and children with an EHCP are finding it challenging and struggling with the fact that routines and provision at school will have changed. We anticipate that this will continue and additional support will be needed as we re-integrate back into school over the coming year.

We are continuing to improve the quality of our EHCPs. As a result of the change to SEND (Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities) legislation due to coronavirus, we are now required to evidence for each child with an EHCP what reasonable endeavours we have made ensure children receive the provision detailed in their plan during COVID-19. There are currently 2,600 children on plans, and evidence needs to be gained from Health, Education and Social Care, so this is a considerable exercise. A working group has established a clear process for completing these returns and work is currently underway on completing these for all our children.

We have developed a minimum offer to support transition remotely for children and young people who are due to move schools.

We effectively managed our primary offer date remotely in line with temporary legislation, with 98.1% of Cheshire East residents offered a preference school and 91.4% offered their first choice. The school admissions team received more than 4,200 applications for places.

School building works have been significantly delayed due to coronavirus. We have put alternative arrangements in place, including temporary accommodation, to ensure we can still offer places to pupils in September, avoiding disruption to children and expensive out of borough placements.

We have been very busy holding extensive discussions with all key stakeholders, teaching unions, school heads and the Cheshire East parent carer forum, on a programme of a phased wider opening of education settings following the announcement of the Prime Minister on 10 May. An Education Recovery group has been established to plan for the phased wider opening of schools. We agreed a Cheshire East position which we have communicated to all parents and schools. Plans will see a two-week period to allow staff to prepare classrooms and implement the significant changes that need to be made to ensure safe working practices with smaller numbers of children and young people

From 15 June, all eligible nursery-aged pupils will be able to attend on a limited and controlled basis where staffing capacity and space allows. Similarly, all primary school reception class pupils will be able to attend. From 22 June, Year 1 pupils will be welcome back to primary school, moving to all Year 6 on 29 June if the school has enough space to do so with social distancing in place. A position on more face to face support for Year 10 and Year 12 pupils will be considered following further guidance from the DfE.

Our priority is to make sure that any way forward is safe for everyone within our schools and we have delivered a supply of PPE to all schools and colleges prior to them opening. We have developed a risk assessment framework and checklist for schools to complete to ensure safe arrangements are in place, and we are releasing further advice and guidance around HR and safeguarding.

We are currently planning for the reopening of school kitchens, and establishing increased school transport for the phased reopening.

We are having regular calls with the ADCS, Practice Leaders Group, DfE and Chief Social Worker to share good practice and any issues across local authority areas and based on this we are satisfied that the measures we have put in place are the right ones to ensure children are protected. A number of our initiatives have been recognised as good practice, including our position on reopening schools and our letter to early years settings.

7.14. Place Services

We have kept our parks and public rights of way open. We closed Tatton Park in line with other National Trust properties. We have kept the situation under review and are now considering how it may be re-opened in a COVID-19 secure way.

We took an early decision to waive car parking charges, to both assist health and other key workers and to avoid unnecessary contact with the pay and display machines to limit the spread of the virus. This is in line with LGA advice.

Kerbside collection of waste has continued throughout the period. Unlike some other councils, we have continued to collect recycling materials, garden and food waste. We have re-opened all eight Household Waste and Recycling Centres.

Support has continued to enable the operation of a core local bus network. This serves key destinations in this time of crisis, such as our local hospitals and medical facilities, providing access for key workers without access to a car.

Our highways operations have all continued to function to ensure the road network remains safe for essential travel. All activities have been assessed and adapted where necessary to ensure works can be delivered in line with the public health guidelines. Where it is possible roadworks are being progressed to take advantage of the lower levels of traffic on the road network.

Following a short pause, the construction of the Congleton Link Road progresses with changes made to working practices. The Council's Infrastructure team is actively working with the contractor, the utility companies and the wider supply chain to ensure the project is delivered in line with the programme.

Our Regulatory Services have undertaken their new responsibilities under the Coronavirus Act to enforce the closure of businesses in accordance with the Government restrictions.

Libraries and Leisure Centres have closed but are offering a range of online resources, health and fitness support to customer.

Registration Service and Crematoria have increased capacity to support the level of increased deaths as a result of the pandemic. We also established a shared temporary mortuary facility with Cheshire West and Chester Council and Warrington Borough Council as contingency.

7.15. Welfare and Council Tax

The level of welfare benefits enquiries dealt with and the official DWP statistics relating to new Universal Credit claimants has increased significantly.

As part of its response to COVID-19, the government announced in the Budget on 11 March 2020 that it would provide local authorities in England with £500 million of new grant funding to support economically vulnerable people and households. Cheshire East's award is £2.2m.

There is an expectation that due to the economic position, there could be a significant number of additional Council Tax Support claims.

7.16 Homelessness and rough sleepers

Between 26 March and 28 May 2020, the Council has accommodated over 100 households, 87 of which were people who were sleeping rough or at immediate risk of doing so. We ensured that they received the necessary support and meals required. Of the 87 accommodated we have successfully

moved 52 (60%) on from Bed and Breakfast into more appropriate accommodation.

We are maintaining delivery of the Council's statutory duties towards homeless households in the borough and our Rough Sleeping Outreach workers are working with those who are currently sleeping rough to move them into more appropriate accommodation.

7.17 Workforce

We quickly moved to allow all staff who can work from home to do so. In practical terms that meant the rapid deployment of IT equipment and support. The IT Shared Service has been exceptional. Changing to an organisation that predominantly works remotely has been a huge challenge but is working well. Staff have shown enormous flexibility and resilience. They have done a great job. There has been regular communication with staff and co-operation with Trade Unions. We have had a strong emphasis on supporting emotional health and wellbeing at an extremely challenging time for everyone.

We are continuing to monitor COVID-19 absences on a regular basis, including the numbers of staff self-isolating and/or off sick. There are currently 118 staff self-isolating, 107 off sick and the majority of the workforce, 2177 staff working from home.

A number of staff who were unable to do their usual role have volunteered for redeployment on a temporary basis. For example, libraries and staff from the Audit and Risk service have assisted with high priority activities such as the People Helping People and the delivery of small business grants.

7.18 Governance and Decision Making

Roll out of new IT equipment to all 81 Members was completed in May. The Coronavirus Act Regulations allow for remote meetings and capability to conduct remote meetings. Extensive efforts have been made to ensure that all Members have been appropriately trained in the use of the new facilities to enable them to participate in virtual meetings.

The first remote meeting was a Cabinet meeting held on 5 May. Since then there has been a remote meeting of the Audit and Governance Committee. Further meetings are planned throughout June, July and August. We are learning lessons as we go, including from the small number of councils which have hosted remote meetings. This is expected to grow as the social distancing and COVID secure restrictions continue into the Summer months.

Daily Member briefings have been produced since 18 March 2020 as part of our commitment to keep Members informed. These briefings have been

shared with local MPs. Democratic Services staff have also kept in contact through, for example, welfare phone calls. In addition, Group Leaders and Shadow Cabinet have each been briefed on two occasions.

The Accounts and Audit Regulations (2015) legislation prescribes the format and timescale of the production of the Annual Governance Statement and the Statement of Accounts for local authorities. In recognition of the impact of the pandemic, The Accounts and Audit (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations 2020 have now been published.

This legislation amends the timescales for the publication of the draft and final statements as follows;

7.18.2 Publication of draft statements (Accounts and AGS) moves from 31 May to 31 August 2020.

7.18.3 Publication of final statements (Accounts and AGS) moves from 30 July to 30 November 2020.

7.19 Lobbying

In these unprecedented times, we have worked closely with our sub-regional partners, through the LRF, to regularly raise and escalate concerns. These include, but are not limited to: PPE, testing, data requests, capacity to deliver and funding. Funding is covered in more detail below.

7.20 Planning for Recovery

Cheshire East Council is leading on the planning arrangements for the longer-term recovery from the pandemic on behalf of the Local Resilience Forum through a Recovery Board, chaired by the Chief Executive.

This is involving partners from neighbouring local authorities, police, fire and rescue, health, transport and reports to the Strategic Co-ordinating Group. The initial focus for the Recovery planning is on:

- The reopening of schools and education settings
- Public transport, traffic management and supporting active travel
- Support for town centres and businesses as lockdown restrictions are eased.

The longer-term focus for recovery will be to ensure that sub-regional partners anticipate and manage:

- The health and community impacts on the local population

- Anticipating any future increased risks relating to safeguarding, crime and anti-social behaviour
- Support to local businesses and the economy including leading an effective plan for addressing a potential recession in the sub-regional economy
- The additional support requirements for the local population e.g. employment support, skills support, mental health etc
- The ongoing resilience of the local population and public services.

8. Implications of the Recommendations

8.1 Legal Implications

The Coronavirus Act 2020 received Royal Assent on 25 March. The Act has extensive schedules setting out a wide framework to life under lockdown. The Act has been followed with copious and frequent guidance notes, frequently with implementation dates ahead of what is practically possible, e.g. Household Waste and Recycling Centres, administration of School Admission Appeals, restrictions on and subsequent opening up of certain business premises, Test and Trace.

The Coronavirus Act also set out a framework by which Local Authorities could reduce their statutory duties in relation to the Care Act 2014, for Adult Social Care. These Care Act Easements could be implemented should the capacity of Adult Social Care staff become so reduced that it could not continue to meet its duties. To date Cheshire East Council has not initiated any Care Act Easements

There have been two instances where urgent decisions were taken – care homes and discretionary grants. There may be other occasions where actions have to be taken rapidly. Any urgent decisions follow the process set out in the Constitution.

8.2 Finance Implications

Like many councils, Cheshire East continues to face increased costs and demand pressures at the same time as seeing a significant drop in income. We estimate that the financial implications of COVID-19 are significant, at around £60m.

Cheshire East has spent significant amounts of money on providing adult and children social care, providing PPE and housing rough sleepers. All services are affected, including increased costs of running services such as highways and waste due to the need for social distancing and new health precautions.

On top of this, the council is losing significant amounts of income and revenue from council tax, business rates, parking income and leisure/culture fees.

In the case of kerbside household bin collections, for example, the council has kept these operating as normal. However, this has come at additional cost due to the need to maintain social distancing, train redeployed staff to replace those unable to work due to Covid-19 and provision of personal protection equipment for our collection teams such as disposable gloves and hand sanitiser.

To date, the Council has received £19.689m of un-ring-fenced grant from central government and additional grants for specific responsibilities. In addition, some new functions and responsibilities are funded separately. In some cases, we are required to accept grants as a matter of urgency. In other cases, for example, small business grants and infection control, have been passported directly to businesses and care homes. The table opposite summarises funding to date. **It does not cover the Council's estimate of £60m in additional costs and loss of income.**

Cheshire East, alongside the Local Government Association and County Councils Network, is pressing for significant additional financial support from the government to enable councils to fund the additional costs of combatting the pandemic and keeping people safe.

Government Funding	£ amount	comments	Cheshire East Council allocation
MHCLG revenue grant 1	£1.6 bn	Announced 19/03/20	£9.150m
MHCLG revenue grant 2	£1.6 bn	Announced 28/04/20	£10.539m
Infection Control Fund	£600m	Total received 75% passported direct to care homes 25% for L.A.	£5.3m £3.975m £1.325m
Active Travel	£250m	Need to bid. Details awaited	
Re-opening high Streets safely	£50m		£339k
Hardship Fund	£500m		£2.2m
Small business grants	£3.4bn	Passported direct to small businesses	£95m
Homelessness and rough sleeping	£3.2m		£6k
Discretionary business grants	5% discretion	5% of small business grants to be passported direct to small businesses	£4.28m
Test and Trace	£300m		tbc

8.3 Policy Implications

COVID-19 is having a wide-ranging impact on a large number of policies. These will be looked at on a case by case basis.

8.4 Equality Implications

Implications of the changes will continue to be reviewed. There have been some positive benefits in terms of additional funding for vulnerable people.

8.5 Human Resources Implications

We quickly moved to allow all staff who can work from home to do so. In practical terms that meant the rapid deployment of IT equipment and support. Changing to an organisation that predominantly works remotely has been a huge challenge but is working well. Staff have shown enormous flexibility and resilience. They have done a great job.

There has been regular communication with staff and good co-operation with the Trade Unions. We have had a strong emphasis on emotional health and wellbeing.

8.6 Risk Management Implications

We have developed risk registers for each CEMART cell, as well as strategic risks. We have also looked at Worse Case Scenarios. We are keeping Business Continuity Plans under review. We have also tested our plans against concurrent risks.

8.7 Rural Communities Implications

COVID-19 is having an impact across all communities, including rural communities. The support for small businesses will support rural business.

8.8 Implications for Children & Young People/Cared for Children

There are implications for children and young people. There are implications for schools, early years and children's social care which are summarised in the report.

8.9 Public Health Implications

COVID-19 is a global pandemic and public health emergency. There are implications for Cheshire East which are summarised in the report.

8.10 Climate Change Implications

They have been positive benefits of fewer cars on the road. This includes the vast majority of staff who have been working from home. There has also been lower demand for heating/lighting offices.

9 Ward Members Affected

All Members

10 Consultation & Engagement

Formal consultation activities have been paused due to the lockdown restrictions. We are considering how and when they can be restarted.

11 Access to Information

Comprehensive reports on COVID-19 can be found on the Council's and the Government's websites

12 Contact Information

Any questions relating to this report should be directed to the following officer:

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Working for a brighter future together

Key Decision Y

Date First
Published: 6/3/20

Cabinet

Date of Meeting: 05 May 2020

Report Title: Procurement of a Housing Development Framework

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Nick Mannion, Environment and Regeneration

Senior Officer: Frank Jordan - Executive Director - Place

1. Report Summary

- 1.1. Cheshire East Council's Economic and Environment Strategies set out the vision for "Place". They articulate the ambition to create inclusive and suitable growth in the Borough.
- 1.2. A fundamental element of achieving this is delivering the right type of housing in the Borough.
- 1.3. We cannot however rely solely on the market to deliver housing growth and Cheshire East Council have been considering mechanisms to firstly increase the provision of sustainable and affordable homes, for rent and homeownership, as well as providing the ability to generate a revenue stream to support our Medium Term Financial Strategy.
- 1.4. This also provides an opportunity to influence the design, type and quality of new homes, ensuring that the right mix of housing tenure is delivered to meet identified housing need.
- 1.5. This report outlines our journey so far and the options considered, putting forward a recommendation to approve the procurement of a Housing Development Framework.

2. Recommendations

2.1. That Cabinet

2.1.1. Approves the procurement and establishment of a Housing Development Framework to commission the development of mixed tenure housing provision on identified Council owned land.

2.1.2. Delegates authority to the Executive Director Place in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Regeneration to:

2.1.2.1 Award and enter into a Framework Agreement with a minimum of two and up to eight Housing Providers who meet the procurement criteria and requirements of the Framework.

2.1.2.2 To identify and approve appropriate Council owned land assets to be taken through the Framework.

2.1.2.3 To approve the award of financial contributions held by the Council in lieu of affordable housing provision, to enhance development opportunities which are in line with the requirements specified under the terms of any Section 106 agreement where such financial contributions are made.

3. Reasons for Recommendations

3.1. There are a number of factors which have contributed to the decision to seek authority to develop affordable housing using the Council's land holdings and these include both social and financial influences set out below.

3.2. We currently have 8,548 applications on the social housing waiting list, of which 1,838 are within the Council's 'reasonable preference' categories (high priority). Stock turnover is on average 1600 units per annum and whilst we are seeing high levels of affordable housing delivered through Section 106 agreements (727 in 2018), this is still not keeping pace with the increased number of applicants registering for social housing, which on average is 500 new applications per month. Supply is not meeting the increasing demand for social housing provision.

3.3. We rely on the private rented sector to help us address housing need, however we are now seeing a reluctance from private landlords to house those in receipt of Universal Credit as the tenant has to be 8 weeks in

arrears before a landlord can apply for a direct payment. Landlords are also reluctant in some areas to rent their properties out at the Local Housing Allowance rate, which means that some properties for those in receipt of benefits are unaffordable.

- 3.4. Affordability continues to be a barrier to accessing housing for sale. In 2018 the median house price in Cheshire East was 7.95 times the median gross annual earnings. This is significantly higher than the North West average of 5.86 and is only slightly below the national average of 8.00. Median house prices also differ across the authority with a median house price in Crewe of £136,000, Macclesfield £190,000, Sandbach £225,000 and Wilmslow £370,000. In some of our rural areas this increases to over £400,000 in Alderley Edge and Bunbury to £680,000 in Prestbury (source ONS published in 2019)
- 3.5. Access to the private rented sector is becoming increasingly difficult with a minimum income of £26,200 required to meet the average private rent in Cheshire East. Again there are disparities across the authority with an income requirement of £35,000 to meet the average private rented 2 bedroomed property in Knutsford (source Savills)
- 3.6. Due to the benefits cap larger families are now struggling to access the private rented sector. They are very much reliant upon social housing, however there is limited larger social housing stock and families are either left in properties which are overcrowded or are unable to pay the levels of rent.
- 3.7. There is an identified need for specialist affordable housing provision to meet the needs of some of our most vulnerable customers, who may have been placed out of area due to the limited housing options currently available within the authority area. Providing a bespoke housing offer within Cheshire East can bring forward potential service efficiencies as well as providing a housing offer close to social networks.
- 3.8. Direct sale of Council owned land and assets to the market reduces the ability to be in control of the type and tenure of the units developed on the site, this can only be achieved via a procurement process. Whilst it could be argued that the disposal of the sites would bring forward a large capital receipt, which could be utilised on other priority areas, and the market would provide the housing, consideration needs to be given to the long-term financial returns and social aspects, which could be achieved through the framework.

3.9. The ability to intervene in the market and bring forward further housing provision will also enable the Council to:

- Contribute towards the housing supply across the Borough in order to address identified housing need, including specialist housing provision and older persons housing provision.
- Support our economic ambition to increase the levels of working age professionals living in the area.
- To reduce the current use and cost of temporary accommodation.
- Have the potential to provide a revenue stream for the Council as opposed to a one off capital receipt.

3.10. This will contribute towards the outcomes set out within our Economic Development Strategy, which highlights the need to provide the right housing offer to support the Council's economic ambition.

4. Other Options Considered

4.1. A variety of mechanisms have either been considered or tested over a period of time to meet the objectives of increasing affordable housing provision, having control over the type and tenure of provision developed and securing a revenue stream. These options included the following and are outlined further with **Appendix One**:

- Direct disposal to the market
- The individual procurement of assets
- The development of a Local Housing Company
- The establishment of a Joint Venture
- Establishment of a Cheshire East Council Housing Development Framework (recommended option)
- Direct development through a Housing Revenue account or General Fund

4.2. Independent advice was commissioned to enable us to consider the options. What was evident from the work undertaken was that in order for certain option to be a viable, a volume of land to enable the delivery of between 300 to 500 units would be required. It also requires the development of mixed tenure sites as the development of affordable rented provision in isolation would not provide the yields in order to make it financially viable to the market.

4.3. When considering the available land assets it has become apparent that we do not have the availability of land to justify the development of a complex

vehicle, which would require significant investment along with additional specialist expertise. Our Strategic Land holdings form part of a wider investment strategy which is required to provide funding for improved infrastructure requirements and to supplement the Council's capital budget. Therefore we only have smaller land holdings, which could be taken forward for the provision of affordable housing.

- 4.4. The options have been outlined including the advantages and disadvantages and are presented in **Appendix One** which have been discussed in detail with the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Regeneration.

5. Background

- 5.1. There is a business case to explore the options to utilise some of our land assets for mixed tenure housing schemes, which will not only address some of our housing need but will also provide a mechanism to generate revenue for the Council.
- 5.2. To date we have tested direct sale to the market with a condition and individual procurements, both having their advantages and disadvantages.
- 5.3. Without significant land holding to warrant the development of a more complex delivery vehicle then the best option would be the procurement of a Housing Development Framework. This would alleviate the need to undertake individual tendering exercises on an individual basis for each site. It would however provide the Council with the ability to control the type of provision to be developed on the land and have the potential to bring forward either a capital receipt or an ongoing revenue stream. The requirements for the developments would be set out within the tender documentation put to the framework and may vary from site to site.
- 5.4. The Framework would be procured in accordance within the Council's Contract Procedure and EU rules. The Council would be looking to appoint in the region of eight Housing Providers who have the experience and expertise to develop a range of affordable and market housing products to meet the identified housing need for the area and add social and environmental value. We currently have 24 developing Registered Housing Providers operating across Cheshire East. To include them all in a framework agreement would not be feasible and some have only recently started to develop in the area and some are very specific in relation to the type of properties they will consider.

- 5.5. The Framework would be in place for a period of 4 years and enable the Council to conduct mini competitions for the development of individual or packaged parcels of Council owned land. We would not have to provide a guarantee of the volume of sites to be procured through this route nor be contractually locked into this arrangement should a more viable alternative route be identified.
- 5.6. Cheshire East Council currently holds a number of financial contributions, which have been secured through s.106 Agreements in lieu of affordable housing provision on new development sites. In July 2014, Cabinet approved a process to award these contributions which included the use on Council led developments. Through the Framework there will be the ability to contribute financial contributions in line with the terms of the Section 106 agreement in order to provide additionality or provide gap funding where there are viability issues on sites.

6. Implications of the Recommendations

6.1. Legal Implications

- 6.1.1. The sale of developed or undeveloped land does not constitute a public works contract. However, it is generally accepted that any authority led development will generally result in the award of a public works contract which has to be procured in accordance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 ("the Regulations"). Where the Council intends to impose by way of legal obligations on the developer the requirement to develop a site in a specific way this will give rise to a need to procure such a contract. A Framework enables the Council to meet its need for a service, supply of goods or works for a set period of time in order to obviate the need to undertake a wide competitive procurement process for each individual scheme. It complies with the Regulations and the Council's Contract Procedure Rules.
- 6.1.2. The Regulations allow local authorities to enter into Framework Agreements with multiple suppliers, following a competitive tendering process, and thereafter the Council can choose to call off contracts under the Framework Agreement following a further mini competition between the suppliers appointed to the Framework.
- 6.1.3. The Framework Agreement would not contain any guarantees of work volumes to the appointed suppliers and could be utilised with other options.

- 6.1.4. The Council would use its powers pursuant to Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972 to dispose of the land through the Framework. The Council would have to demonstrate best consideration for any disposals or meet the requirements of the General Disposals Consent and (where necessary) seek the permission of the Secretary of State to dispose at an undervalue.
- 6.1.5. Under section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972, a local authority has the power to dispose of land. The main caveat to this power is that the Council must not do so for “a consideration less than the best that can be reasonably obtained”. This is interpreted as being the best price achievable in the open market.
- 6.1.6. It is possible for Local Authorities to dispose of land at less than best consideration where the unrestricted value of the land is less than £2million, and to do this the Council must demonstrate that value is being received in other ways that justify the monies foregone to the public purse. For example the provision of affordable housing.
- 6.1.7. All disposals must comply with the European Commission’s State aid rules. When disposing of land at less than best consideration the Council is providing a subsidy to the occupier of the land, in addition to this making s106 funding available to supplement the development of the Council’s land could also come within the remit of State aid. In any such cases further legal advice will be obtained at the outset.

6.2. Finance Implications

- 6.2.1. Disposing of land directly to the market would bring forward a capital receipt and would demonstrate best value, however if land is disposed of for the provision of affordable housing then the land value would be reduced and therefore this will have an impact on capital receipts. Consideration has to be given to the social value of providing affordable housing.
- 6.2.2. The costs associated with the development of the framework approach, which would predominately be legal costs would be covered by the existing Strategic Housing revenue budget.

6.3. Policy Implications

- 6.3.1. Affordable housing in Cheshire East plays a fundamental role in realising the ambition to deliver jobs-led growth and sustainable vibrant communities. It contributes towards our five Residents First Outcomes.

Affordable housing creates balanced, sustainable communities whilst driving forward improved health and well-being outcomes for modest-income households. Moreover, it provides the vital impetus for economic activity and raising aspirations. The provision of affordable housing equips an area with the long-term capacity for labour and economic fluidity that will attract and develop business growth.

- 6.3.2. The delivery of affordable housing is a priority set out within the 2018-2023 Housing Strategy.

6.4. Equality Implications

- 6.4.1. Affordable housing provides an opportunity for some of our groups with protected characteristics to access decent, affordable accommodation.

6.5. Human Resources Implications

- 6.5.1. There are no direct implications for human resources.

6.6. Risk Management Implications

- 6.6.1. Failure to procure works in accordance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and the Council's Finance and Contract Procedure Rules would leave the Council open to challenge and in breach of regulations, with a subsequent reputational impact.
- 6.6.2. The contract would be advertised on the North West Chest, and all companies expressing an interest in the framework would be invited to tender. The tenders would be evaluated using a range of published criteria based on quality, delivery, customer care, safeguarding and social value that can be secured for residents, as well as price, in order to establish the most economically advantageous tender.

6.7. Rural Communities Implications

- 6.7.1. There are no direct implications for rural communities, however some of the sites may be within rural locations which will enable local residents to access housing to enable them to continue to reside within their local communities.

6.8. Implications for Children & Young People/Cared for Children

- 6.8.1. Poor housing can have a negative impact on our children's well being. Increasing affordable housing provision will ensure that families have

access to appropriate housing options and reduces the risk of having to reside in temporary accommodation.

6.9. Public Health Implications

6.9.1. Providing decent living accommodation will benefit some of our vulnerable residents' mental and physical wellbeing and reduce demand on health and social care services.

6.10. Climate Change Implications

6.10.1. The Council has committed to becoming carbon neutral by 2025 and to encourage all businesses, residents and organisations in Cheshire East to reduce their carbon footprint.

6.10.2. Building sustainability is a consideration in the specification and design of the homes, ensuring that every opportunity to reduce building operating costs are evaluated in order to tackle fuel poverty and tackle climate change.

7. Ward Members Affected

7.1. All wards

8. Consultation & Engagement

8.1. A Soft market testing was undertaken by Engine of the North with Housing Builders and Registered Housing Providers to establish the best approach to take when considering mechanisms to develop affordable housing.

9. Access to Information

9.1. Appendix One

10. Contact Information

10.1. Any questions relating to this report should be directed to the following officer:

Name: Karen Carsberg

Job Title: Head of Housing

Email: Karen.carsberg@cheshireeast.gov.uk

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APPENDIX ONE – DEVELOPMENT MECHANISMS – ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES

Option	Advantages	Disadvantages
Direct disposal to the market - The quickest route is through direct disposal to the market. This route will ensure that best value is obtained, however the Council are not able to state any requirements on the site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best Value can be achieved • No procurement process is required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council is unable to stipulate the end use for the land. • The expectation through the planning process would be that 30% affordable housing would be required, however there is nothing to prohibit an owner from putting forward a viability case, or demonstrating that affordable housing cannot be accommodated on the site and offering a financial contribution in lieu.
The individual procurement of assets - Where the Council intends to impose by way of legal obligations on the developer the requirement to develop a site in a specific way this will give rise to a need to procure such a contract. Due to the likely value of the asset to the housing developer/providers the Council will need to procure its partners in compliance with EU procurement rules	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total control over the process • Ability to stipulate the type and tenure of the housing to be developed • Ability to specify over 30% affordable housing requirement • Potential to generate either a capital receipt or a revenue income stream if required • Ability to meet local housing needs. • No requirement to borrow funding to develop the homes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dispose of land at less than best consideration • The requirement for land which will have an impact on capital receipts. • OJEU procurement process required each time which can take over 6 months
Housing Company - The model is based on the authority setting up a fully staffed development company, whose role would be to take the development process from start to finish. This would be akin to a regional office of a housebuilder, employing specialist staff. It does not include any housing management function which would have to be procured separately.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total control over the process • Higher financial returns (revenue) • 100% of value will be retained • Develops a long term plan, brand and vision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant outlay in order to employ the specialisms required • Need to borrow in order to finance the developments as considerable capital injection required to deliver this option • Considerable commitment to establish a new housebuilding company • Substantial office space required • Recruitment required to create delivery team • Due to the time taken to establish the new company, speed to market will be slow • Standard housing types will need to be developed • New house building company will not have initial access to supply chain discounts etc. • Site abnormalities, constraints and risks will need to be addressed

<p>Joint Venture (Cheshire East Fund and Risk) - This model would require the Council to allocate land holdings, finance the venture and through a Joint Venture procure the development of the units. The Council would take all the development risk, but would also take a higher percentage of the profit. It does not include any housing management function which would have to be procured separately</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Still maintain control over the development process and the type of units • Financial returns are higher • Reduced start up costs to establish housing delivery vehicle • Reduced resource commitment to establish housing delivery vehicle • Joint venture partner will have an established supply chain/sector knowledge • Standard housing types will already be known and understood • Joint venture partner will have access to supply chain discounts etc. • Will not require the same resource commitment in comparison to the company • As JV partner has an established supply chain, speed to market will be improved • Sales and marketing function will already be established • Substantial office space not required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sales and marketing function will need to be developed • Considerable capital injection required to deliver this option • An element of the project value will be given away to JV partner • Potential for JV “politics” • Requirement to set up collaboration agreements etc.
<p>Joint Venture (JV Partner Fund and Risk) - This model would involve the procurement of a partner (this could also include a management partner but is not included in this model) whose role would be to develop the units, including financing the development and taking responsibility for all the development risk.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is less risk as the Council are not incurring any financial costs. • No requirement for capital borrowing • Control over the type of provision to be delivered on site • Reduced start up costs to establish housing delivery vehicle • Reduced resource commitment to establish housing delivery vehicle • Joint venture partner will have an established supply chain/sector knowledge • Standard housing types will already be known and understood • Joint venture partner will have access to supply chain discounts etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An element of the project value will be given away to JV partner • Potential for JV “politics” • Requirement to set up collaboration agreements etc. • CEC will need to provide the majority of the JV funding

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will not require the same resource commitment • As JV partner has an established supply chain, speed to market will be improved • JV partner will provide the majority of the JV funding • Substantial office space not required 	
<p>Housing Development Framework Approach - This model would enable the procurement of a number of Registered Housing Providers who would be able to perform specific contracts for example the development of affordable housing. The framework would establish the terms governing contracts to be awarded during a given period, in particular with regard to price and, where appropriate, the quantity envisaged.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to meet local housing needs. • Control over the type of provision which is developed on the Councils land assets. • Potential to generate a revenue income stream. • There is only the requirement to carry out a mini tendering process once the framework is established. • No requirement to borrow funding to develop the homes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The initial framework has to be established through an OJEU compliant process. • The requirement for land which will have an impact on capital receipts.
<p>Direct development - Housing Revenue Account - This model would require the Council to establish a Housing Revenue Account if it was to develop over 199 homes. Councils who have retained responsibility for Social Housing have to operate a Housing Revenue Account (HRA). This is separate to the Council's other budgets and operations (e.g. the General Fund) and income (for example, from rents) cannot be spent on other Council activities but is used to maintain existing housing stock and develop new provision. Those operating a HRA have the ability to borrow money within their HRA to build more homes.</p> <p>General Fund - A local authority may hold up to 199 homes outside the HRA under Direction, so local authorities that have previously transferred their stock to a housing association, or that retain very low levels of council housing,</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting local housing needs • Control over the type of provision which is developed • Ability to generate income to be reinvested into new development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This would involve recruitment to employ the specialisms required to manage a housing stock and if over 200 units manage a HRA. • The Housing stock would be subject to Right to Buy. The current Right to Buy (RTB) rules mean 75% of proceeds are kept locally with 25% going to the government. • Considerable borrowing would be required in order to develop the homes. • Could be subject to further changes in regulations which could have a positive or negative impact on the Council.

<p>may borrow prudentially through the General Fund to enable development.</p> <p>Local authorities planning to build outside the HRA must write to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government to apply for a direction that permits these homes to be held outside the HRA.</p>		
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Fly tipping – Cleaner Crewe Business Improvement Project

15th June 2020

Environment and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Paul Bayley, Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services

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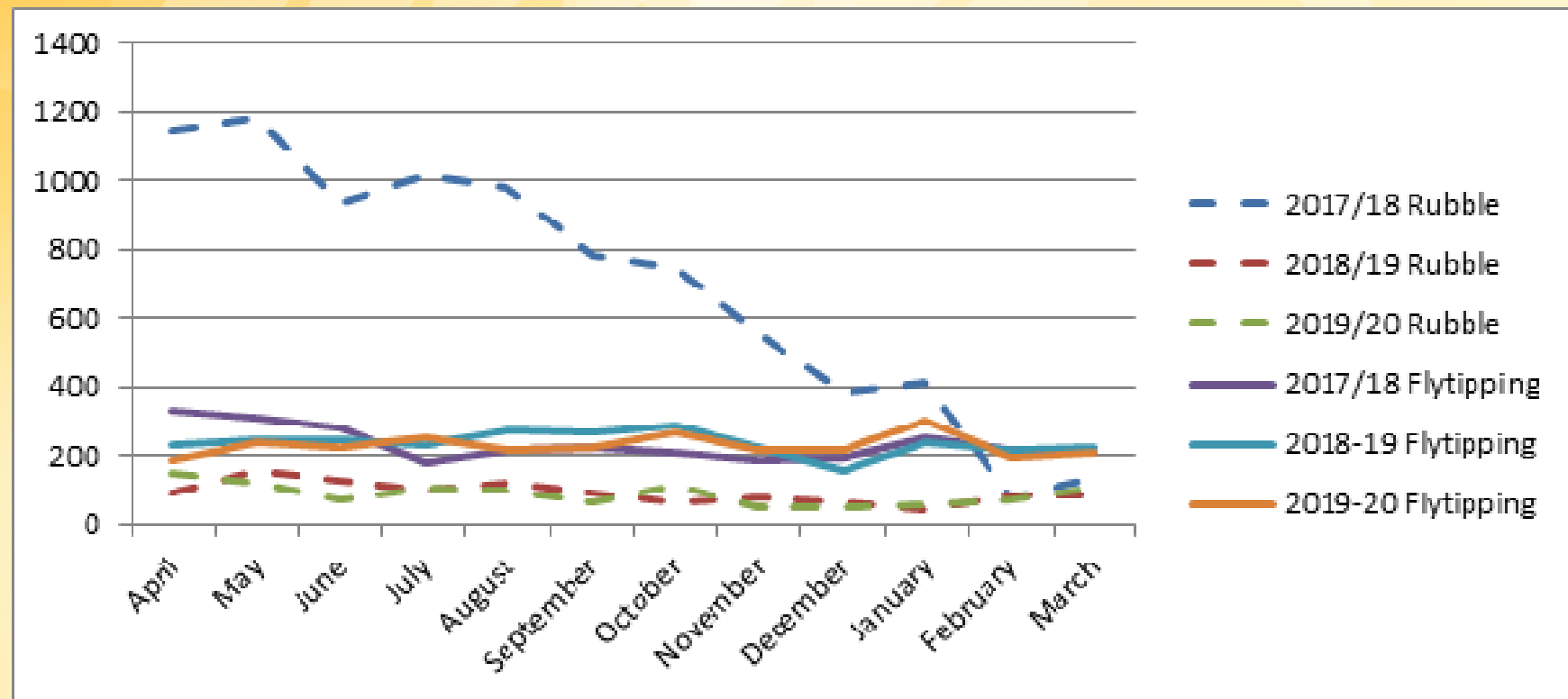
Agenda

- Impact of rubble charge at HWRCs
- Fly-tipping progress to date
- Focus on Crewe

Rubble Charge

- Rubble and construction waste made up 25% of all HWRC material – 8,000 to 10,000 tonnes per year
- Disposal costs of £130,000 in 2016/17
- The rubble charge was introduced from January 2018
- Residents encouraged to hire a skip for larger projects
- Rubble charge = £3.60 per bag
- Income covers cost of disposal and administration of system
- Risk – impact on fly-tipping?

Rubble volume vs Fly-tipping Incidents



Fly tipping - Background

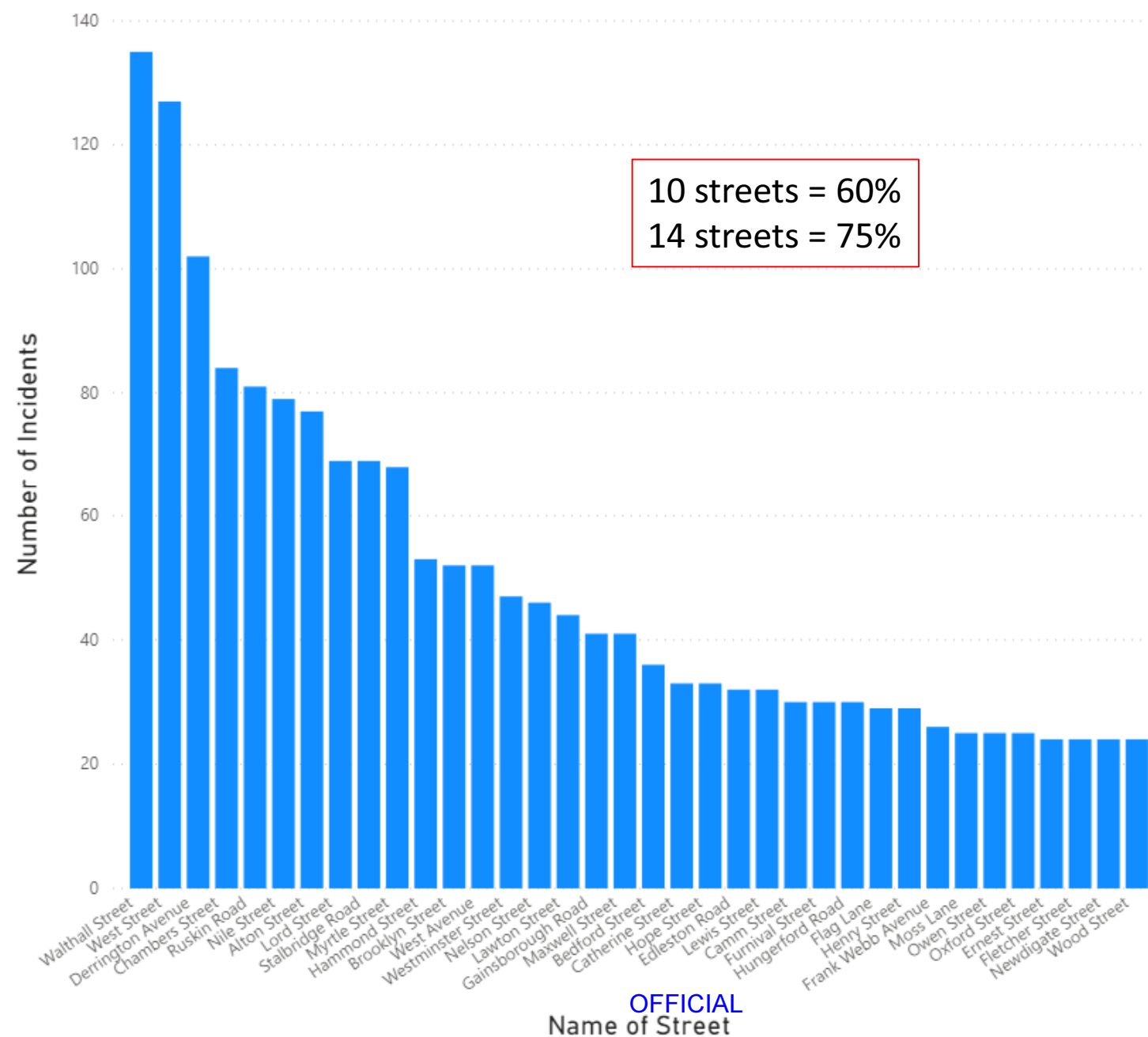
- Fly Tipping Task and Finish Group
- Crewe Neighbourhood Fly Tipping Action Plan
- Extra Controls in Private Rented Sector
 - Article 4 Directions for Small Houses in Multiple Occupation
 - Selective Licensing scheme
- Fly Tipping Monitoring Group
- December 2019 - Business improvement project initiated to review waste management issues in specified neighbourhoods in Crewe

Why the Crewe neighbourhoods focus?

- 70% of fly tipping incidents cleansed in 2019 were in Crewe

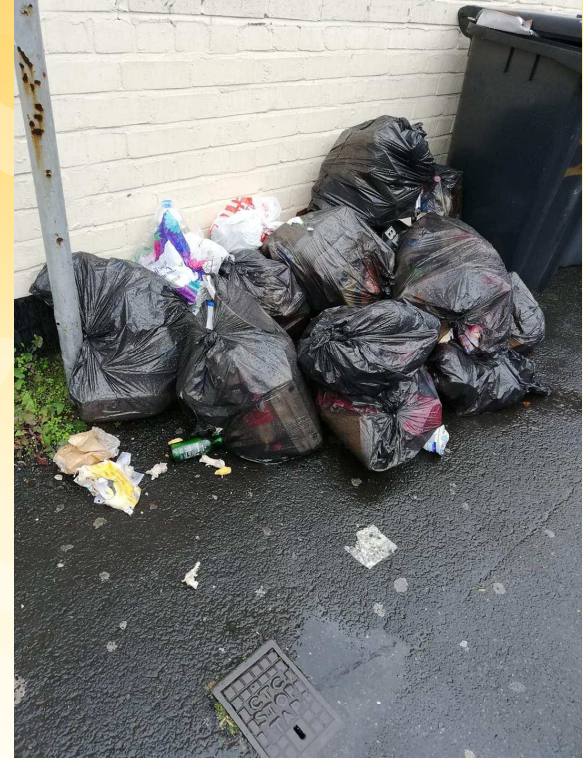
March 2019		April 2019		March 2020		April 2020		May 2020	
Town	Incidents	Town	Incidents	Town	Incidents	Town	Incidents	Town	Incidents
Crewe	127	Crewe	130	Crewe	157	Crewe	289	Crewe	259
Macclesfield	21	Macclesfield	10	Macclesfield	6	Macclesfield	61	Macclesfield	33
High Legh	10	Alsager	5	Wilmslow	4	Wilmslow	12	wilmslow	11
Sandbach	7	Middlewich	5	Middlewich	3	Alsager	9	Handforth	10
Nantwich	6	Nantwich	4	Nantwich	3	Moston	8	Alsager	7
Church Minshull	5	Sandbach	4	Alderley Edge	2	Nantwich	8	Knutsford	7
Moston	4	Wilmslow	3	Alsager	2	Handforth	5	Nantwich	7
Knutsford	3	Bosley	2	Betchton	2	Church Lawton	4	Weston	6
Poynton	3	Henbury	2	Haslington	2	Knutsford	4	Church Lawton	5
Alderley Edge	2	High Legh	2	Moston	2	Middlewich	4	Moston	5
Alraham	2			Mow Cop	2	Aston	3	Mow Cop	4
Bollington	2			Weston	2	Barthomley	3	Scholar Green	4
Bollinton	2			Wettenhall	2	Holmes Chapel	3	Church Minshull	3
Plumley	2					Alderley Edge	2	Middlewich	3
Stapeley	2					High Legh	2	Poynton	3
						Mow Cop	2	Oakhanger	2
						Scholar Green	2	Smallwood	2
						Smallwood	2	Swanley	2
						Swanley	2	Tabley	2
						Wheelock	2		

Crewe Streets with > 20 incidents since Jan 2019



Day to day issues

- Fly tipping
 - Rubbish, bagged waste and fly tipping is being dumped in the alleyways and on the streets of Crewe
 - Items of furniture and household goods are being left in the streets
- Bin Problems
 - Contaminated recycling waste resulting in bins not getting emptied, leading to further contamination and a vicious circle of waste build up
 - Bagged waste left at or near bins or bin collection points
 - Bins not reclaimed by residents promptly creating barriers for pedestrians and attracting rubbish
- Trade Waste
 - Unsecured bins which get scavenged and spilled
- Enforcement
 - Enforcement activity is hampered by the lack of clarity over what is and is not permissible
 - Residents believe that a lack of enforcement activity encourages all of the above as there appears to be no consequences for perpetrators



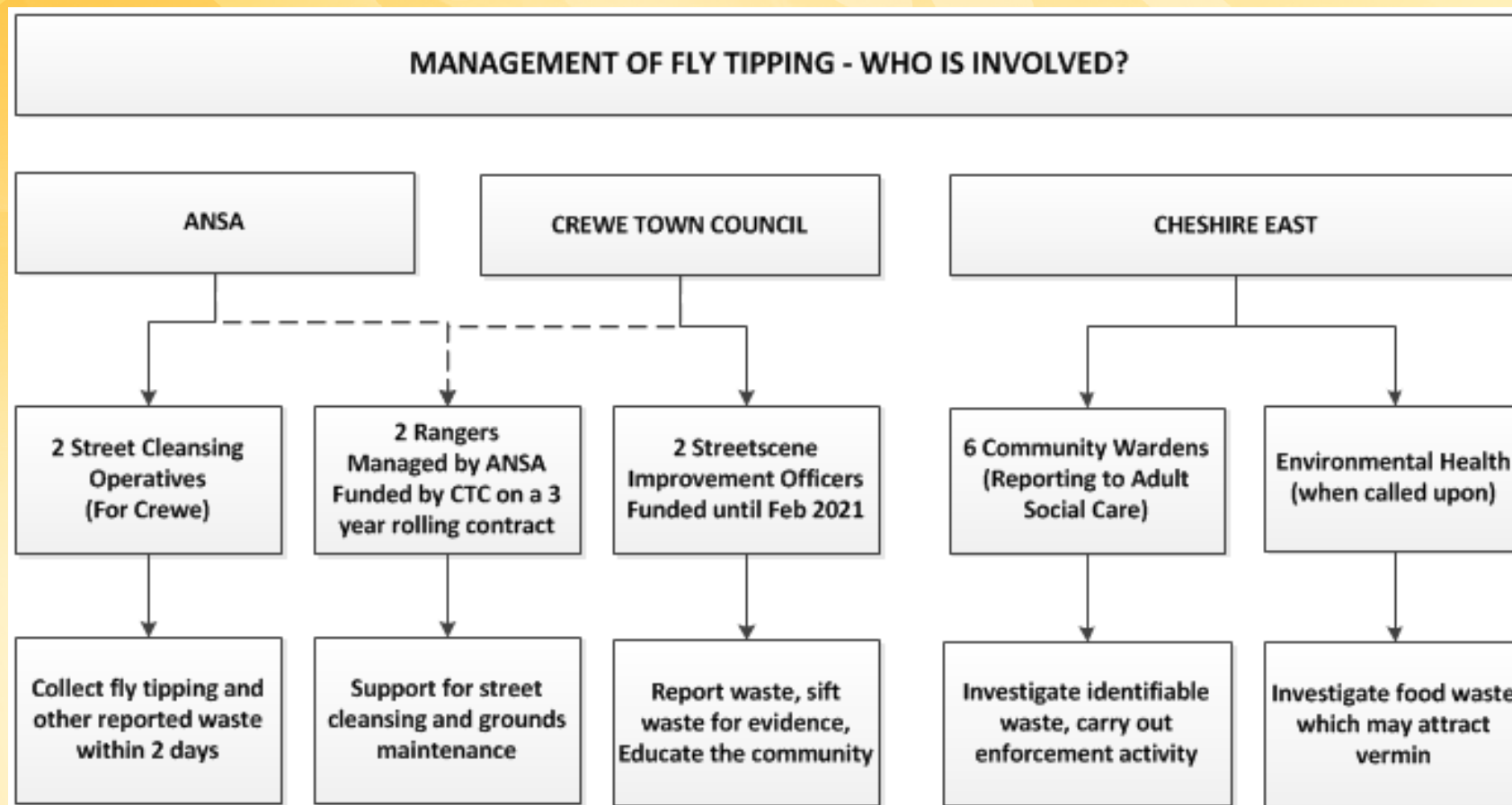
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Current Service Delivery



Business Improvement Project

- Range of stakeholders engaged in the diagnosis:
 - Council departments including Contact Centre, Housing, Regulatory Services, Community Enforcement Officers, Planning
 - Ansa
 - Crewe Town Council
 - Ward Members
 - PCSO
 - Kingdom
- Analysis and action plan structured under 6 themes – policy, people, processes, systems, performance management, assets

Policy

- Root cause
 - The Cheshire East Waste Management Policy and Waste Management Enforcement Policy do not deliver adequate clarity or direction to manage the current issues
- Effects
 - It is not clear what is permissible in relation to bins and side waste/bagged waste
 - It is not clear what is classed as Fly Tipping
 - Mixed messages to residents and external services from different teams
 - Some incidents receive attention but no action as teams are unclear what we do and don't do
 - Leads to a lack of confidence in what can be enforced resulting in limited enforcement activity being carried out
- Actions
 - Review Waste Management Policy and Waste Management Enforcement Policy
 - Identify bin storage and bin collections points
 - Decision required on unadopted land

Process and People

- Root cause
 - The waste management services are provided by dispersed resources
 - Processes within and across teams are not clearly define with no clear accountability for service outcomes
- Effects
 - Duplication of work across teams – different teams respond to the same incident
 - Wasted journeys – Enforcement Officers visit sites that have already been cleared
 - Multiple handoffs cause delays
- Actions
 - Short term: set up “crash test dummy” with existing resources working together for active learning
 - Long term: create one multi-functional team?

Systems and Assets

- Root cause
 - Services hold their own data on demand and response
 - Vehicles and equipment have been commissioned for individual functions rather than service outcomes
- Effects
 - The system is resident based rather than location based – multiple incidents can be generated for the same event
 - Management information and performance management is manually intensive
 - There is no collective view of the scale and direction of the problem
 - Increased maintenance requirement for vehicles due to predominant use for short journeys
- Actions
 - Identify an alternative case management system
 - Provide the right vehicles and equipment to support the field based team

Questions?



FORWARD PLAN FOR THE PERIOD ENDING 30TH SEPTEMBER 2020

This Plan sets out the key decisions which the Executive expects to take over the period indicated above. The Plan is rolled forward every month. A key decision is defined in the Council's Constitution as:

"an executive decision which is likely –

- (a) to result in the local authority incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the local authority's budget for the service or function to which the decision relates; or
- (b) to be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising one or more wards or electoral divisions in the area of the local authority.

For the purpose of the above, savings or expenditure are "significant" if they are equal to or greater than £1M."

Reports relevant to key decisions, and any listed background documents, may be viewed at any of the Council's Offices/Information Centres 5 days before the decision is to be made. Copies of, or extracts from, these documents may be obtained on the payment of a reasonable fee from the following address:

Democratic Services Team
Cheshire East Council
c/o Westfields, Middlewich Road, Sandbach Cheshire CW11 1HZ
Telephone: 01270 686472

However, it is not possible to make available for viewing or to supply copies of reports or documents the publication of which is restricted due to confidentiality of the information contained.

A record of each key decision is published within 6 days of it having been made. This is open for public inspection on the Council's Website, at Council Information Centres and at Council Offices.

This Forward Plan also provides notice that the Cabinet, or a Portfolio Holder, may decide to take a decision in private, that is, with the public and press excluded from the meeting. In accordance with the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012, 28 clear days' notice must be given of any decision to be taken in private by the Cabinet or a Portfolio Holder, with provision for the public to make representations as to why the decision should be taken in public. In such cases, Members of the Council and the public may make representations in writing to the Democratic Services Team Manager using the contact details below. A further notice of intention to hold the meeting in private must then be published 5 clear days before the

meeting, setting out any representations received about why the meeting should be held in public, together with a response from the Leader and the Cabinet.

The list of decisions in this Forward Plan indicates whether a decision is to be taken in private, with the reason category for the decision being taken in private being drawn from the list overleaf:

1. Information relating to an individual
2. Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual
3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including to authority holding that information)
4. Information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under the authority
5. Information in respect of which a claim to legal and professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings
6. Information which reveals that the authority proposes (a) to give under any enactment a notice under or by virtue of which requirements are imposed on a person; or (b) to make an order or direction under any enactment
7. Information relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime

If you would like to make representations about any decision to be conducted in private at a meeting, please email:

Paul Mountford, Executive Democratic Services Officer
paul.mountford@cheshireeast.gov.uk

Such representations must be received at least 10 clear working days before the date of the Cabinet or Portfolio Holder meeting concerned.

Where it has not been possible to meet the 28 clear day rule for publication of notice of a key decision or intention to meet in private, the relevant notices will be published as soon as possible in accordance with the requirements of the Constitution.

The law and the Council's Constitution provide for urgent key decisions to be made. Any decision made in this way will be published in the same way.

Forward Plan

Key Decision and Private Non-Key Decision	Decisions to be Taken	Decision Maker	Expected Date of Decision	Proposed Consultation	How to make representation to the decision made	Private/ Confidential and paragraph number
CE 18/19-60 The Minerals and Waste Development Plan	To seek approval to consult on the first draft of the Minerals and Waste Development Plan.	Portfolio Holder for Planning	May 2020		David Malcolm	N/A
CE 19/20-42 Congleton Leisure Centre Redevelopment Project	To seek authority to enter into the construction contract with Rock Merchanting (T/A Pulse Fitness) for the redevelopment of Congleton Leisure Centre.	Portfolio Holder for Communities	May 2020		Paul Bayley	Fully exempt - para 3
CE 19/20-47 Loan to Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership	To approve a loan to Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership to stimulate development on the Enterprise Zones; officers be authorised to take all necessary actions to progress the loan agreement and establish governance processes.	Cabinet	9 Jun 2020		Paul Goodwin	N/A

Key Decision	Decisions to be Taken	Decision Maker	Expected Date of Decision	Proposed Consultation	How to make representation to the decision made	Private/ Confidential and paragraph number
CE 19/20-55 Houses in Multiple Occupation Supplementary Planning Document	To seek approval to consult on the first draft supplementary planning document for houses in multiple occupation.	Portfolio Holder for Planning	June 2020		Jeremy Owens	
CE 19/20-36 Middlewich Eastern Bypass - CPO Powers to Acquire Revised Land for the Scheme	To authorise the use of compulsory purchase powers to acquire the land and rights required for the construction of the scheme, reflecting the revised land requirement that has now been established.	Cabinet	7 Jul 2020		Chris Hindle	N/A
CE 19/20-43 Appropriation of Land for Planning Purposes at the Garden Village, Handforth	To authorise the appropriation of Council-owned land for planning purposes at the Garden Village, Handforth.	Cabinet	7 Jul 2020		Geoffrey Dyson	Part exempt - paras 3 and 5
CE 19/20-54 Level Access Showers Framework	To approve the procurement and establishment of a framework to commission level access shower works on behalf of residents with disabilities.	Cabinet	7 Jul 2020		Karen Whitehead	N/A

Key Decision	Decisions to be Taken	Decision Maker	Expected Date of Decision	Proposed Consultation	How to make representation to the decision made	Private/ Confidential and paragraph number
CE 19/20-56 Local Growth Fund Cycleway Schemes	To seek approval for the commencement of works to construct new cycleways to serve North West Crewe and Wilmslow, utilising the Local Growth Funding allocation from C&WLEP; and to seek authority to prepare the Compulsory Purchase Order for the scheme.	Cabinet	7 Jul 2020		Richard Hibbert	N/A
CE 19/20-21 Site Allocations and Development Policies Document	To decide the next steps in progressing the Site Allocations and Development Policies Document to public examination.	Cabinet	8 Sep 2020		Jeremy Owens	N/A
CE 19/20-31 Proposed Expansion of Wilmslow High School	Subject to the School Organisation Sub-Committee approving the proposed expansion of Wilmslow High School at a meeting to be held on 6 th April 2020, Cabinet will be asked to authorise the Executive Director People to enter into a construction contract to facilitate the provision of additional places at Wilmslow High School.	Cabinet	8 Sep 2020		Val Simons	N/A

Key Decision	Decisions to be Taken	Decision Maker	Expected Date of Decision	Proposed Consultation	How to make representation to the decision made	Private/ Confidential and paragraph number
CE 19/20-46 Support for Syrian Vulnerable Person Resettlement Programme and Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children and Asylum Seekers Dispersal Programme	<p>To update Cabinet on the four programmes under support, which are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Syrian Vulnerable Person Re-settlement ▪ Unaccompanied Asylum-seeking Children ▪ Asylum-seeker Dispersal ▪ Community Sponsorship Resettlement <p>and to seek approval to extend the current programmes following a request from Government for further commitment from local authorities.</p> <p>To delegate authority to the Executive Director People in consultation with the Executive Director Place to determine the appropriate allocation.</p>	Cabinet	8 Sep 2020		Jill Stenton	N/A

Key Decision	Decisions to be Taken	Decision Maker	Expected Date of Decision	Proposed Consultation	How to make representation to the decision made	Private/ Confidential and paragraph number
CE 19/20-51 New Homes Bonus Community Fund - Review of Round 1 and Future Options	To consider a review of round 1 of the New Homes Bonus Community Fund and to consider the options for the future of the Fund.	Cabinet	8 Sep 2020		Jill Stenton	N/A
CE 19/20-52 Regional Adoption Agency Integrated Services Agreement	To approve that the Council enter into an integrated service agreement and associated support agreement with its partners.	Cabinet	8 Sep 2020			N/A
CE 19/20-53 - Future High Streets Fund Grant Support for Crewe Town Centre Regeneration	To determine whether to accept a government grant to support a range of measures to support the regeneration of Crewe town centre; to approve a supplementary capital estimate to facilitate expenditure utilising this grant; and to authorise officers to take all necessary actions to implement the proposal.	Cabinet	10 Nov 2020		Jez Goodman	N/A

Key Decision	Decisions to be Taken	Decision Maker	Expected Date of Decision	Proposed Consultation	How to make representation to the decision made	Private/ Confidential and paragraph number
CE 19/20-49 Council Tax Base 2021-22	For Cabinet to consider the Council Tax Base for Cheshire East and identify any changes to the calculation of the tax base for 2021-22 with a view to recommending the amount calculated to Council.	Council	16 Dec 2020		Paul Manning	N/A
CE 19/20-50 Medium Term Financial Strategy 2021-25	To approve the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2021-25 incorporating the Council's priorities, budget, policy proposals and capital programme. The report will include the capital, treasury management, investment and reserves strategies.	Council	17 Feb 2021			N/A



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Version
Number: 1

Key Decision N

Date First
Published: N/A

Environment and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date of Meeting: 15 June 2020

Report Title: Work Programme

Senior Officer: Frank Jordan, Executive Director of Place

1. Report Summary

- 1.1. To review items in the work programme listed in the schedule attached, together with any other items suggested by committee members.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1. To approve the work programme, subject to the agreement to add new items or delete items that no longer require any scrutiny activity.

3. Reason for Recommendation

- 3.1. It is good practice to regularly review the work programme and update it as required.

4. Background

- 4.1. The committee has responsibility for updating and approving its own work programme. Scrutiny liaison meetings – held between the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the committee, alongside the portfolio holders and key senior officers – ensure that there is continued awareness and discussion of upcoming policies, strategies and decisions within the committee's remit area.

5. Determining Which Items Should be Added to the Work Programme

- 5.1. When selecting potential topics, members should have regard to the Council's three year plan and to the criteria listed below, which should be considered to determine whether scrutiny activity is appropriate.

5.2. The following questions should be considered by the committee when determining whether to add new work programme items, or delete existing items:

- Does the issue fall within a corporate priority?
- Is the issue of key interest to the public?
- Does the matter relate to a poor or declining performing service for which there is no obvious explanation?
- Is there a pattern of budgetary overspends or underspends?
- Is it a matter raised by external audit management letters and or audit reports?
- Is there a high level of dissatisfaction with the service?

5.3. The committee should not add any items to its work programme (and should delete any existing items) that fall under any one of the following:

- The topic is already being addressed elsewhere by another body (i.e. this committee would be duplicating work)
- The matter is sub-judice
- Scrutiny would not add value to the matter
- The committee is unlikely to be able to conclude an investigation within a specified or required timescale

6. Implications of the Recommendations

6.1. There are no implications to legal or financial matters, equality, human resources, risk management, or for rural communities, children and young people or public health.

7. Ward Members Affected

7.1. All.

8. Access to Information

8.1. The background papers can be inspected by contacting the report author.

9. Contact Information

9.1. Any questions relating to this report should be directed to the following officer:

Name: Mark Nedderman

Job Title: Scrutiny Manager

Email: mark.nedderman@cheshireeast.gov.uk

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Date: 15.6.20 Time: 10.00am Venue: Committee suite, Westfields	Date: 21.9.20 Time: 10.00am Venue: Committee suite, Westfields	Date: 19.10.20 Time: 10.00am Venue: Committee suite, Westfields	Date: 16.11.20 Time: 10.00am Venue: Committee suite, Westfields	Date: 14.12.20 Time: 10.00am Venue: Committee suite, Westfields	Date: 18.1.21 Time: 10.00am Venue: Committee suite, Westfields	Date: 15.3.21 Time: 10.00am Venue: Committee suite, Westfields
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<u>Item</u>	<u>Purpose</u>	<u>Lead Officer</u>	<u>Portfolio</u>	<u>Suggested by</u>	<u>Scrutiny role</u>	<u>Corporate priorities</u>	<u>Date</u>
Responding to COVID19	To receive an update	Executive Director of Place and Deputy Chief Executive	Environment & Regeneration	Executive Director of Place and Acting Deputy Chief Executive	Performance Monitoring	Cheshire is a Green and sustainable Place. People live well and for longer.	15 June 2020
Cleaner, Greener Crewe to include Fly tipping and rubble charge review	To receive an update.	Executive Director of Place and Deputy Chief Executive	Environment & Regeneration	Executive Director of Place and Acting Deputy Chief Executive	Performance Monitoring	Cheshire is a Green and sustainable Place.	15 June 2020
Highway drainage	To receive a report in respect of highway drainage including the process for cleaning gullies.	Executive Director of Place and Deputy Chief Executive	Environment & Regeneration	Executive Director of Place and Acting Deputy Chief Executive	Performance Monitoring	Cheshire is a Green and sustainable Place.	21 September 2020
Vulnerable and Older Persons Housing Strategy	To receive an update on Vulnerable and Older Persons Housing Strategy 2020-2024.	Executive Director of Place and Deputy Chief	Environment & Regeneration	Executive Director of Place and	Pre-decision Scrutiny	People live well and for longer.	15 June 2020

<u>Item</u>	<u>Purpose</u>	<u>Lead Officer</u>	<u>Portfolio</u>	<u>Suggested by</u>	<u>Scrutiny role</u>	<u>Corporate priorities</u>	<u>Date</u>
2020-2024		Executive		Acting Deputy Chief Executive			
Future High Streets Fund Grant Support for Crewe Town Centre Regeneration	To receive an update on whether the Council should accept a government grant to support a range of measures to support the regeneration of Crewe town centre; to approve a supplementary capital estimate to facilitate expenditure utilising this grant; and to authorise officers to take all necessary actions to implement the proposal.	Executive Director of Place and Deputy Chief Executive	Environment & Regeneration	Executive Director of Place and Acting Deputy Chief Executive	Pre-decision Scrutiny	Cheshire is a Green and sustainable Place.	19 October 2020

Possible Future Items/briefings notes

Air Quality Annual Status Report-19 October 2020

Waste Strategy and Household Recycling-Date TBC

Bus Strategy-Date TBC

Charing Structure in relation to Flexi-Link Service-Date TBC