

Corporate Policy Committee

Agenda

Date: Thursday, 10th February, 2022
Time: 10.00 am
Venue: Committee Suite 1, 2 & 3, Westfields, Middlewich Road,
Sandbach CW11 1HZ

PLEASE NOTE – This meeting is open to the public and anyone attending this meeting will need to wear a face covering upon entering and leaving the venue. This may only be removed when seated.

The importance of undertaking a lateral flow test in advance of attending any committee meeting. Lateral Flow Testing: Towards the end of May, test kits were sent to all Members; the purpose being to ensure that Members had a ready supply of kits to facilitate self-testing prior to formal face to face meetings. Anyone attending is asked to undertake a lateral flow test on the day of any meeting before embarking upon the journey to the venue. Please note that it can take up to 30 minutes for the true result to show on a lateral flow test. If your test shows a positive result, then you must not attend the meeting, and must follow the advice which can be found here:
https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/council_and_democracy/council_information/coronavirus/testing-for-covid-19.aspx

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 in the 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

To note any apologies for absence from Members.

2. Declarations of Interest

To provide an opportunity for Members and Officers to declare any disclosable

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pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests in any item on the agenda.

3. **Public Speaking/Open Session**

In accordance with paragraph 2.24 of the Committee Procedure Rules and Appendix on Public Speaking, set out in the [Constitution](#), a total period of 15 minutes is allocated for members of the public to put questions to the Committee on any matter relating to this agenda. Each member of the public will be allowed up to two minutes to speak; the Chair will have discretion to vary this where they consider it appropriate.

Members of the public wishing to speak are required to provide notice of this at least three clear working days in advance of the meeting.

4. **Minutes of Previous Meeting** (Pages 5 - 12)

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 12th January 2022.

5. **Covid-19 Update** (Pages 13 - 32)

To consider an update report on recent Covid developments.

6. **Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2022-26** (Pages 33 - 42)

To consider the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) for Cheshire East Council for the four years 2022/23 to 2025/26.

7. **High Speed Rail (Crewe - Manchester) Bill Petition**

To consider a report which outlines the rationale for the Council to petition against the High Speed Rail (Crewe - Manchester) Bill and the proposed approach to member engagement in preparing and progressing a petition.

(Report to follow)

8. **Update on Shared Services Joint Committee** (Pages 43 - 50)

To consider a report on the recent work of the Shared Services Joint Committee.

9. **Pay Policy Statement 2022/23** (Pages 51 - 64)

To consider a report which outlines changes to the Pay Policy Statement for 2022/23.

10. **Calendar of Meetings 2022-23** (Pages 65 - 92)

To consider the draft Calendar of Meetings for Cheshire East Council for the 2022-23 Municipal Year.

11. **Work Programme** (Pages 93 - 94)

To consider the Work Programme and determine any required amendments.

12. **Minutes of Sub-Committees** (Pages 95 - 102)

To receive the following minutes of sub-committees:

Finance Sub-Committee – 5th January 2022

13. **Reporting of Urgent Decisions** (Pages 103 - 104)

To note the urgent decisions taken on behalf of the Committee.

THERE ARE NO PART 2 ITEMS

Membership: Councillors C Browne, J Clowes, S Corcoran (Chair), J P Findlow, K Flavell, R Fletcher, S Gardiner, N Mannion, A Martin, K Parkinson, J Rhodes, A Stott (Vice-Chair) and M Warren

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CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **Corporate Policy Committee**
held on Wednesday, 12th January, 2022 in the Council Chamber, Municipal
Buildings, Earle Street, Crewe CW1 2BJ

PRESENT

Councillor A Stott (Vice-Chair)

Councillors C Browne, J P Findlow, K Flavell, S Gardiner, N Mannion,
A Martin, K Parkinson, M Warren, C Bulman (for Cllr Corcoran), A Critchley
(for Cllr Rhodes) and J Saunders (for Cllr Clowes)

Officers

Lorraine O'Donnell, Chief Executive
Jane Burns, Executive Director Corporate Services
Alex Thompson, Director of Finance and Customer Services
David Brown, Director of Governance and Compliance
Michael Moore, Head of Communications
Josie Griffiths, Head of Audit and Risk
Paul Mountford, Democratic Services

Apologies

Councillors J Clowes, S Corcoran, R Fletcher and J Rhodes.

58 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors S Gardiner and N Mannion declared personal interests as
future recipients of a pension from the Cheshire pension fund.

Councillor J P Findlow declared a personal interest as a current recipient
of a pension from the Cheshire pension fund.

59 PUBLIC SPEAKING/OPEN SESSION

Sue Helliwell asked about the Council's policy on the disposal of Council-
owned land, with particular reference to public open space. She asked
who took decisions to release land and whether there were any prior
discussions with local ward members, the Leader, planning committees
and the relevant committee chairs.

The Director of Governance and Compliance responded that the
publication of notices advertising the potential loss of open space was a
statutory process and followed a set procedure. The Director confirmed
that in the case of a recent disposal of open space in Alsager, the process
had been followed. A detailed written response to the question would be
provided.

60 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 2nd December 2021 be approved as a correct record.

61 MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2022/23 - 2025/26

The Committee considered the Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2022 to 2026 as part of the budget consultation. The consultation document included proposals to update the current MTFS that was approved by Council in February 2021.

All Committees were being asked to provide feedback in relation to their financial responsibilities as identified within the Constitution and linked to the budget alignment approved by the Finance Sub-Committee in July 2021. Responses to the consultation, including those of all service committees, would be reported to the Corporate Policy Committee at its meeting on 10th February 2022 with a view to the Committee making recommendations to Council.

Appendix 1 to the report contained the Budget Engagement document, including the survey questions that had been used during the consultation period, which closed 4th January 2022.

The Provisional Settlement announced on 16th December 2021 had varied the assumptions contained in the Budget Engagement document. Appendix 2 to the report, which had been circulated to members before the meeting, set out the changes announced and the impact on the estimated funding envelope.

The Executive Director of Corporate Services informed the Committee that the budget for Corporate Services remained fairly static over the four year period of the MTFS, at £36m next year, rising to £38m largely as a result of inflation. There was some growth attributable to the revenue consequences of capital expenditure on ICT and to pay inflation and increased national insurance contributions. The Executive Director briefly discussed the proposals within the consultation document that were relevant to the responsibilities of the Committee.

Members raised the following matters in relation to the consultation document:

- Members asked whether the mitigation to address reducing levels of Dedicated Schools Grant was as up to date as it could be. The Executive Director of Corporate Services would ensure that this was addressed in the report back to the Committee in February.

- The question was asked whether there was sufficient flexibility to allow for a smaller increase in Council tax, for instance by utilising money currently intended for the General Reserves? Officers responded that the Government had an expectation that councils would increase Council tax to achieve financial sustainability. Members would have to consider any flexibility in Council tax rises in relation to risks such as the pressure on the Adult Social Care budget and inflation.
- The question was asked whether the Government would be moving to a deprivation-based model of assessing the needs of local authorities from 2023. The Director of Finance and Customer Services replied that this had been a feature of the fairer funding consultation that had taken place in recent years. Whilst it was not certain when any such change would take place, the Government did appear to be moving towards a deprivation-based model.
- Concern was expressed about the energy consumption of the cloud-based platform Atamis and the green credentials of the company providing the system. The Executive Director of Corporate Services undertook to look into the matter and write to all members of the Committee.

RESOLVED

That the Committee

1. notes the MTFS 2022 to 2026 Consultation Document (Appendix 1) and the proposals relevant to the responsibilities of the Committee as set out in the following paragraphs and on the following pages of the Consultation Document:
 - 1) Improving Digital Customer Experience (page 11 of the report)
 - 2) Pay inflation (page 11)
 - 3) National Insurance increase at 1.25% for social care funding (page 11)
 - 4) Improved Debt Recovery and correcting budgeted court costs income targets to reflect actual levels (page 11)
 - 5) Transactional Service Centre additional funding (page 12)
 - 6) Vendor Management Phase 3 (page 12)
 - 7) Unified IT Communications (page 12)
 - 8) IT Security and Compliance (page 12)
 - 9) IT Procurements and Application Lifecycle Management (page 12)
 - 10) Information Assurance and Data Management Phase 3 (page 12)
 - 11) Removal of temporary implementation budget and investment to run the new Financial System (page 14)
 - 12) Staff Travel and related savings (page 14)

2. notes those proposals that are rolling forward from the MTFS 2021-25 relevant to the Committee (as part of Appendix 1 (Appendix A)):
 - 6) Mitigation of reduction in the Dedicated Schools Grant (Corporate Services) (page 33)
 - 7) Mitigation of the year-on-year reduction in the Dedicated Schools Grant (ICT) (page 33)
 - 13) Efficiency savings and Restructures within Corporate Services (page 33)
 - 15) Shared services review (page 33)
 - 21) Review of corporate subscriptions (page 33)
 - 34) Brighter Futures Together Programme Customer Experience (page 34)
 - 43) Infrastructure Investment Programme (page 34)
3. notes the impact of the local government financial settlement as provided at Appendix 2 on the MTFS Consultation Document;
4. notes the other elements of the MTFS Consultation Document related to the responsibilities of the Committee (including WOC Business Plans, and Reserves levels); and
5. notes that the minutes of this meeting will form the consultation response of this Committee, and along with feedback from all the other Committees, will be considered at the Committee's next meeting on 10th February 2022.

62 COMMUNICATIONS PLAN FOR RESIDENTS

The Committee considered a report which set out proposals for how the Council would meet its Corporate Plan commitment to communicate effectively with residents. The report explained the approach for communicating with residents and highlighted priority communications activity for January 2022 – March 2023.

Members raised the following matters in relation to the report:

- The comment was made that some residents did not have access to digital technology and might therefore be excluded from certain forms of engagement. The Head of Communications responded that the communications plan would sit alongside the Digital Strategy which aimed at improving access across the board. On being asked whether digital equipment could be provided by the Council for those in deprived circumstances, the Executive Director of Corporate Services explained that this was not currently planned and that some community-based projects might assist. .
- The comment was made that town and parish councils and local volunteers would be willing to assist with the distribution of hard copies of documents to residents where necessary.

- Some members of the public were still finding it difficult to access Cheshire East committee meetings over the Internet. The Executive Director of Corporate Services responded that there were ongoing technical issues involving the Council's firewall and that a solution was being sought; she undertook to pursue the matter and report back to Members.
- Greater emphasis should be placed on residents in particular, as opposed to other stakeholders, and recognition should be given to the communication difficulties experienced by older people.
- The communications plan should also address the needs of minority groups such as travellers.
- With regard to a question about how robust social and digital media platforms were against attempts by third parties to influence and disrupt communications, the Executive Director of Corporate Services suggested that the Committee might wish to add an item on cyber security to its work programme.
- In response to a comment about the difficulty in contacting officers, for example in the highways and planning services, the Chief Executive reiterated the importance of customer service and explained that work was underway to make improvements.

The Head of Communications advised that the next step would be to conduct a survey of residents and customers to understand their communications preferences and needs. The results of that survey, and a draft communications strategy, would then be brought back to the Committee.

Members asked if the results of the survey could be published on the Council's website. The Director of Governance and Compliance undertook to work with Democratic Services to ensure that this was done.

On a related matter, Councillor C Browne advised that he and the Leader of the Council were planning a Q&A session for residents.

RESOLVED (unanimously)

That the Committee

1. approves the development of a communications strategy for residents, including undertaking a survey of residents and customers to understand their communications preferences and needs; and the results of the survey, together with the draft communications strategy, be brought back to the Committee;

2. approves the principles and approach for communications activity set out in paragraphs 5.7 and 5.8 of the report; and
3. notes the planned priorities for the communications programme for 2022-23.

(At this point, the Committee adjourned for 10 minutes.)

63 HEALTH AND SAFETY UPDATE QUARTER 2

The Committee considered an update report on the health, safety and wellbeing of the organisation. The report and Appendix provided a summary of data regarding accident and information data for the Council and maintained schools for Quarter 2 2021/22, the year to date and comparative data for the same periods in the last two years.

Members asked the following questions in relation to the report:

- With regard to staff currently working from home, what arrangements were in place to monitor accidents at home, and what risk assessments were in place. The Head of Audit and Risk responded that risk assessments were in place and were reviewed with line managers. Accident reports were required to be completed where accidents occurred.
- What arrangements were in place to ensure that Council equipment provided for home working was safety-checked.
- How staff absences and shortages, particularly in schools, were being addressed.
- Whether some form of post-assessment would be undertaken to assess the lessons learned from staff working from home. The Head of Audit and Risk undertook to provide members with a written response.
- Whether the statistics relating to academies could be made available. The Head of Audit and Risk replied that she would see if this information could be shared with the Committee; she undertook to report back as part of the next update at the March meeting.
- If a definition of 'accident' could be provided. The Head of Audit and Risk replied that this would be included in the next update report.

RESOLVED (unanimously)

That the report be noted.

64 WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee considered its work programme for 2021/22.

The Executive Director of Corporate Services reported that a Covid Update report would be included on the work programme for the February meeting. The report on EDI Strategy and Objectives would be deferred to the March meeting.

Members noted the significant workload for the February meeting and suggested that the meeting start at the earlier time of 10.00 am. The Executive Director of Corporate Services undertook to discuss the matter with the Chair and Vice-Chair.

RESOLVED

That the work programme be noted.

65 MINUTES OF SUB-COMMITTEES

The minutes of the following sub-committee meetings were received:

- Finance Sub-Committee – 1st December 2021
- General Appeals Sub-Committee – 7th December 2021

66 REPORTING OF URGENT DECISIONS

There were no urgent decisions to report.

The meeting commenced at 10.30 am and concluded at 12.30 pm

Councillor A Stott (Chair)

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Working for a brighter future together

Corporate Policy Committee

Date of Meeting: 10 February 2022

Report Title: Covid-19 Update

Report of: Jane Burns, Executive Director of Corporate Services

Report Reference No. CP/61/21-22

Ward(s) Affected All

Corporate Plan Priorities			
	Open	An open and enabling organisation	X
	Fair	A council which empowers and cares about people	X
	Green	A thriving and sustainable place	X

1. Purpose of the Report

To provide the Committee with an update on recent Covid developments, including the move to Plan B for the purposes of oversight and review.

2. Executive Summary

1.1 COVID-19 is an enduring national and international public health emergency. Members have been kept informed through regular reports and briefings on how the Council, working with its partners, continues to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and plan for the recovery from it. This report summarises recent developments on an exception basis.

1.2 England moved to Plan B in response to the risk of the Omicron variant on 8 December. The Council and its partners have continued to work

together to support and inform residents, businesses, and staff in managing the implications. The implications for council activities are summarised in section 5.

- 1.3** The response to and recovery from the pandemic contributes to the strategic aims and objectives in the Council's Corporate Plan 2021-25

2.0 Recommendation

- 2.1** To note the ongoing implications of Covid-19 and Cheshire East Council's response.

3. Reason for Recommendation

- 3.1** This report is part of the Council's commitment to being open and transparent.

4. Other Options Considered

- 4.1** Not appropriate.

5. Background

Update and by exception reporting on Council actions

- 5.1** Cheshire East Council continues to respond to the Coronavirus pandemic. At the same time the Council has continued to strive to:

- deliver essential local services
- protect our most vulnerable people
- support our communities and local businesses.

- 5.2** A summary of the key changes since December 2021 is provided below.

- 5.3 COVID infection rates** – COVID infection rates rose rapidly from the end of November and over the first three weeks of December 2021. By the end of December, there was a massive shift of variant from Delta to Omicron. The Omicron variant came close to 100% of infections at the end of December.

In Cheshire East, the infection rate almost tripled between the end of November and third week of December. In the last two months, Cheshire East has consistently been experiencing between the third and fifth highest rates across the Cheshire and Merseyside sub region. Cheshire East infection rates have been consistently higher than England rates and lower than North West rates. In areas with particularly high case rates and low vaccination uptake rates, surge testing and targeted vaccination programmes have been introduced. After the first week of January 2022,

the rates have started to decline. Cheshire East has seen a reduction in infection rates from 2,175 cases per 100,000 population (as of 4 January 2022) down to 1,068 cases per 100,000 (4,131 cases as of 13 January 2022) demonstrating a 50% decrease over this 10 day period.

Hospital admissions - There are fewer COVID-related admissions in our local hospitals compared this time last year. However, the number of patients in hospitals increased from 30 to 200 between November 2021 and January 2022. Compared to last year, the rate of increase has been slower and the number of patients occupying ITU beds is very low. As the case rates have started to decrease, hospital admissions are expected to decline soon. Nevertheless, it remains a priority to emphasise the need for the local population to follow COVID safety guidance and get fully vaccinated and boosted.

Vaccination - As of 17 January 2022, there were 319,414 eligible registered patients over the age of 12 with Cheshire GP Practices who have received their first dose (87.2%), 299,571 (81.8%) received their second dose, and 246,723 (67.3%) received their third or booster vaccination dose. The rate of full vaccination and booster vaccination within electoral wards ranges from 74% to 92%, and individuals yet to be vaccinated range between 13% and 44%. One explanation for this variation is that some wards have a significantly younger age profile and therefore only became eligible for vaccination later in the schedule. Targeted efforts are in place to ensure everyone in our communities has access to vaccination, with additional support to those with greater need, where possible.

- 5.4 Test Trace Contain Enable/Swab squad** - As expected, the TTCE Programme has experienced a significant surge in activity as case rates have increased dramatically in autumn/winter. The programme planned for this in autumn and increased the capacity of the both the 'test' and 'trace' workstreams to manage this workload, with 30 people operating on the Swab Squad and 20 people operating on the Contact Tracing team. The Swab Squad have been actively mitigating the national issue of lateral flow testing (LFT) kit shortages, and the team has ensured enough local stock is available to deal with demand, so this has not been a major issue in Cheshire East compared to other areas. However, the team has had to provide support to many teams struggling to access PCR testing kits and as Cheshire East do not have access to this stock; it is more challenging to provide this support to frontline and key workers teams and organisations such as care workers, care homes and schools. Overall, testing demand remains high with the team undertaking over 7,000 tests in December alone. Cheshire East is now operating a 50% local contact tracing service once again and aims to have this fully mobilised in February. In order to

deal with demand, the team have reduced the national contact tracing questionnaire, which has significantly increased performance. The Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) are now considering a similar approach nationally.

5.5 Developments since December 2021

5.5.1 England moved to Plan B in response to the rapid spread of the Omicron variant in the UK on 8 December 2021. Plan B was set out by the Government in September 2021. Plan B aimed to slow the spread of the variant and reduce the chances of the NHS coming under unsustainable pressure, while buying time to deliver booster vaccinations to the population.

5.5.2 From 10 December, face coverings became compulsory in most public indoor venues, except hospitality. From 13 December, those who could were advised to work from home. From 15 December, the COVID Pass became mandatory for entry into nightclubs and settings where large crowds gathered. New guidance was also introduced, for example, on self-isolation periods, enabling people to test on day 5 and 6 and if negative on both occasions they could end isolation.

5.5.3 On 19 January the Government announced its intention to reduce the measures introduced as part of Plan B from the 26 January. Full details are available via this link:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/england-to-return-to-plan-a-following-the-success-of-the-booster-programme>

Council services directly affected by changes include:

5.5.3 Education – Pupils who are contacts of positive cases in their households are now no longer required to stay at home for 5 days, but must carry out daily lateral flow tests. Letters have been shared with schools to update parents and carers, along with updated guidance on testing and the reduced isolation period.

Early in the new year, the government announced a series of changes to restrictions and measures in schools, these included secondary age pupils wearing masks in classrooms as well as communal areas. This advice was in place until 20 January 2022, following the review of Plan B regulations. Following a discussion with Public Health and education ministers, the council advised schools to take a planned and paced approach to the removal of face coverings in classrooms.

The DfE have provided a workforce fund which schools and colleges can access to help with the financial pressures of significant staff absence. Advice on how to manage high levels of staff absence has been shared with schools. Schools have been asked to contact the Cheshire East COVID helpline if they feel restricting attendance is necessary due to staff absence or high case numbers to support a consistent approach across Cheshire East.

The DfE has made a marketplace available to provide all state funded schools, colleges and early years settings with a route to purchase air cleaning units directly from suppliers at a competitive price. Schools, colleges and early years settings that meet strict eligibility criteria for poorly ventilated teaching spaces can apply to the DfE for a funded air cleaning unit.

There have been some local challenges in terms of the availability of LfT testing kits for schools, some of which have required direct escalation up to DfE officials to ensure adequate supplies are available to support in school as well as school community testing.

The vaccination programme for 12-15 year olds, led by the school nursing service, continues to support schools. So far 61% of 12-15 year olds in Cheshire East have received their first vaccine. Delivery of second doses commenced on 10 January 2022. Vaccination should help to reduce the need for pupils to have time off school and reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19 within schools. It is important to note that as well as 12-15 year olds being able to receive vaccinations via their school, there is the ability for families to book direct and this process is also being promoted to families.

Significant work continues to be planned and delivered for curriculum recovery and supporting all learners to ensure our school subject leaders are fully confident to plan workschemes that address gaps in knowledge but maintain the focus on progression of learning through the year groups.

All of the activity above continues to be shaped and influenced through the Education Recovery Group (ERG) which includes representatives from schools and settings. The latest information, advice, training opportunities, and best practice continues to be shared with schools, colleges and settings through the COVID education bulletins and learning bulletins.

- 5.5.4 Children's Social Care** – There continue to be significant pressures nationally on the number of placements available for cared for children and young people as a result of the pandemic. The implications of the National Transfer Scheme for unaccompanied asylum seeking children, locally and nationally is creating additional pressures on placement sufficiency and also frontline capacity. As a result we are continuing to experience significant challenges in finding the right homes for a small number of our cared for children and young people, and this is also impacting on the cost of placements.

The Adoption and Children (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations 2021 lapsed on 30 September 2021 which meant that all statutory social work was required to return to face to face delivery. This continues to pose challenges in the context of the rise in positive cases at the frontline. Business continuity planning has taken place to mitigate the impact on children and families should absences increase.

The findings of the Ofsted inspection of Child in Need and Child Protection Services conducted in November 2021 have been published. Ofsted summarised that since their last inspection in November 2019 the quality of social work with children and their families has improved and senior leaders are successfully embedding a child-centred culture. The recommendations from the inspection are being carefully considered and incorporated into a development plan.

- 5.5.5 Early Help and Prevention – Household Support Fund** - Cheshire East Council with the help of a wide range of local partners, is distributing vouchers worth £2.2 million on behalf of the Department of Work and Pensions to support the most vulnerable households across the borough with food, utilities, housing costs, and other essentials over the winter period. The money is our share of the government's £500 million Household Support Fund which will run from 6 October 2021 until 31 March 2022. The fund is available to support both adults (without dependent children) and families with children and is available to vulnerable households who need additional financial support. As at 20 January 2022, approximately £32,000 of food vouchers had been provided to over 10,000 individuals.

Holiday Activities and Food Programme - The government's Holiday Activities and Food Programme has been extended to

cover the winter holidays. The scheme provides enjoyable activities and nutritious meals for primary and secondary school aged children who are eligible for benefits-related free school meals during the school holidays. It is also an important source of support for children and families during the holiday period. As at 20 January 2021, over 13,000 hours of support had been provided and over 2,500 meals.

5.5.6 Adult social care – On 3 November 2021, the Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC) published guidance on a new funding stream to support the adult social care workforce. The primary purpose of the Workforce Recruitment and Retention Fund (WRRF) is to support local authorities to address capacity pressures within the adult social care workforce in their geographical area through recruitment and retention activities during the winter months. On 16 December, DHSC published information relating to round two, a £300 million extension to the Workforce Recruitment and Retention Fund. Round two funding can be used to support the same objectives for round one, however, unlike round one, the round two funding can be used to enable local authorities and providers to bring forward planned uplifts relating to pay for the adult social care workforce in advance of the new financial year. Both rounds of WRRF total £2.8m of funding for Cheshire East Council in total, but the funding has to be used on services delivered by 31 March 2022.

Recruitment and retention pressures on the care market continue due to competition from the retail and hospitality industries and this is impacting on the ability to discharge medically fit patients from hospital. An incentive fund has been introduced which aims to encourage commissioned Care at Home providers to pick up council commissioned packages of care where they have capacity to do so.

The Omicron variant has led to a significant increase in the number of care homes closed due to a COVID-19 outbreak (59 at the time of writing – 18 January 2022). A Standard Operating Procedure has been developed which adopts a risk-based approach to enable care homes to admit new residents safely where the Director of Public Health deems that there is low risk. Recruitment challenges are also being experienced in care homes and some providers are having to use a high proportion of agency staff.

On 29 December 2021, the DHSC published guidance on a new funding stream linked to the pressures arising linked to the Omicron variant. In recognition of these pressures the government allocated £60m of funding to support councils. The allocation for Cheshire East Council is £363k. This funding is intended to support infection control measures including limiting staff movement, providing transport and accommodation, managing staff absences and self-isolation, ventilation, and further use of Direct Payments if required to meet care needs. This funding has to be spent by the 31 March 2022.

Work is ongoing with care providers to encourage their staff to have the full suite of vaccinations. Over half (52%) of care home staff have had the booster vaccination. From 1 April 2022, all frontline NHS and care staff working in the community must have had both vaccinations as a condition of their employment. Feedback received from externally commissioned community providers shows that around 95% of staff have had at least the first dose of the vaccination.

Mental Health Services remain under pressure, the number of Mental Health Act Assessments continues to increase with the average per week now at 14; pre-pandemic the average was 11. Week commencing 10 January saw the week's assessments total 23 - the highest number ever recorded in one week. Additional staff have been commissioned to support the Emergency Duty Team.

5.5.7 Registration services

Since March 2020 all death registrations nationally have been undertaken by telephone rather than face to face. Whilst introduced at very short notice the system has worked well, making things easier for those needing to register deaths. The indications are that the temporary legislation that allowed for telephone registrations will not be extended. The Registration Service has started planning for the reintroduction of face to face registrations, a system that is more time consuming and takes up more staff resource than telephone registrations.

5.5.8 Tatton Park – All facilities are open. Visit the website for information: www.tattonpark.org.uk/home.aspx

5.5.9 Support for businesses

The council's economic development and regulatory services teams are continuing to provide advice and guidance to hospitality, events and tourism businesses to support the many changes in those sectors following the release of restrictions on 19 July:

The 'Say Hi to the High Street' campaign continues to be positively received. The pre-Christmas winter phase of the campaign focused on promoting town centre Christmas events and encouraging people to support local town centre businesses in the run up to Christmas, will full page press adverts and social media videos. Feedback and analysis of the pre-Christmas winter phase suggests the videos in particular had a positive impact; the Twitter campaign alone achieving a reach of over a million from 33 posts. In the last month CEC has also procured gazebos and deckchairs for town councils to enable them to support community events to increase town centre footfall. As we move towards Spring further procurements are being pursued with the intention of claiming funding back from the Welcome Back Fund. Another phase of the 'Say Hi to the High Street' campaign is planned with local and digital promotional elements, and there are several additional procurements ongoing to deliver planters and planting, bunting, chairs and tables etc. all designed to enhance the attractiveness of town centres and boost town centre footfall.

The Regulatory Services team have continued to provide advice and guidance to businesses requesting advice on positive cases in the workplace. The team also contacted businesses to help them prepare for the changes introduced in December for compulsory face coverings in most public indoor venues and the introduction of COVID Passes for entry into nightclubs and other late night dance venues. Ten venues in the borough were identified that were required to introduce COVID passes. However, the requirement to wear a face covering in indoor public spaces and show COVID Passes at nightclubs ended on 27 January.

5.5.10 Waste and recycling collections

There continues to be pressure on the waste collections system. There has been an increase in the tonnage of waste collected since the first lockdown when more people started to work from home, and this has not yet reduced to pre-lockdown levels, although recycling levels remain encouragingly high. Throughout the pandemic, ANSA

Environmental Services, the Council's wholly owned company, have continued to empty all three waste streams whilst many local authorities have ceased one or more of their collections. However, there continues to be disruption to individual rounds on a daily basis due to staff absences due to sickness or self-isolation and the shortage of agency staff to provide cover, particularly qualified HGV drivers, has added to this pressure. ANSA have introduced a number of measures to help manage these challenges, including suitably qualified managers and supervisors joining collection crews when necessary. When rounds are missed ANSA will try to return to missed collections within 5 working days.

5.5.11 Planning

There are also pressures within the Planning service at present with a significant increase in caseload due to a combination of increased volumes of applications, particularly smaller householder applications, and reduced officer capacity. This has resulted in lengthy delays in determining applications and a significant increase in the number of live applications to 2,876 at the end of September, more than double the normal level. A number of measures to help manage officer caseload and manage customer expectations have been introduced and an external provider has been procured to provide additional resources to help address the backlog of applications over the next 9-12 months. We continue to recruit to fill staff vacancies on a permanent basis. To help develop greater resilience and improve service standards in the longer term, a deep dive review of the service is being undertaken. A Members Advisory Panel has been established to support and advise the review.

5.6 Business Grants Update

- 5.6.1** On 21 December 2021, Government announced the introduction of grant support for hospitality and leisure businesses in England. This support will take the form of a one-off grant funding scheme. The Scheme is called the Omicron Hospitality and Leisure Grant and is administered by business rate billing authorities in England. Cheshire East Council has been allocated £3.8m to distribute to local businesses who can be awarded up to £6k. Our scheme opened for applications on 5 January and has so far received 478 applications and paid out £1.065m. Eligible businesses have been contacted by email supplemented by a range of communications to the business community. The closing date for applications is 18 March with final payments to be made by 31 March.

- 5.6.2** Cheshire East Council were allocated a total of £14,500,835 over the first three ARG payment rounds. This is comprised of £7,683,040 for the initial allocation in October 2020, £3,412,442 for the first Top-Up in January 2021 and £3,405,353 for the second Top-Up in July 2021.
- 5.6.3** On 11 January 2022, we received a Grant Offer Letter from the Department of Business Energy and Industry Strategy confirming the amount of grant we had been allocated through the third Top Up to the ARG for the period 30 December 2021 to 31 March 2022. The amount allocated to Cheshire East Council is £827,109. This means the total amount of ARG funding allocated to Cheshire East is £15,327,944
- 5.6.4** To date, we have spent a total of £13,176,388. This means there is £2,151,586 left to be distributed before 31 March 2022.
- 5.6.5** The remaining ARG funds are being distributed through two grant schemes, both of which are still open for applications: The Business Interruption Fund and The Recovery & Growth Grant.

5.6.6 Business Interruption Fund – Open until 28 February 2022

The Business Interruption Fund is available to support all businesses based in the Borough that are able to demonstrate they have been impacted by the pandemic, including the latest Omicron variant. On 16 December 2021, Cheshire East Council announced that we had increased the amount of support available through this fund to a maximum of £10,000 per business. It means that those who previously applied for funding and received the maximum amount available at that time (of £5,000), are able to submit a further application for support. To be eligible, a business must demonstrate that they are either: operating at reduced capacity due to staff shortages as a result of Covid-19 or; have had to close for operational reasons due to Covid-19 or; that cashflow has been disrupted due to reduced customer demand or supply-side issues as a result of Covid-19. Business is operating at a reduced capacity due to staff shortages as a result of isolation requirements.

- **No. Applications Received: 477**
- **Claims Approved: 147 totalling £624,020.00**
- **Claims Pending: 215**
- **Claims Denied: 114**

5.6.7 Recovery and Growth Grant – Open until 28 February 2022

This Recovery and Growth Grant Programme is to support economic recovery and assist businesses that are seeking to grow, adapt, diversify, and expand their current operation to support long-term sustainability. The grant will be made available for businesses seeking to invest in their premises, facilities or equipment that will enable them to re-open quickly, bring staff and customers safely back to work or to capitalise on new opportunities. The grant is paid retrospectively.

Only the following expenditure will be eligible for a grant:

- furniture, fittings and equipment to create outside business spaces or to adapt internal workspaces
- improved building ventilation/ air exchange or low carbon heating and green energy solutions
- specialist electric vehicles and associated charging points for business uses
- digital hardware and software to enable the adoption of new digital business practices including setting up a new e-commerce or e-POS systems, payment systems or to enable flexible/ remote working etc
- purchase of equipment or machinery to capitalise on new and emerging business opportunities
- access improvements / amendments (i.e. motion sensor doors, queueing adaptations, one-way set-ups, improvised waiting areas etc)
- internal adaptations (i.e. relocation of existing fixtures / fittings / services etc. potentially to support revised utilisation of space to ensure social distancing or diversified uses of premises).
 - **No. Applications Received: 159**
 - **Claims Approved: 90 totalling £1,216,889.52**
 - **Claims Pending: 61**
 - **Claims Denied: 8**

5.7 Future Workplace and engagement

5.7.1 Throughout the pandemic, we have provided frequent briefings to staff through a variety of methods. This includes written briefings, Conversation With/Question and Answer sessions, team meetings, TLC calls and wellbeing support. There have been two Pulse

Surveys of staff which reported positive feedback on how informed staff have felt. We are continuing to prioritise communication and engagement over the coming months.

- 5.7.2** Member decision-making meetings have been held face-to-face since the remote meeting regulations expired. Appropriate health and safety and risk assessments have been undertaken to protect participants. The Government are conducting a consultation on future arrangements. More information will be provided in due course. Since Plan B has been invoked, arrangements for meetings have been reviewed, moving to larger venues and limiting attendance where possible.
- 5.7.3** Covid-19 and new ways of working have been a catalyst for a refresh of the Workplace Strategy which was approved at the Corporate Policy Committee In November 2021. We are taking a phased and pragmatic approach, engaging with and listening to staff about new ways of working which meet customer, service and individual needs. The revised Agile and Flexible Working Policy has been approved. All staff are being actively encouraged to discuss future ways of working and how this best meets future requirements. These discussions will also inform future workplace design.

5.8 Recovery planning

- 5.8.1** At the sub-regional level, the strategic command for the response to the pandemic has been stepped back up. This is a multi-agency group that brings together key partners including local government, health, police, the local enterprise partnership enables feedback and escalation to central government.
- 5.8.2** This Sub-regional Recovery Group, which is chaired by the Chief Executive of Cheshire East Council, has now been stepped down until the response phase concludes.
- 5.8.3** As a reminder, the council developed a recovery plan to support this sub-regional approach as well as ensuring the Borough continues to manage the pandemic effectively as well as recovery arrangements.
- 5.8.4** In particular the recovery plan anticipated and prepared the Council to manage the longer-term impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic in the Borough and on our council services. For example, it is anticipated that there will be significant long-term impacts on communities and business in Cheshire East.

5.8.5 The key issues, risks and plans that have been developed at this stage cover:

- The ongoing management of COVID-19 including test, trace, contain and enable
- Supporting children and young people including ensuring an effective education recovery, managing increased demand on social care and supporting mental health
- Meeting the increased demands on adult social care, health and community services
- Putting effective arrangements in place to provide guidance and support to local businesses to ensure they operate safely and in line with the regulations
- Leading an effective economic recovery
- Winter planning and table top exercise on adult social care.

6. Consultation and Engagement

6.1 Consultations have resumed, although they are predominantly through digital or remote means.

7. Implications

7.1 Legal Implications

7.1.1 The UK has made hundreds of laws in response to the Coronavirus pandemic. Following the Prime Minister's announcement in Parliament on 19 January 2022, the measures put in place under Plan B in England were lifted. In particular:

- The government is no longer asking people to work from home if they can;
- From 20 January, face coverings will no longer be advised for staff and pupils in secondary schools and college classrooms;
- From 27 January, face coverings will no longer be advised for staff and pupils in communal areas of secondary schools, nor staff in communal areas of primaries;
- From 27 January, there will no longer be a legal requirement to wear a face covering. However, government guidance suggests that people continue to wear a face covering in crowded and enclosed spaces.
- From 27 January, venues and events will no longer be required by law to check visitors' NHS Covid Pass, although this can still be operated on a voluntary basis.

- 7.1.2** From 11 February 2022, eligible fully vaccinated passengers arriving in the UK will no longer have to take a post-arrival lateral flow test.
- 7.1.3** Mandatory vaccinations for staff working in care home settings applies from the 11 November 2021 to all staff undertaking personal or nursing care in a regulated care home setting in England. <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2021/891/contents/made>. The regulations do not apply to the NHS and are subject to a review in one year.
- 7.1.4** The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 have expired. The High Court determined that primary legislation would be necessary to allow remote meetings to continue. There was no reference to such legislation in the Queen's Speech on 12 May. Essential meetings including planning and licensing committees, are taking place in person with appropriate COVID-19 measures such as ensuring adequate ventilation, separation distances and the requirement for attendees to wear face masks unless sat during the meeting.

7.2 Financial Implications

- 7.2.1** The financial implications of the Covid-19 pandemic on the Council relate to the need to incur additional expenditure to meet the needs of our community and to continue to provide services; losses in income from sales, fees and charges; and reductions in council tax and business rates income. The effect on the Council's budget and its Medium Term Financial Strategy are influenced by the Government's approach to funding. Government policies and strategies in this regard have evolved over time, since March 2020; but essentially financial support to the Council and for our Borough has been provided in the following forms:
- Unringfenced grant
 - Sales, fees and charges compensation scheme
 - Tax income guarantee
 - Specific grants
 - Deferment of financial impacts on Capital Programme and Collection Fund
- 7.2.2** With regard to unringfenced grant received from Government for Covid-19 purposes, as at 31 March 2021 the balance held in an earmarked reserve for future use was £5.153m. For the 2021/22 financial year, the Council was allocated £8.508m in unringfenced

grant; and the sales, fees and charges scheme was also extended to provide some compensation for losses in income compared to budget, for the April to June 2021 period.

7.2.3 2021/22

The position for the current financial year reported as part of the in-year Finance Review to Finance Sub Committee on 1 December 2021 showed Covid-related net spending/ income loss pressures of £10m. The Committee may wish to note that latest forecasts indicate a reduction in pressures on Service budgets, being a total of some £9m, which may be covered by Covid-related unringfenced grants, the compensation receivable for income losses, and capitalisation of some expenditure where appropriate:

Service expenditure and income losses

	Expenditure	Income	Net
	£000	£000	£000
Service costs/ losses above Budget	4,989	4,064	9,053
Financed by:			
Use of unringfenced grant – 2021/22			(8,173)
Sales, fees & charges compensation – 2021/22			(800)
Capitalisation of expenditure			(80)
Total – Financing			(9,053)
Potential Surplus/ Deficit in 2021/22			-

7.2.4 Included in the above forecast is a provision of £390,000, being the latest estimate of the potential support required by Everybody Sport & Recreation to help cover the shortfall in their budgets as a consequence of income losses in the year. As per the precedent set in 2020/21, the Council will continue to provide further support in this regard; and any relating payment this year will be made in accordance with the Constitution and covered by use of the unringfenced Covid grant, as shown above.

7.2.5 Implications for council tax and business rates will continue to be managed within the Collection Fund, over the medium term, and are not expected to have an immediate effect on the Council's revenue budget in 2021/22. Latest estimates for this year show losses in receipts of £3.7m on council tax, and £8.4m on business rates.

- 7.2.6** The Council has also been allocated some £86m for 2021/22 in specific grants, to date, to continue to support outbreak management, infection control in care homes, and to provide businesses with support and restart grants, along with other grants to support residents. Further specific grants may become payable and require local administration in response to the emerging status of the pandemic.

7.2.7 Reporting to Government

Reporting of the Council's position continues to be submitted frequently to DLUHC as required, in the specified format; and those returns are published on the Cheshire East website:

[Open data and transparency \(cheshireeast.gov.uk\)](https://cheshireeast.gov.uk)

[Search for 'covid' | Insight Cheshire East \(arcgis.com\)](https://arcgis.com)

The Council will continue to support lobbying by the LGA and CCN in their aim to ensure fair settlement of the financial pressures facing local authorities.

7.3 Policy Implications

- 7.3.1** COVID-19 is having a wide-ranging impact on many policies. Any significant implications for the Council's policies are outlined in this report.

7.4 Equality Implications

- 7.4.1** Work has continued to improve accessibility of the vaccine, particularly for those who are vaccine hesitant or less able to travel to vaccination centres Targeted efforts are in place to ensure everyone in our communities has access to vaccination, with additional support to those with greater need, where possible. A recent example is the provision of multiple vaccination sites in Crewe.
- 7.4.2** We carried out individual risk assessments for staff with protected characteristics, particularly in relation to BAME colleagues and staff with a disability and have issued regular reminders to keep these under review as circumstances may change. Further work is being done to support staff who may be vaccine hesitant, including BAME staff.

7.5 Human Resources Implications

- 7.5.1** Sickness absence reporting has been stepped up to twice weekly, given the rapid spread of Omicron. There has been some volatility

but overall levels have not been high. The latest data on staff absences on 24 January 2022 are 31 (7 in December) staff self-isolating and working from home, 1 (4 in December) member of staff self-isolating and not working from home (role does not allow), 45 (39 in December) Covid-related sickness absences, and 129 (128 in December) non-Covid-related sickness absences.

7.5.2 Staff vaccinations: as at 24 January 2022, 1900 staff are eligible for vaccinations due to their role. Of these, 95.3% have had a first vaccination and 94.1% have had their second vaccination. Data on boosters not yet collected.

7.5.3 The pandemic has exposed capacity pressures and skills shortages, for example, public health professionals, enforcement officers, care workers and school support staff. In addition, the challenging financial context and re-prioritisation of work has meant that vacant posts in some service areas have not been automatically filled. Work continues to provide short and longer term resourcing solutions in a challenging recruitment market.

7.5.4 There continues to be regular communication with staff and good co-operation with the Trade Unions.

7.5.5 Although Covid is still with us, we can now continue with our plans to move forward safely, including how we will use our buildings. Our approach has always been and will be informed by colleagues in public health and local Covid case data. We will continue to put the customer at the heart of our service delivery while meeting the varying needs of all our different services. As we move forward, we will be combining this information to define in more detail what hybrid working means for Cheshire East. We anticipate colleagues will be able to come to the office or workplace more regularly than during the pandemic, but less often than before it.

7.6 Risk Management Implications

7.6.1 The risk environment around COVID-19 remains dynamic. Risk registers have been maintained as part of the Council's response to date and the plans for recovery. Business Continuity Plans have been invoked over December/January period in a number of services are being kept under review and have been invoked following the Omicron surge.

7.7 Rural Communities Implications

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

7.8 Implications for Children & Young People/Cared for Children

- 7.8.1** There are implications for children and young people. There are implications for schools, early help and prevention and children's social care which are summarised in the report.

7.9 Public Health Implications

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

7.10 Climate Change Implications

- 7.10.1** There have been positive benefits of fewer cars on the road during the first 12 months of the pandemic, although traffic levels are now exceeding pre-pandemic levels. Those staff who have been able to work from home have done so and business mileage has also reduced. There has also been lower demand for heating/lighting offices. The emerging Future Workplace Strategy will carefully consider how to embed carbon reduction.

8 Ward Members Affected

- 8.1** All members.

Access to Information

HM Government website contains comprehensive information.

Roadmap

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/963491/COVID-19_Response_-_Spring_2021.pdf

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Appendices:	None
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Background Papers:	Government Guidance COVID-19 Response – Spring 2021(Roadmap) an Autumn and Winter Plan 2021 (Plan B)
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Working for a brighter future together

Corporate Policy Committee

Date of Meeting:	10 February 2022
Report Title:	Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2022-26
Report of:	Alex Thompson – Director of Finance and Customer Services (Section 151 Officer)
Report Reference No:	CP/35/21-22
Ward(s) Affected:	All

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. This report presents the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) for Cheshire East Council for the four years 2022/23 to 2025/26. The Corporate Policy Committee is asked to consider the feedback from the budget consultation and recommend an annual balanced budget to the full Council meeting of 24 February 2022.
- 1.2. The Appendices referred to in this report will be circulated with the agenda as a separate document which will also be used for the Council meeting.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1. Financial strategies underpin how Cheshire East Council will allocate resources, achieve the Corporate Plan and provide in the region of 500 local services every day. The strategies must be affordable, based on robust estimates and balanced against adequate reserves.
- 2.2. In February 2021 the Council approved the Corporate Plan 2021-2025 which articulates the vision of how these services will make Cheshire East an Open, Fair and Green borough:
 - 2.2.1. Open - We will provide strong community leadership and work transparently with our residents, businesses and partners to deliver our ambition in Cheshire East.

- 2.2.2.** Fair - We aim to reduce inequalities, promote fairness and opportunity for all and support our most vulnerable residents.
- 2.2.3.** Green - We will lead our communities to protect and enhance our environment, tackle the climate emergency and drive sustainable development.
- 2.3.** The Corporate Plan 2021-2025 was agreed by Council in February 2021. **Appendix B** summarises the plan on a page.
- 2.4.** The Council operates a three-stage financial cycle to support its strategy plans – Plan, Monitor and Report. Progress against each element of this cycle is crucial to maintain sustainable services:
- 2.4.1.** **Plan** – the Council presented its first four-year balanced Strategy in 2021. Despite the financial settlement from government providing only a single year of certainty the Council is again presenting a four-year balanced financial strategy in 2022. Following public consultation on the draft revenue budget for 2022/23, net spending is proposed at **£327.7m**. The budget addresses significant spending challenges such as rising social care costs, inflation and increasing demand. Total capital investment aspirations of £633.7m are also identified over the next four financial years.
- 2.4.2.** **Monitor** - the outturn position for 2021/22 is currently forecast to be a marginal overspend of £2.3m. This is a small increase of £0.1m compared to the first in-year forecast mainly due to increased costs of school transport which have been offset by various improvements across other services. Any variation to budget at year-end will be managed through the Council's Medium-Term Financial Strategy Earmarked Reserve in the first instance.
- 2.4.3.** **Report** - the Council's audited accounts for 2020/21 were unqualified and highlighted achievement of a positive outturn for the year. The Outturn report showed increases in reserves based on temporary underspending but identified prevailing financial pressure and risks, particularly in Social Care that are causing budgets to continue to rise in the medium-term.
- 2.5.** The Medium-Term Financial Strategy contains the following headlines for the 2022/23 financial year:
- Overall net revenue spending on services is being increased by £16.6m to £327.7m in 2022/23, split as follows:

Adults (inc. Social Care / Public Health)	£120.8m
Children (inc. Social Care / Education)	£ 73.8m
Place (inc. Highways / Regeneration / Waste)	£ 79.7m
Corporate (inc. ICT / HR)	£ 38.3m
Central (inc. Capital Financing)	£ 15.1m
Total Net Revenue Budget	£327.7m

- Central Government unringfenced grants will increase by £4.8m overall to £24.0m.
 - Funding from Council Tax will need to increase by £11.8m, to £254.7m. To provide this essential funding for local services it will require a proposed Council Tax increase of 2.99% from £1,579.03 to £1,626.24 for a Band D property. 1% (£2.4m) of the Council Tax increase is related to Adult Social Care and partially supports the £4m of forecast growth in demand in 2022/23.
 - In response to concerns over cost of living increase the Council Tax Support scheme has improved to protect families on low incomes from council tax increases. Residents in the lowest income bands will see support increase from 75% to 80%, those on the lowest incomes, and in receipt of specified benefits, can receive 100% rebates. The estimated cost to the Council is £1.4m in 2022/23, funded from Local Council Tax Support grant which was deliberately set aside for this purpose.
 - Capital Spending is forecast at £633.7m for the period 2022/23 to 2025/26 including £19m on improving our highways network.
 - COVID-19 related spending will continue to be managed through Government Grant.
 - General Reserves will remain at £11.5m.
- 2.6.** The Medium-Term Financial Strategy has been developed following months of analysis and consultation. The strategy responds to the challenges raised throughout this process to ensure the change proposals contained in this report are robust and provide an affordable budget for consideration.
- 2.7.** During the consultation there were 380 engagements, with additional feedback being provided by the Council's Committees. Annex 2b, within Appendix C, provides information on the nature of the responses. The most significant headlines from the feedback are summarised as follows:
- 2.7.1.** 46% agreed that Council Tax increases of 2.99% were appropriate (35% disagreed).
- 2.7.2.** 23 investment proposals were included in this year's budget consultation and the level of support for each ranged from 89% down to 34%.
- 2.7.3.** 9 saving proposals were included in this year's budget consultation and the level of support for each ranged from 86% down to 50%.
- 2.8.** The Local Government Settlement was received during the consultation period which increased unringfenced funding overall by £6.6m for the 2022/23 financial year. There was also a further £1m received for Market Sustainability and Fair Costs of Care that will be ringfenced for use within the Adults budget. Allocations beyond 2022/23 are unknown, so this additional funding is being treated as a one-off benefit for a single year. Based on the key items raised during the consultation period, including the

emerging in-year financial position, the additional funding is being allocated as follows:

- 2.8.1. Adding £2.7m to the Capital Financing Budget to fund new borrowing costs associated with an increase in the Highways Maintenance capital budget to £19m (£7m in 2022/23, and £4m in each of the following three years).
- 2.8.2. Increasing Home to School Transport by £1.2m in 2022/23, with a further £1m being drawn from reserves.
- 2.8.3. Increasing utility and carbon management budgets by £1.5m in 2022/23.
- 2.8.4. Providing additional temporary support to Planning and Public Rights of Way (PROW) services of £0.7m in 2022/23. A further £0.3m being provided for PROW for the period 2023/24 to 2025/26.
- 2.8.5. The balance is added to the Medium-Term Financial Strategy Reserve in response to feedback that the Council has relatively low reserves compared to the potential risks associated with short term funding settlements.
- 2.9. This report summarises the resolutions that Corporate Policy Committee are requested to recommend to Council at **Appendix A**.
- 2.10. This report also provides the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) Report (containing the Budget) for the period 2022/23 to 2025/26 at **Appendix C**.

3. Recommendations

3.1. That Corporate Policy notes:

- 3.1.1. The year-end forecast outturn position for 2021/22 (**Appendix C, Section 2**).
- 3.1.2. The summary results of the Budget Consultation and Engagement exercise undertaken by the Council, as set out in the attached (**Appendix C, Annex 2a and 2b**).
- 3.1.3. The report of the Council's Section 151 Officer, contained within the MTFS Report, regarding the robustness of estimates and level of reserves held by the Council based on these budget proposals (**Appendix C, Comment from the Section 151 Officer**).
- 3.1.4. The Council's Finance Procedure Rules will always apply to ensure proper approval should any changes in spending requirements be identified (**Appendix C, Annex 14**).

3.2. That Corporate Policy Committee:

- 3.2.1. Recommend to Council the items at **Appendix A**.

4. Reasons for Recommendations

- 4.1.** In accordance with the Budget and Policy Framework Rules of Procedure, Corporate Policy Committee is requested to recommend the Medium-Term Financial Strategy to Council for approval.
- 4.2.** The recommended MTFS should be balanced to support the Council in its duty.
- 4.3.** The Council's Section 151 Officer reports that, in accordance with Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003 and Sections 32 and 43 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended by the Localism Act 2011, he is satisfied with the robustness of the estimates making up the Council Tax Requirement of £254,681,348. This is based on a total 2.99% Band D increase, which includes a 1% precept ringfenced specifically for Adult Social Care services and he is satisfied with the adequacy of the financial reserves for the Council. The S.25 statement of the Council's s.151 Officer is included on Page 15 of **Appendix C** and members of the committee should have due regard of this report in making their recommendations to Council.
- 4.4.** Further to the above statement it can be reported that the Medium-Term Financial Strategy Report 2022/23 to 2025/26 (**Appendix C**) is based on sound financial principles and reflects sufficiently detailed plans that can maintain the financial resilience and viability of the Council in the medium-term.

5. Other Options Considered

- 5.1.** The Council has a legal duty to set a balanced annual budget taking regard of the report from the Chief Finance Officer. As such options cannot be considered that would breach this duty. Any decision of the Committee must still recognise the requirement for Council to fulfil this duty.
- 5.2.** There is no option to "do nothing". The Council has statutory obligations to provide certain services, which would be unaffordable if the Council failed to levy an appropriate Council Tax.

6. Background

- 6.1.** The Council's financial resources are provided from a combination of local taxes, government grants, investment returns on assets and other direct contributions from individuals or organisations. Financial plans are based on estimated spending and income over the next four years and the report of the Chief Financial Officer brings members attention to the processes and risks associated with developing these estimates.
- 6.2.** The Council aims to achieve value for money based on Economy (how much we pay for things), Efficiency (how well we use things) and Effectiveness (how we use things to achieve outcomes). Public feedback

and internal and external scrutiny create the necessary framework to hold the Council to account for achieving these aims.

- 6.3. All councils are legally required to set a balanced budget each year.
- 6.4. The Budget Setting Process 2022-2026 has enabled a set of proposals to be developed and challenged through a managed process that considered service changes, the Capital Programme and the supporting financial planning assumptions relating to funding levels.
- 6.5. There have been a series of distinct stages of the Budget Setting Process with reports in relation to the Council's financial position being taken to Corporate Leadership Team and all Committees throughout 2021/22. See **Appendix C, Annex 2** for further details of the process undertaken.
- 6.6. The MTFS Report provides financial background as well as setting out further details of the ongoing approach to funding the priorities set out in the Corporate Plan. It highlights the spending plans and income targets for the financial year starting 1 April 2022, as well as forecast estimates up to the 2025/26 financial year.
- 6.7. The Corporate Plan is a key strategic document for the Council, setting the vision and objectives for the whole organisation. It is a vital part of the Council's performance management framework and how the Medium-Term Financial Strategy is delivered. The MTFS aligns resources to manage the costs associated with achieving the Council's vision.
- 6.8. The Corporate Plan was reviewed by the Corporate Policy Committee at their meeting on 2 December 2021, where progress was noted. The Corporate Plan will continue to drive the Council's ambitions and priorities for the next three years.
- 6.9. The MTFS Report is based on the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement for 2022/23. This was released on 16 December 2021. The final settlement is expected in early February 2022 with a debate by Members of Parliament in the House of Commons expected in mid-February (after the publication date of this report to Committee) to agree the position.
- 6.10. The MTFS Report continues to include estimated grant allocations in relation to several Specific Grants (**Appendix C, Annex 7**). These will be refined as appropriate in due course.
- 6.11. Any changes made as a result of the engagement process and further debate will be reported to Members at the Council meeting on 24 February 2022.

7. Consultation and Engagement

- 7.1.** The business planning process involved engagement with local people and organisations and details of how this process was managed is included within **Appendix C, Annex 2**.

8. Implications

8.1. Legal

- 8.1.1.** The Council should have robust processes so that it can meet statutory requirements and fulfil its fiduciary duty.

8.2. Finance

- 8.2.1.** Please see all Sections of this report.
- 8.2.2.** The S.25 Statement of the S.151 Officer provides information on the process and professional judgement of the Budget 2022/23. This is provided on page 15 of **Appendix C**.

8.3. Policy

- 8.3.1.** The MTFS report outlines policy and budget proposals which will impact on service delivery arrangements.
- 8.3.2.** The Corporate Plan will drive and inform Council policy and priorities for service delivery. The priorities and actions listed may have direct policy implications will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

8.4. Equality

- 8.4.1.** Under the Equality Act 2010, decision makers must show 'due regard' to the need to:
- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
 - Advance equality of opportunity between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it; and
 - Foster good relations between those groups.
- 8.4.2.** The protected characteristics are age, disability, sex, race, religion and belief, sexual orientation, gender re-assignment, pregnancy and maternity, and marriage and civil partnership.
- 8.4.3.** Having "due regard" is a legal term which requires the Council to consider what is proportionate and relevant in terms of the decisions they take.
- 8.4.4.** The Council needs to ensure that in taking decisions on the Medium-Term Financial Strategy and the Budget that the impacts on those with protected characteristics are considered. The Council undertakes equality impact assessments where necessary and continues to do so as proposals and projects develop across the lifetime of the Corporate Plan.

The process assists us to consider what actions could mitigate any adverse impacts identified. Completed equality impact assessments form part of any detailed Business Cases.

8.4.5. The proposals within the MTFS include positive and negative impacts. A separate Equality Impact Assessment has been produced and is included in **Appendix C, Annex 3**.

8.4.6. Positive impacts include significant investment in services for children and adults (protected characteristics primarily age and disability). Specific examples are Investment in Cared for Children and Care Leavers, SEND services and School Transport. There is also significant investment in Adult Social Care and support to care providers (protected characteristics primarily age and disability).

8.4.7. There are a number of savings proposals which could have a negative impact on those with protected characteristics. Where this is the case, more detailed work and consultation before any decisions are made.

8.4.8. The Corporate Plan's vision reinforces the Council's commitment to meeting its equalities duties, promoting fairness and working openly for everyone. Cheshire East is a diverse place and we want to make sure that people are able to live, work and enjoy Cheshire East regardless of their background, needs or characteristics.

8.5. Human Resources

8.5.1. A number of the proposals will impact on staff. See **Appendix C, Section 1** for full list of change proposals.

8.6. Risk Management

8.6.1. The steps outlined in this report mitigate the four main legal and financial risks to the Council's financial management arrangements:

- The Council must set a balanced Budget.
- Setting the Council Tax for 2022/23 must follow a compliant process.
- The Council should provide high quality evidence to support submissions for external assessment.
- That Council borrowing will comply with the Treasury Management Strategy which is underpinned by the Prudential Code.

8.6.2. A risk assessment of the significant proposals being put forward has been carried out by each service and is included as part of the planning process.

8.6.3. It is important to note that the Council faces significant financial challenges in achieving its desired outcomes. Management of risk is embedded within the organisation to ensure the Council can seize opportunities, introduce new, innovative models of service delivery, focus on improving outcomes for residents and review its range of services

whilst identifying and controlling any resulting risks. The approach to risk management will continue to be assessed as the Council's plans and financial strategy are implemented.

8.6.4. See **Appendix C, Annex 4** for further information.

8.7. Rural Communities

8.7.1. The Corporate Plan, along with the 'Green' aim and supporting priorities will have direct and indirect implications for our rural communities across Cheshire East. These impacts will be considered and reported through individual work programmes as they are developed.

8.7.2. The MTFS report provides details of service provision across the borough. See **Appendix C, Section 1**.

8.8. Children and Young People/Cared for Children

8.8.1. The Corporate Plan, along with the 'Fair' aim and supporting priorities will have direct and indirect implications for children and young people and cared for children which will be considered individually and in line with the actions required. These impacts will be considered and reported through individual work programmes as they are developed.

8.8.2. See **Appendix C, Section 1**.

8.9. Public Health

8.9.1. The Corporate Plan, along with the 'Fair' aim and supporting priorities will have direct and indirect implications for public health which will be considered individually and in line with the actions required. These impacts will be considered and reported through individual work programmes as they are developed.

8.9.2. See **Appendix C, Section 1**.

8.10. Climate Change

8.10.1. The Corporate Plan has a very strong environmental thread throughout with a specific aim for the Council to be 'Greener'.

8.10.2. A number of priorities and activities are listed which will support the Council's commitment of being carbon neutral by 2025, including the ongoing delivery of an Environmental Strategy and a Carbon Action Plan.

8.10.3. As part of our commitment to be carbon neutral for our operations by 2025, proposals have been assessed for their estimated annual impact on our carbon footprint. **Appendix C, Section 1** contains a score for every proposal within this budget. The score is the projected tonnes of carbon, with negative meaning a reduction, and positive being an increase.

8.10.4. Also see **Appendix C, Annex 3** for further information.

Access to Information	
Contact Officer:	<p>Alex Thompson</p> <p>Director of Finance and Customer Services (Section 151 Officer)</p> <p>Email: alex.thompson@cheshireeast.gov.uk</p>
Appendices:	<p>The following Appendices are circulated with the agenda as a separate document and are available on the agenda web page:</p> <p>Appendix A - Recommendations</p> <p>Appendix B – Corporate Plan (summary)</p> <p>Appendix C – Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2022-26</p> <p>Budget Consultation Report</p> <p>Equality Impact Assessment</p>
Background Papers:	<p>Outturn Report 2020/21 (Finance Sub Committee Meeting)</p> <p>Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2021-25</p> <p>Financial Update 2021/22 (Corporate Policy Meeting)</p> <p>Pre Budget Consultation released 24 November 2021</p> <p>Council 15 December 2020: Domestic Taxbase Report and Council Tax Support Scheme</p>



Working for a brighter future together

Corporate Policy Committee

Date of Meeting: 10 February 2022

Report Title: Update on Shared Services Joint Committee

Report of: Jane Burns, Executive Director Corporate Services

Report Reference No: CP/27/21-22

Ward(s) Affected: All

Corporate Plan Priorities			
	Open	An open and enabling organisation	X
	Fair	A council which empowers and cares about people	
	Green	A thriving and sustainable place	

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1** To inform the Corporate Policy Committee of the recent work of the Shared Services Joint Committee and allow the opportunity for Member oversight and scrutiny.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1** Currently there are eight Shared Services between Cheshire East and Cheshire West and Chester Councils which date back to local government reorganisation in 2009. The Shared Services Joint Committee's role is to oversee the management of those services which are provided on a Cheshire-wide basis on behalf of both councils to ensure effective delivery of such services and to provide strategic direction. The Joint Committee consists of 6 Members: 3 from each Council. It is chaired and administered on alternate years by each Council; it is currently being chaired and administered by Cheshire East Council.

- 2.2** The Joint Committee is playing a key role overseeing the implementation of the Best for Business Programme and the Shared Services Review.
- 2.3** This report summarises key updates from the most recent meeting, held on 21 January 2022.

3. Recommendation

- 3.1** To note the progress in the delivery of shared services, the shared services review, and the Best for Business Programme.

4. Reason for Recommendation

- 4.1** This is the first report to the Corporate Policy Committee to assist in its role overseeing the shared services arrangements with Cheshire West and Chester Council.

5. Other Options Considered

- 5.1** Not applicable

6. Background

- 6.1** The Shared Services Joint Committee's role is to oversee the management of those services which are provided on a Cheshire-wide basis on behalf of Cheshire West and Chester Council and Cheshire East Council to ensure effective delivery of such services and to provide strategic direction. The Joint Committee consists of 6 Members: 3 from each Council. It is chaired and administered on alternate years by each Council; it is currently being chaired and administered by Cheshire East Council.
- 6.2** At the meeting on 8 June 2021 the Corporate Policy Committee appointed three Members: Cllr Rhodes, Cllr Stott and Cllr Findlow. Cllr Rhodes is the current Chair.
- 6.3** Currently there are eight Shared Services (six CWC hosted, and two CEC hosted). They are:
- Archaeological Planning and Advisory Services (APAS) - CWC
 - Archives and Local Studies - CWC
 - Cheshire Rural Touring Arts – (CRTA) - CWC
 - Emergency Planning - CWC
 - Farms Estate (Management) - CEC
 - ICT - CEC
 - Libraries Shared Service - CWC
 - Transactional Services - CWC

7. Performance reporting

- 7.1** Day-to-day performance is managed by each shared service manager who reports, through their normal line management arrangements, to a service manager in the host authority and has a relationship with a client manager, in the other authority.
- 7.2** Shared service business plans provide details of the shared service operation, objectives and resources required. The business plans require a degree of flexibility to enable an appropriate response to the changing needs of each council, especially during the ongoing pandemic.
- 7.3** The most recent performance report (Quarter 3 review) was considered at the meeting on 21 January 2022.

8. Overall Summary Ratings Commentary

8.1 Budget

- Most services are reporting a balanced budget or underspent financial position.
- Emergency Planning forecasting a small overspend of £1,697.
- The ICT budget has a forecast overspend of £1.61m, relating mainly to the under-recovery of income from capital projects. A proportion of the overspend relates to the staff pay award and Unit 4 ERP has provision already factored into budgets. Mitigation measures continue to be taken. However, it is unlikely to improve the overall position. The year-end position would be shared 50:50 between the councils.
- Transactional Services are currently forecasting an overspend of £584,501 which is 10.87% of the total budget mainly due to the impact of the revised, later, GO Live date for phase 2 of the Unit 4 ERP system and loss of income. Budget provision for the overspend has been made by two councils.

8.2 Objectives

- Most services are on track with objectives being achieved.
- Emergency Planning have one objective impacted by Covid-19.
- Transactional Services have three objectives rated as amber this quarter.

8.3 Key Performance Indicators

- Most services KPIs are on track with four KPIs, one each in APAS, Emergency Planning, Archives and Local Studies, and Libraries Shared Service, that are impacted by Covid 19.
(The detailed report is accessible via the link to background documents).

9. Best for Business

- 9.1** In May 2016, the SSJC approved a programme of work to procure a new system to replace the existing Finance and HR system. Both Councils' Cabinets approved a recommendation in July 2017 to award a contract to Agilisys for the implementation of the Unit4 ERP system. In November 2019 (Cheshire West & Chester) and December 2019 (Cheshire East), each Council's Cabinet approved recommendations relating to the re-setting of the Best4Business programme. The Joint Committee has been provided with regular updates on the programme.
- 9.2** A Joint Scrutiny Working Group was established in 2019. It consists of 6 members: 3 from each council. Cheshire East Members are Cllr Mannion, Cllr Warren, and Cllr David Brown.
- 9.3** We are pleased to report that full implementation of all functionality was achieved before Christmas. This means that all finance, payments, HR, and payroll for both councils are now delivered via Unit4 ERP, replacing the old and outdated Oracle system.
- 9.4** In December, over 57,000 individuals across our councils, schools, academies, council companies, external organisations and pensioners were paid from Unit4 ERP.
- 9.5** To recognise that the system is still in the early stages of running complete payrolls through Unit4 ERP, additional support measures are continuing. During December and January hardship faster payments were made for a total of 32 people across both councils.
- 9.6** Resolving any outstanding system issues from 2021 and addressing any new issues as they arise, continues to be a priority for the team. Many users are now gaining in confidence by using the system on a regular basis, however, we also acknowledge that for some users more support is still required.
- 9.7** The Hypercare team, made up of the Governance and Support team, B4B programme team members, the ICT technical support team and change champions continue to offer daily support to all users. The team have answered almost 3,000 calls over the months of November and December and handled over 1,600 support/issue requests of which 82%

have now been resolved. An additional 5% are back with the user requesting further information, in order to resolve the issue.

- 9.8** This package of support will remain in place until the Programme Board agree that it is no longer required.
- 9.9** As well as addressing the technical aspects of the system, we will also be revisiting current processes that were put in place at the outset to look at how we might be able to make adjustments and improvements, or even simplify them.
- 9.10** The final phase is to carry out a post-implementation review along with our implementation partner Ameo. In addition, a formal lessons learned review will be undertaken, to be overseen by the Joint Committee and Scrutiny members. The terms of reference for the review will be agreed by those Members. The results of the review will be reported to the relevant Member bodies in both Councils in due course.

10. Shared Services Review

- 10.1** Cheshire East and Cheshire West and Chester Councils agreed to commission a strategic review of all the existing eight formal shared services. It was agreed that an external perspective and expertise would be valuable, and a specification was drawn up, a procurement exercise undertaken, and C.Co, the consultancy arm of CIPFA, were appointed to conduct the reviews. This work has largely been completed and is in the process of being reviewed in detail.

The work has been undertaken in 3 phases:

- **Phase 1 ICT Shared Services** (in depth review). The key findings of this review were reported to the Joint Committee on 24 September 2021. Further work on technical and financial assurance and due diligence was agreed. The more detailed exercise is required to fully understand the impacts, the delivery plan, the costs, and the benefits of moving to the recommended ICT model before a decision is taken. The resource impact across ICT services as a whole is regularly monitored through project governance to ensure this is manageable and to reduce any additional costs or impacts. This activity is underway and is anticipated to be complete by April 2022.
- **Phase 2 Transactional Services** (in depth review). The key findings of the review were reported to the Joint Committee on 21 January 2022. There is strategic alignment between the two Councils. As well as the investment the two Councils have made to the new Unit4 ERP system, there is a wider strategic commitment to working together. There is alignment of strategies and policies which provide a good

starting point for identifying opportunities for improvement and realisation of efficiencies.

- **Phase 3 the six smaller Shared Services** (desk top review). The key findings of the review were also reported to the Joint Committee on 21 January 2022. They are operating well and in line with best practice, where comparisons can be made. There is a mixed approach to how these six smaller services operate, with some operating as shared services, whilst others are more in line with the definition of a managed service or a strategic partnership. The governance and reporting in some cases are not proportionate to the type of service or the services size and can duplicate or create additional avoidable effort. Funding, for some services, needs to be reviewed to ensure alignment with the shared services principles.

10.2 Officers are reviewing the recommendations and will draw up an implementation/action plan to take forward the improvements, to report back to the Joint Committee.

11. Consultation and Engagement

11.1 Regular conversations take place with the Trade Unions on B4B, and regular staff communication continues.

11.2 Any proposed changes as a result of the shared services review will be discussed with staff and trade unions in both councils.

12. Implications

12.1 Legal

The Shared Services Administrative Agreement sets out the overall arrangements in relation to the way the sharing Authorities will work together. This will be revised when revised arrangements are agreed.

12.2 Finance

Service	Planned Budget £	Q1 Forecast £	Q2 Forecast £	Q3 Forecast	Forecast Variance £
Archaeology Planning Advisory Service	158,817	158,817	158,817	158,817	0
Archives and Local Studies	461,602	461,602	461,602	461,602	0
Cheshire Rural Touring Arts	84,000	84,000	84,000	84,000	0
Emergency Planning	303,716	302,522	307,198	306,668	1,697

Farms Estate Management	225,938	162,720	157,063	157,332	(69,342)
ICT	17,350,000	17,840,000	18,960,000	18,960,000	1,610,000
Libraries Shared Service	330,836	330,836	330,836	330,836	0
Transactional Services	5,294,018	5,522,270	5,882,235	5,924,481	£584,501

Best for Business

Programme Spend	Previously forecast 20/21 and 21/22 expenditure £m	Financial Year (actual) 20/21 £m	Financial Year (estimated forecast) 21/22 £m	Total forecast £m
Retained element for asset purchase	0.25	0.00	0.25	0.25
Estimated payments to software provider	3.03	2.44	0.71	3.15
Programme Management costs	3.18	2.34	0.84	3.18
Other (including training)	0.54	0.35	0.19	0.54
Less: chargeable to COVID	(0.20)	(0.06)	(0.14)	(0.20)
Less: costs charged outside programme	(0.27)	(0.27)	0	(0.27)
Total	6.53	4.80	1.85	6.65

Shared Service Review

The cost of the contract with C.Co is £98,000, shared equally between the two councils.

12.4 Policy

There are no policy implications of this report.

12.5 Equality

There are no equality implications of this report.

12.6 Human Resources

There are significant implications of the move to a new HR and Payroll module of Unit 4 ERP.

12.7 Risk Management

There are detailed risk registers which are monitored regularly by the Joint Committee.

12.8 Rural Communities

There are no implications to rural communities of this report

12.9 Children and Young People/Cared for Children

There are no implications to children and young people,

12.10 Public Health

There are no public health implications of this report

12.11 Climate Change

There are no climate change implications of this report.

Access to Information	
Contact Officer:	Jane Burns, Executive Director Corporate Services Jane.burns@cheshireeast.gov.uk
Appendices:	None
Background Papers:	Agenda for Shared Services Joint Committee on Friday, 21 January, 2022, 10.00 am Cheshire East Council



Working for a brighter future together

Corporate Policy Committee

Date of Meeting: 10 February 2022

Report Title: Pay Policy Statement 2022/23

Report of: Jane Burns, Executive Director of Corporate Services

Report Reference No: CP/60/21-22

Ward(s) Affected: Not applicable

Corporate Plan Priorities			
	Open	An open and enabling organisation	X
	Fair	A council which empowers and cares about people	
	Green	A thriving and sustainable place	

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1.** The purpose of this report is to outline the changes to the Pay Policy Statement for 2022/23 and for the Corporate Policy Committee to recommend the policy to Council.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1.** Section 38 of the Localism Act (2011) requires Local Authorities to produce a Pay Policy Statement by 31st March on an annual basis. Regard continues to be given to any guidance from the Secretary of State in producing this statement and the Local Government Transparency Code (2015).
- 2.2.** The Pay Policy Statement for 2022/2023 which reflects the expected position at 1st April 2022 is attached as Appendix 1. Changes since last year's Statement are outlined in section 7 of this report.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1.** That the in-year changes since the 2021/22 Pay Policy Statement be noted as outlined in section 7.4 and 7.5 of this report.
- 3.2.** That the changes in the 2022/23 Pay Policy Statement (see Appendix 1) are also noted in section 7.6 of this report.
- 3.3.** That the attached Pay Policy Statement for 2022/23 be recommended by the Corporate Policy Committee to Council for approval and published accordingly.
- 3.4.** That the agreed Pay Policy Statement for 2022/23 is reviewed in-year and any further changes are approved by the Monitoring Officer and published accordingly.

4. Reasons for Recommendations

- 4.1.** A Pay Policy Statement has been required to be produced annually since 2012/13 under Section 38 of the Localism Act (2011). Local Authorities must have their Pay Policy Statement approved by full Council and published on their website no later than the 31st March prior to the financial year to which it relates.

5. Other Options Considered

- 5.1.** Not applicable.

6. Background

- 6.1.** The purpose of the Pay Policy Statement is to increase accountability, transparency, and fairness with regard to the Council's approach to pay with particular focus on its Chief Officers.

7. Key Updates to the Pay Policy Statement

- 7.1.** The Pay Policy Statement 2022/23 follows the style and format of the Statement published in 2021/22. The Statement focuses on the broad principles and policies regarding pay and has links to further information and statistical data available on the Council's website and associated policies.
- 7.2.** The Statement has again been designed to be user friendly for public consumption and should require minimal updates each subsequent year.
- 7.3.** The links to further information will be updated as appropriate through the coming year.
- 7.4.** Changes since the Pay Policy Statement approved by Council in March 2021 are mainly associated with Performance Related Pay (PRP) for senior

management and information in relation to the new JNC and NJC pay structures and have been approved by the Monitoring Officer in-year as follows:

- 7.4.1.** Performance Related Pay (PRP) for senior management has been removed and two new grades (13 and 14) with incremental progression have been introduced in the JNC pay structure (see pages 2 and 3).
- 7.4.2.** The grade overlaps up to Grade 8 and the minimum spinal column point in Grade 9 (SCP27) have been removed in the NJC Pay structure (see page 3).
- 7.4.3.** The pay and grading structure (Link 1) has been updated to reflect the latest JNC and NJC pay structures as outlined above.
- 7.5.** Further in-year amendments have been agreed, mainly to reflect changes made in the Council Constitution and the move to a committee system as follows:
 - 7.5.1.** Removed the post titles (Chief Officer and Deputy Chief Officer) that were listed against the Tier 2 and 3 salary packages (see page 3).
 - 7.5.2.** Changed 'Appointment Panel made up of members of the Staffing Committee' to the 'Appointments Committee' as the Council moved to a committee system for decision making from May 2021 (see page 4).
 - 7.5.3.** Key statutory posts (Head of Paid Service, Section 151 Officer and Monitoring Officer) are Council appointments has been stated in the section on 'Recruitment of Chief Officers' (see page 4).
 - 7.5.4.** Changed the reference to the 'Leader and the relevant Portfolio Holder' to 'Chair of the Corporate Policy Committee' in regard to agreeing the re-employment of former employees who left on grounds of VR or severance (see page 7).
- 7.6.** Changes specifically for the 2022/23 Pay Policy Statement, that have not been approved in-year (prior to 1st April 2022), are as follows:
 - 7.6.1.** The 'important note' on page 6 in the 2021/22 Pay Policy Statement has been removed in the 2022/23 PPS (see Appendix 1) in regard to the Restriction of Public Sector Exit Payments (Revocation) Regulations. The Pay Policy Statement will be updated as and when reforms to exit payments are introduced.

8. Consultation and Engagement

- 8.1.** The Pay Policy Statement 2022/23 will be shared with Trade Unions.

9. Implications

9.1. Legal

- 9.1.1.** The Council is required to produce and publish a Pay Policy Statement agreed by full Council each year, under Section 38 of the Localism Act (2011).
- 9.1.2.** In addition, the Local Government Transparency Code (2015) requires information on organisational structure, senior salaries and pay multiples to be published annually each year.
- 9.1.3.** This report and the accompanying Pay Policy Statement, with associated links in Annex 1, once approved and adopted ensures that Cheshire East Council complies with these requirements.

9.2. Finance

- 9.2.1.** There are no direct financial implications associated with approving the updated Pay Policy Statement 2022/23 and no budgetary adjustments are proposed in relation to this report.

9.3. Policy

- 9.3.1.** Any decisions relating to the pay and remuneration of Chief Officers must comply with the Pay Policy Statement in place at the time for that financial year. Whilst the Statement can be amended during the year should the need arise, in-year changes will be subject to the approval of the Monitoring Officer.

9.4. Equality

- 9.4.1.** There are no direct equality implications associated with approving the updated Pay Policy Statement 2022/23, any potential implications relating to pay are addressed within the relevant pay policies.

9.5. Human Resources

- 9.5.1.** Associated pay policies and HR support must comply with the Pay Policy Statement. Updates on the Workforce Strategy and workforce data are provided to the Corporate Policy Committee on a regular basis.

9.6. Risk Management

- 9.6.1.** If the Council does not follow specific aspects of the guidance issued by DCLG and therefore does not achieve appropriate levels of openness and accountability, DCLG (now DLUHC) can take steps to require the Council to adapt particular policies.

9.7. Rural Communities

9.7.1. There are no direct implications for rural communities.

9.8. Children and Young People/Cared for Children

9.8.1. There are no direct implications for children and young people.

9.9. Public Health

9.9.1. There are no direct implications for public health.

9.10. Climate Change

9.10.1. There are no direct implications on climate change.

Access to Information	
Contact Officer:	Craig Hughes, HR Business Partner craig.hughes@cheshireeast.gov.uk 01270 686307
Appendices:	Appendix 1 – Draft Pay Policy Statement 2022/23
Background Papers:	None

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APPENDIX 1



Working for a brighter future  together

Pay Policy Statement 2022/23

1. Introduction and Purpose

Under Section 112 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council has the “power to appoint officers on such reasonable terms and conditions as the authority thinks fit”. This Pay Policy Statement (the ‘statement’) sets out the Council’s approach to pay policy in accordance with the requirements of Section 38-43 of the Localism Act 2011 and due regard to the associated Statutory Guidance including the Supplementary Statutory Guidance issued in February 2013, and guidance issued under the Local Government Transparency Code 2015.

The purpose of the statement is to provide transparency with regard to the Council’s approach to setting the pay of its senior employees (excluding teaching staff, employees working in local authority schools and academies, and alternative service delivery vehicles) by identifying:

- The methods by which salaries of all employees are determined.
- The detail and level of remuneration of its most senior employees i.e. ‘Chief Officers’, as defined by the relevant legislation.

“Remuneration” for the purposes of this statement includes three elements; basic salary, pension and all other allowances arising from employment.

Once approved by Council, this policy statement will come into effect on the 1st April 2022 superseding the 2021/22 statement and will continue to be reviewed on an annual basis.

2. Background

In determining the pay and remuneration of all of its employees, the Council takes account of the need to ensure value for money in respect of the use of public expenditure. This is balanced against the need to recruit and retain employees in an increasingly competitive market who are able to deliver the Council’s commitments and meet the requirements of providing high quality services, which are delivered effectively and efficiently and at times at which those services are required.

OFFICIAL

The Council complies with all relevant employment legislation and codes of practice. The Council seeks to ensure there is no pay discrimination within its pay structures and that all pay differentials can be objectively justified through the use of job evaluation mechanisms and the application of key criteria, which directly establish the relative levels of posts in grades according to the requirements, demands and responsibilities of the role.

3. Pay Structure

Senior Management

3.1 Principles

There are a number of overriding principles which govern the Council's approach to senior management reward:

- The policy will be affordable; with reward being commensurate with individual and corporate performance.
- Reward policy for senior post-holders will be transparent, clearly defined and readily understood.
- The policy will offer the flexibility to reward for job size, capability, performance (objectives and behaviours) and market rates (where these may be relevant, with evidence).
- Reward for senior roles will be fair and proportionate by comparison to reward for the wider workforce.

3.2 Reward components

For many senior posts, reward will continue to comprise basic salary and a range of benefits. Reward no longer includes an annual performance related pay incentive as the Council has removed Performance Related Pay (PRP) with effect from 1st August 2020.

The components are described as follows:

- **Basic salary:** This is guaranteed fixed cash remuneration, paid monthly. The level of basic salary is contractual. For some jobs, this remuneration may increase by annual increments until the maximum of the grade is reached.
- **Benefits:** The Council provides a range of benefits, some of which are guaranteed and form a part of the contract of employment. Generous holiday and access to the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) are principal benefits.

3.3 Job Evaluation and Banding

The Council uses the Hay Group job evaluation scheme to position roles into the Cheshire East Senior Management pay bands. The bands are linked to Hay Job Evaluation points ranges which have been determined as part of the Council's operating model.

3.4 Senior Manager Pay Structure

This defined pay structure determines the salaries of senior managers on JNC (Joint National Council for Chief Officers) conditions of service. A score is produced from the HAY job evaluation process which equates to a pay band on the Council's senior manager pay structure.

A review of the JNC Pay Structure for Chief Officers was carried out in 2020 to remedy some outstanding anomalies, and a new pay structure has been agreed with effect from 1st August 2020 and implemented in September 2021. The **new** pay structure for senior managers who are subject to JNC conditions of service can be seen by accessing the [senior manager pay and grading structure](#).

The latest Cheshire East pay bands for senior managers includes two new Grades (13 and 14) containing three increments in each with annual incremental progression on the anniversary of the appointment.

In addition, there is a small proportion of public health employees who transferred under TUPE to the Council on NHS Pay and Terms and Conditions on 1st April 2013 and these employees remain on the terms and conditions of their previous NHS employer.

3.5 Chief Officer remuneration

When applying the senior manager pay structure, for the purposes of this statement, the definition of Chief Officers is as set out in Section 43 of the Localism Act. The details of the salary packages are as follows:

Tier 1 (Chief Executive)

- The current salary package is £155,153

Tier 2 (direct reports to the Chief Executive)

- The salary package falls within a range of £119,955 to £136,313

Tier 3 (direct reports to Tier 2 managers)

- The salary package falls within a range of £77,862 to £105,670

3.6 Pay and grading structure for NJC employees

The Council reviewed its local pay structures NJC (Grades 1 to 12) as a result of the two-year national agreement which covered the period 2018-2020 and introduced an interim structure in June 2019 which assimilated all employees on to the new NJC Pay structure in line with the National Agreement. These changes brought Cheshire East Council in line with the NJC for Local Government Services pay structure and the revised national pay spine (spinal column points).

More recently, further changes to the NJC pay structure have been agreed; including the removal of the grade overlaps up to Grade 8 and the removal of the minimum spinal column point (SCP27) in Grade 9.

The **new** [pay and grading structure for employees](#) on NJC (National Joint Council for Local Government Services) is also available.

4. Living Wage

As a result of the 2018-20 NJC pay agreement, it is no longer necessary to pay a Local Living Wage supplement because the uprated pay points for the lowest paid employees have been increased and now exceed the National Living Wage. For information, the lowest pay point is £9.25 an hour with effect from 1st April 2020, and future pay awards are intended to take this into account in order to maintain parity with National Living Wage requirements.

5. Recruitment of Chief Officers

The Council's policy and procedures with regard to recruitment of Chief Officers is set out in the Council's Constitution and is undertaken by the Appointments Committee in accordance with arrangements set out in the Constitution. Full Council approval will be sought for the establishment of a role on a salary package exceeding £100,000 where remuneration departs from the pay policy statement.

Key statutory posts (Head of Paid Service, Section 151 Officer and Monitoring Officer) are Council appointments.

When recruiting to all posts, the Council will take full and proper account of all provisions of relevant employment law and its own Recruitment Policy and Procedure, Disability Confident Commitment, Mindful Employer, Redeployment Procedure and Equality in Employment Policy.

The determination of the remuneration to be offered to any newly appointed Chief Officer will be in accordance with the pay structure and relevant policies in place at the time of recruitment and in line with this Pay Policy Statement. New appointments will normally be made in accordance with the JNC pay structure, any variation to this approach will be by exception and based on objectively justified criteria supported by appropriate evidence. An appointee's existing pay and their relevant experience and qualifications may be included in any consideration but would need to take account of any equal pay implications that could arise within the Council.

From time to time, it may be necessary to take account of the external pay levels in the labour market and to pay market related supplements in order to attract and retain employees with particular experience, skills, and capacity. Where necessary, the Council will ensure the requirement for such additional payments is objectively justified by reference to clear and transparent evidence of relevant market comparators, using data sources available from within the local government sector and outside, as appropriate. Any such payments will be reviewed at least annually to ensure their ongoing suitability and appropriateness.

Where the Council is unable to recruit Chief Officers, or there is a need for interim support to provide cover for a substantive Chief Officer post, the Council will, where necessary, put in place the most effective arrangements to engage individuals.

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These arrangements will comply with HMRC IR35 requirements, relevant procurement processes and ensure the Council is able to demonstrate maximum value for money.

6. Additions to Chief Officers' Salaries

The following payments can be applied to Chief Officers' salaries:

- Returning and Deputy Returning Officers' Fees
- Travel Allowances and Expenses
- Salary Sacrifice Lease Car Scheme (only applicable for salary sacrifice vehicles ordered before 7th September 2020 as this scheme ended on 15th September 2020)
- Relocation Expenses
- Professional Fees and Subscriptions

Further details of [Additions to Chief Officers' salaries](#) are published in the Council's Transparency Data and in the Statement of Accounts.

7. Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS)

Details of the [Local Government Pension Scheme](#) discretions exercised, contribution bands, actuarial rates and discretions policy application are available.

8. Redundancy Payments and Payments on Termination

The Council's policy on compulsory redundancies, including redundancy payments, is set out in the Organisational Change Policy and Procedure. If employees have two or more years' service, they may be entitled to a redundancy payment. The payment is based on the statutory formula (on actual weekly pay). Any overtaken leave/flexi will be deducted from their final salary. Where there is an outstanding leave entitlement, this must be taken during their notice period and before their employment ends.

In order to minimise the need for compulsory redundancies and in conjunction with other measures, e.g. restricting recruitment, the Council may consider requests from employees to be made redundant (voluntary redundancy). Employees who leave on grounds of voluntary redundancy will normally be entitled to receive a redundancy payment in accordance with the statutory formula (on actual weekly pay) plus an additional severance payment of 0.8 times the statutory payment, bringing the total payment to 1.80 times the statutory formula and up to a maximum of 50 week's pay.

The Council's **current** approach to statutory and discretionary payments on termination of employment of Chief Officers, prior to reaching normal retirement age, is set out within the Leaving the Council Policy & Procedure and for those eligible for retirement, in the Leaving the Council Policy & Procedure and are in accordance with the Local Government (Early Termination of Employment) (Discretionary Compensation) Regulations 2006 and Local Government Pension

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scheme Regulations 2007. All payments under this section are subject to the approval process set out in the Organisational Change Policy & Procedure and the Leaving the Council Policy & Procedure.

The Council reserves the right to change all discretionary elements.

9. Early Retirement and Severance on the Grounds of Business Efficiency

In line with the Local Government (Early Termination of Employment) (Discretionary Compensation) (England and Wales) Regulations 2006, the Council also operates a voluntary scheme to facilitate early retirement or severance on grounds of business efficiency to enable the Council to continue to achieve effective use of resources and provide value for money. The terms of this are set out in the Leaving the Council Policy and Procedure.

10. Mutually Agreed Resignation Scheme (MARS)

The Council had operated a Mutually Agreed Resignation Scheme (MARS) which enables individual employees, including Chief Officers, in agreement with the Council, to choose to leave their employment voluntarily in return for a discretionary 'severance' payment. This scheme creates resourcing flexibility to avoid compulsory redundancies in future, enable the redeployment of resources to higher priority areas of work and reduce costs in lower priority areas. MARS is non contractual and has no pension liabilities. A decision is taken each year whether to run the scheme by the Chief Executive.

11. Settlement Agreements

The Council uses settlement agreements for all voluntary redundancies/severance and MARS severance payments, for all employees, including Chief Officers. The use of settlement agreements on this basis minimises any risk of future claims against the Council and can ensure that any threatened or pending legal proceedings and their associated legal costs can be avoided. The Council follows the current guidance for public sector settlement agreements in these circumstances.

12. Pay Multiples

The Council publishes a range of information to meet the Transparency Code requirements and has used the recommended formulae in the code guidance and Local Government Association (LGA) guidance to calculate the relationship between the rate of pay for the lowest paid, median and Chief Officers, known as [pay multiples](#).

13. Re-employment or re-engagement

Any decision to re-employ an individual (including Chief Officers) already in receipt of a Local Government Pension (with same or another local authority) will be made on merit, taking into account the use of public money and the exigencies of the Council.

In particular, the Voluntary Redundancy Scheme provides that former Cheshire East/Legacy Authority employees who left their employment on grounds of voluntary retirement or severance will not be re-employed in any capacity, except in exceptional circumstances and subject to the agreement of the Head of HR in consultation with the Chair of the Corporate Policy Committee. Re-engagement includes all types of contractual relationships whether they are a contract of employment, contract for service etc. and whether the individual is appointed as an employee or engaged as an interim, direct consultancy or via an agency or other supplier.

14. Publication and access to information

Upon approval by Council, this Statement will be published on the Council's website (www.cheshireeast.gov.uk). Additionally, in line with Code of Practice and Accounts and Audit Regulations, salary, allowances and bonus compensation and employers pension contributions will be published for:

- a) Senior employees whose salary is £150,000 or more (who will also be identified by name).
- b) Senior employees whose salary is £50,000 or more.

The Council will also publish, on an annual basis, Gender Pay Gap data in line with the Equality Act 2010 (Gender Pay Gap Information) Regulations 2017.

Prepared by:	HR Strategy and Policy Team
Date:	March 2022
Review date:	March 2023

Annex 1 – Links

All the relevant policies and procedures as referred to in the Pay Policy Statement can be found using the links in section 1 below. Please email hrcommunications@cheshireeast.gov.uk should you have any difficulties accessing this information.

Section 1: Additional information

Link 1 – [Pay and grading structure for senior managers and employees](#)

Link 2 – [Additions to Chief Officers' salaries](#)

Link 3 – [Local Government Pension Scheme](#)

Link 4 – [Pay multiples](#)

[Statement of Accounts](#)

Section 2: Internal intranet links to the further relevant policies, procedures and other relevant information

- [Payment of a Market Supplement](#)
- [Pay and Allowances Policy](#)
- [Pensions Discretions Policy](#)
- [Organisational Change Policy and Procedure](#)
- [Leaving the Council Policy and Procedure](#)
- [Recruitment Policy and Procedure](#)
- [Mindful Employer](#)
- [Redeployment Procedure](#)
- [Equality in Employment Policy](#)
- [Relocation and Excess Travel Policy and Procedure](#)

For those seeking to access copies of policies and procedures externally, please email hrcommunications@cheshireeast.gov.uk to request copies of the relevant documents.

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Working for a brighter future together

Corporate Policy Committee

Date of Meeting: 10 February 2021

Report Title: Calendar of Meetings 2022-23

Report of: David Brown, Director of Governance and Compliance

Report Reference No: CP/59/21-22

Ward(s) Affected: All Wards

Corporate Plan Priorities			
	Open	An open and enabling organisation	X
	Fair	A council which empowers and cares about people	
	Green	A thriving and sustainable place	

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1** This report appends a draft Calendar of Meetings for Cheshire East Council for the 2022-23 Municipal Year. This is for approval at full council.
- 1.2** Also appended for additional information and to assist in diary planning is a provisional draft calendar of dates for the period May to October 2023. This is not for approval.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1** In accordance the Local Government Act 1972, the Council is required to give public notice of its meetings. The calendar of meetings assists in fulfilling this legal obligation.
- 2.2** Having an approved and published calendar of meetings enables effective business planning and decision-making procedures.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1.** That the draft Calendar of Meetings for Cheshire East Council 2022-23, be recommended to Council for approval.
- 3.2.** That the draft Calendar of Meetings for the period of May to October 2023, be recommended to Council for noting.

4. Reasons for Recommendations

- 4.1.** The Council is required to give public notice of its meetings in order to fulfil its legal obligations under the Access to Information Rules set out in the Constitution and to meet its obligations under the Local Government Act 1972. The Calendar will assist the Council in meeting these requirements and will provide certainty for Members.

5. Background

- 5.1** As set out in its Constitution (Chapter 3 – Part 1 para 1.1) the Council is required to decide when its meetings will take place. These are set out in a Calendar of Meetings. The Calendar of Meetings is intended only to deal with formal decision-making meetings and, therefore, does not provide details of other meetings involving Members.
- 5.2** Full Council must approve the Calendar.
- 5.3** The scheduling of meetings has taken into account the Council's business planning/performance reporting cycle, together with a range of additional issues arising from the implementation of the committee system and learning from its operation since May 2021.
- 5.4** August has been retained for recess except for planning meetings and an Environment and Communities Committee.
- 5.5** Meetings of full Council have been scheduled to be held on 20 July 2022, 19 October 2022, 14 December 2022, 22 February 2023, and 24 May 2023, with the start time of 11 am.
- 5.7** The meetings of service committees have been scheduled to take place on the same day of the week where possible. If there is a specific need for additional or fewer meetings, this can be dealt with under existing arrangements.
- 5.8** Strategic Planning Board, Northern Planning Committee and Southern Planning Committee are scheduled on Wednesdays; with any site visits taking place on the Friday before the meeting.
- 5.9** The Public Rights of Way Committee had been scheduled to take place quarterly, with the Audit and Governance Committee and Licensing Committee meeting five times each year. Provisions exist for additional meetings to be called if needed.

- 5.10** The scheduling of meetings of the Scrutiny Committee has been approached on a quarterly basis. It is acknowledged however that there may be the need to arrange ad-hoc meetings, when required to deal with bespoke external scrutiny matters e.g., external proposals by health providers, using the general powers of the Committee Chair. The quarterly scheduling will provide for annual reporting, with flexibility around the dates of meetings, to suit business needs.
- 5.11** Whilst consultation with Group Leaders, Chairs etc has taken the usual approach in focussing upon the Municipal Year only, it was thought to be helpful to seek to provide provisional information to Members upon a draft calendar of meetings for the first six months of the 2023 Municipal Year also.
- 5.12** Additions have therefore been made to the Calendar of Meetings to provide draft meeting dates for that period, but it should be noted that these draft dates will be subject to formal approval at the February meeting of Council in 2023.
- 5.13** In this way, Members will have some degree of certainty about meeting dates, but flexibility will be retained for the February meeting of Council to formally vary these in the light of circumstances which apply at that time.
- 5.14** It is proposed that from 2023 onwards an 18-month calendar of meetings will be produced to assist Members with their planning commitments.
- 5.15** The Committee is asked to refer the Calendar to Council for approval.

6. Consultation and Engagement

- 6.1** The Calendar has been shared with the Group Leaders, Chairs and Vice Chairs of Committees.

7. Implications

7.1. Legal

- 7.1.1.** In accordance the Local Government Act 1972 and the Access to Information Rules in the Constitution, the Council is required to give public notice of its meetings, and a calendar of meetings assists in fulfilling this legal obligation.
- 7.1.2.** Members of the public have a legal right to attend to participate in and observe council meetings, e.g., make representations in respect of planning applications, asking questions at meetings, and presenting appeals.

7.2. Finance

- 7.2.1.** There are no direct finance implications.

7.3. Policy

- 7.3.1.** There are no direct policy implications.

7.4. Equality

7.4.1. There are no direct implications for equality.

7.5. Human Resources

7.5.1. There are no direct implications for human resources.

7.6. Risk Management

7.6.1. A published calendar of meetings enables effective business planning and decision-making procedures.

7.7. Rural Communities

7.7.1. There are no direct implications for rural communities.

7.8. Children and Young People/Cared for Children

7.8.1. There are no direct implications for children and young people.

7.9. Public Health

7.9.1. There are no direct implications for public health.

7.10. Climate Change

7.10.1. There are no implications for climate change.

Access to Information	
Contact Officer:	Brian Reed, Head of Democratic Services and Governance brian.reed@cheshireeast.gov.uk
Appendices:	Appendix 1 – Calendar of Meetings 2022/23 Appendix 2 – Draft Calendar of Meetings May to Oct 2023
Background Papers:	None

Calendar of Meetings 2022-

Appendix 1

COMMITTEE	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APRIL	MAY
Council (11 am)	18		20			19		14		22			24
Corporate Policy (10.30 am)		9	14			6		1		9	23		
Economy and Growth (2 pm)	31		12		13		15		17		14		
Highways and Transport (10.30 am)		16	21		22		24		26		2		
Environment and Communities (10.30 am)		7		4	29		10			2	30		
Children and Families (2 pm)	23		11		19		14		16	13	20		
Adults and Health (10.30 am)	30		18		26		21		23		27		
Finance Sub Committee (2 pm)		1	6		7		9		11		8		
Scrutiny Committee (10.30 am)		14			1			8			16		
Audit and Governance Committee (2 pm)	26		28		29		24				9		
General Appeals Sub Committee (10 am)			5		6	11	8	6	10	7	7	4	
Licensing Committee (2 pm)		6			5		7		9		6		
General Licensing Sub Committee (10 am)		27	25	22		13	28		30	27		3	
Public Rights of Way Sub Committee (2 pm)		13			12			5			13		

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COMMITTEE	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APRIL	MAY
Strategic Planning Board (10 am)		15	27	24	21	26	23	21	25		1 29	26	
Southern Planning (10 am)	25	29		3 31	28		2 30		11	8	15	5	
Northern Planning (10 am)		8	13	10	14	5	16	7	18	15	22	12	
Health and Wellbeing Board** (2 pm)	24	(21)	26		27	(25)	22	(20)	24	(21)	21	(25)	
Local Authority School Governor Nomination Panel (10 am)		8			7		9			15 (2 pm)			
Corporate Parenting Committee (2 pm)		28 (10 am)			6		1 (10 am)		10		7		
Shared Services Joint Committee (10 am)		17	22		23		25		27		17		

** Health and Wellbeing Board informal meetings in brackets

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CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2022-2023

MAY 2022	
1	
2	BANK HOLIDAY
3	10 am General Appeals Sub Committee
4	10 am Strategic Planning Board
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	
11	
12	
13	
14	
15	
16	
17	
18	11 AM ANNUAL COUNCIL
19	
20	<i>(planning site visits)</i>
21	
22	
23	2 pm Children and Families Committee
24	2 pm Health and Wellbeing Board
25	10 am Southern Planning Committee
26	2 pm Audit and Governance Committee
27	
28	
29	
30	10.30 am Adults and Health Committee
31	2 pm Economy and Growth Committee

JUNE 2022	
1	2 pm Finance Sub Committee
2	BANK HOLIDAY
3	BANK HOLIDAY
4	
5	
6	2 pm Licensing Committee
7	10.30am Environment and Communities Committee
8	10 am Northern Planning Committee 10 am LA School Governor Nomination Panel
9	10.30 am Corporate Policy Committee
10	
11	
12	
13	2 pm Public Rights of Way Committee
14	10.30 am Scrutiny Committee
15	10 am Strategic Planning Board
16	10.30 am Highways and Transport Committee
17	<i>(planning site visits)</i> 10am Shared Services Joint Committee
18	
19	
20	
21	2pm Health and Wellbeing Board (informal meeting)
22	
23	
24	<i>(planning site visits)</i>
25	
26	
27	10 am General Licensing Sub Committee
28	10 am Corporate Parenting Committee
29	10 am Southern Planning Committee
30	

JULY 2022	
1	<i>(planning site visits)</i>
2	
3	
4	
5	10 am General Appeals Sub Committee
6	2 pm Finance Sub Committee
7	
8	
9	
10	
11	2 pm Children and Families Committee
12	2 pm Economy and Growth Committee
13	10 am Northern Planning Committee
14	10.30 am Corporate Policy Committee
15	
16	
17	
18	10.30 am Adults and Health Committee
19	
20	11 AM COUNCIL
21	10.30 am Highways and Transport Committee
22	<i>(planning site visits)</i> 10am Shared Services Joint Committee
23	
24	
25	10 am General Licensing Sub Committee
26	2 pm Health and Wellbeing Board
27	10 am Strategic Planning Board
28	2 pm Audit and Governance Committee
29	<i>(planning site visits)</i>
30	
31	

AUGUST 2022	
1	
2	
3	10 am Southern Planning Committee
4	10.30 am Environment and Communities Committee
5	<i>(planning site visits)</i>
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	10 am Northern Planning Committee
11	
12	
13	
14	
15	
16	
17	
18	
19	<i>(planning site visits)</i>
20	
21	
22	10 am General Licensing Sub Committee
23	
24	10 am Strategic Planning Board
25	
26	<i>(planning site visits)</i>
27	
28	
29	BANK HOLIDAY
30	
31	10 am Southern Planning Committee

SEPTEMBER 2022	
1	10.30 am Scrutiny Committee
2	<i>(planning site visits)</i>
3	
4	
5	2 pm Licensing committee
6	10 am General Appeals Sub Committee 2 pm Corporate Parenting Committee
7	10 am LA School Governor Nomination Panel 2 pm Finance Sub Committee
8	
9	
10	
11	
12	2 pm Public Rights of Way Sub Committee
13	2 pm Economy and Growth Committee
14	10 am Northern Planning Committee
15	
16	<i>(planning site visits)</i>
17	
18	
19	2 pm Children and Families Committee
20	
21	10 am Strategic Planning Board
22	10.30 am Highways and Transport Committee
23	<i>(planning site visits)</i> 10am Shared Services Joint Committee
24	
25	
26	10.30 am Adults and Health Committee
27	2 pm Health and Wellbeing Board
28	10 am Southern Planning Committee
29	10.30 am Environment and Communities Committee 2 pm Audit and Governance Committee
30	<i>(planning site visits)</i>

OCTOBER 2022	
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	10 am Northern Planning Committee
6	10.30 am Corporate Policy Committee
7	
8	
9	
10	
11	10 am General Appeals Sub Committee
12	
13	10 am General Licensing Sub Committee
14	
15	
16	
17	
18	
19	11 AM COUNCIL
20	
21	<i>(planning site visits)</i>
22	
23	
24	
25	2pm Health and Wellbeing Board (informal meeting)
26	10 am Strategic Planning Board
27	
28	<i>(planning site visits)</i>
29	
30	
31	

NOVEMBER 2022	
1	10 am Corporate Parenting Committee
2	10 am Southern Planning Committee
3	
4	<i>(planning site visits)</i>
5	
6	
7	2 pm Licensing committee
8	10 am General Appeals Sub Committee
9	10 am LA School Governor Nomination Panel 2 pm Finance Sub Committee
10	10.30 am Environment and Communities Committee
11	
12	
13	
14	2 pm Children and Families Committee
15	2 pm Economy and Growth Committee
16	10 am Northern Planning Committee
17	
18	<i>(planning site visits)</i>
19	
20	
21	10.30 am Adults and Health Committee
22	2 pm Health and Wellbeing Board
23	10 am Strategic Planning Board
24	10.30 am Highways and Transport Committee 2 pm Audit and Governance Committee
25	<i>(planning site visits)</i> 10am Shared Services Joint Committee
26	
27	
28	10 am General Licensing Sub Committee
29	
30	10 am Southern Planning Committee

DECEMBER 2022	
1	10.30 am Corporate Policy Committee
2	<i>(planning site visits)</i>
3	
4	
5	2 pm Public Rights of Way Sub Committee
6	10 am General Appeals Sub Committee
7	10 am Northern Planning Committee
8	10.30 am Scrutiny Committee
9	
10	
11	
12	
13	
14	11 AM COUNCIL
15	
16	<i>(planning site visits)</i>
17	
18	
19	
20	2pm Health and Wellbeing Board (informal meeting)
21	10 am Strategic Planning Board
22	
23	
24	
25	
26	BOXING DAY
27	BANK HOLIDAY
28	
29	
30	
31	

JANUARY 2023	
1	NEW YEARS DAY
2	BANK HOLIDAY
3	
4	
5	
6	<i>(planning site visits)</i>
7	
8	
9	2 pm Licensing Committee
10	10 am General Appeals Sub Committee 2 pm Corporate Parenting Committee
11	10 am Southern Planning Committee 2 pm Finance Sub Committee
12	
13	<i>(planning site visits)</i>
14	
15	
16	2 pm Children and Families Committee
17	2 pm Economy and Growth Committee
18	10 am Northern Planning Committee
19	
20	
21	
22	
23	10.30 am Adults and Health Committee
24	2 pm Health and Wellbeing Board
25	10 am Strategic Planning Board
26	10.30 am Highways and Transport Committee
27	<i>(planning site visits)</i> 10am Shared Services Joint Committee
28	
29	
30	10 am General Licensing Sub Committee
31	

FEBRUARY 2023	
1	
2	10.30 am Environment and Communities Committee
3	<i>(planning site visits)</i>
4	
5	
6	
7	10 am General Appeals Sub Committee
8	10 am Southern Planning Committee
9	10.30 am Corporate Policy Committee
10	<i>(planning site visits)</i>
11	
12	
13	2 pm Children and Families Committee
14	
15	10 am Northern Planning Committee 2 pm LA School Governor Nomination Panel
16	
17	
18	
19	
20	
21	Health and Wellbeing Board (informal meeting)
22	11 AM COUNCIL (budget)
23	
24	<i>(planning site visits)</i>
25	
26	
27	10 am General Licensing Sub Committee
28	

MARCH 2023	
1	10 am Strategic Planning Board
2	10.30 am Highways and Transport Committee
3	<i>(planning site visits)</i>
4	
5	
6	2 pm Licensing Committee
7	10 am General Appeals Sub Committee 2 pm Corporate Parenting Committee
8	2 pm Finance Sub Committee
9	2 pm Audit and Governance Committee
10	<i>(planning site visits)</i>
11	
12	
13	2 pm Public Rights of Way Sub Committee
14	2 pm Economy and Growth Committee
15	10 am Southern Planning Committee
16	10.30 am Scrutiny Committee
17	10am Shared Services Joint Committee
18	
19	
20	2 pm Children and Families Committee
21	2pm Health and Wellbeing Board
22	10 am Northern Planning Committee
23	10.30 am Corporate Policy Committee
24	<i>(planning site visits)</i>
25	
26	
27	10.30 am Adults and Health Committee
28	
29	10 am Strategic Planning Board
30	10.30 am Environment and Communities Committee
31	<i>(planning site visits)</i>

APRIL 2023	
1	
2	
3	10 am General Licensing Sub Committee
4	10 am General Appeals Sub Committee
5	10 am Southern Planning Committee
6	
7	GOOD FRIDAY
8	
9	
10	EASTER MONDAY
11	
12	10 am Northern Planning Committee
13	
14	
15	
16	
17	
18	
19	
20	
21	<i>(planning site visits)</i>
22	
23	
24	
25	2pm Health and Wellbeing Board (informal meeting)
26	10 am Strategic Planning Board
27	
28	
29	
30	

MAY 2023	
1	BANK HOLIDAY
2	
3	
4	BROUGH COUNCIL ELECTIONS
5	
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18	
19	
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24	11 AM ANNUAL COUNCIL
25	
26	
27	
28	
29	BANK HOLIDAY
30	
31	

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Calendar of Meetings 2023 May to October

Appendix 2

COMMITTEE	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEP	OCT
Council (11 am)	24		19			18
Corporate Policy (10.30 am)		15	13			5
Economy and Growth (2 pm)		6	11		12	
Highways and Transport (10.30 am)		22	20		21	
Environment and Communities (10.30 am)		8	27		28	
Children and Families (2 pm)		5	10		18	
Adults and Health (10.30 am)		26	24		25	
Finance Sub Committee (2 pm)		7	5		13	
Scrutiny Committee (10.30 am)		29			7	
Audit and Governance Committee (2 pm)		1	27		28	
General Appeals Sub Committee (10 am)			4		5	10
Licensing Committee (2 pm)		12			4	
General Licensing Sub Committee (10 am)		13	17		19	12
Public Rights of Way Sub Committee (2 pm)		19			11	

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27 Jan 2022

COMMITTEE	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEP	OCT
Strategic Planning Board (10 am)		21	26	23	20	25
Southern Planning (10 am)	31	28		2 30	27	
Northern Planning (10 am)		7	5	9	6	4
Health and Wellbeing Board** (2 pm)	30	(20)	25		26	(24)
Local Authority School Governor Nomination Panel (10 am)		14			13	
Corporate Parenting Committee (2 pm)		27 (10 am)			5	
Shared Services Joint Committee *** (10 am)		16	21		22	

** informal meeting date in brackets

*** dates need to be agreed with Cheshire West and Chester Council

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CALENDAR OF MEETINGS MAY TO OCTOBER 2023

MAY 2023	
1	BANK HOLIDAY
2	
3	
4	BROUGH COUNCIL ELECTIONS
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	
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12	
13	
14	
15	
16	
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18	
19	
20	
21	
22	
23	
24	11 AM ANNUAL COUNCIL
25	
26	<i>(planning site visits)</i>
27	
28	
29	BANK HOLIDAY
30	2 pm Health and Wellbeing Board
31	10 am Southern Planning Committee

JUNE 2023	
1	2 pm Audit and Governance Committee
2	<i>(planning site visits)</i>
3	
4	
5	2 pm Children and Families Committee
6	2 pm Economy and Growth Committee
7	10 am Northern Planning Committee 2 pm Finance Sub Committee
8	10.30 am Environment and Communities Committee
9	
10	
11	
12	2 pm Licensing Committee
13	10 am General Licensing Sub Committee
14	10 am LA School Governor Nomination Panel
15	10.30 am Corporate Policy Committee
16	10am Shared Services Joint Committee <i>(planning site visits)</i>
17	
18	
19	2 pm Public Rights of Way Committee
20	2pm Health and Wellbeing Board (informal meeting)
21	10 am Strategic Planning Board
22	10.30 am Highways and Transport Committee
23	<i>(planning site visits)</i>
24	
25	
26	10.30 am Adults and Health Committee
27	10 am Corporate Parenting Committee
28	10 am Southern Planning Committee
29	10.30 am Scrutiny Committee
30	<i>(planning site visits)</i>

JULY 2023	
1	
2	
3	
4	10 am General Appeals Sub Committee
5	10 am Northern Planning Committee 2 pm Finance Sub Committee
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	2 pm Children and Families Committee
11	2 pm Economy and Growth Committee
12	
13	10.30 am Corporate Policy Committee
14	
15	
16	
17	10 am General Licensing Sub Committee
18	
19	11 AM COUNCIL
20	10.30 am Highways and Transport Committee
21	10am Shared Services Joint Committee (<i>planning site visits</i>)
22	
23	
24	10.30 am Adults and Health Committee
25	2 pm Health and Wellbeing Board
26	10 am Strategic Planning Board
27	10.30 am Environment and Communities Committee 2 pm Audit and Governance Committee
28	(<i>planning site visits</i>)
29	
30	
31	

AUGUST 2023	
1	
2	10 am Southern Planning Committee
3	
4	<i>(planning site visits)</i>
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	10 am Northern Planning Committee
10	
11	
12	
13	
14	
15	
16	
17	
18	<i>(planning site visits)</i>
19	
20	
21	
22	
23	10 am Strategic Planning Board
24	
25	<i>(planning site visits)</i>
26	
27	
28	BANK HOLIDAY
29	
30	10 am Southern Planning Committee
31	

SEPTEMBER 2023	
1	<i>(planning site visits)</i>
2	
3	
4	2 pm Licensing committee
5	10 am General Appeals Sub Committee 2 pm Corporate Parenting Committee
6	10 am Northern Planning Committee
7	10.30 am Scrutiny Committee
8	
9	
10	
11	2 pm Public Rights of Way Sub Committee
12	2 pm Economy and Growth Committee
13	10 am LA School Governor Nomination Panel 2 pm Finance Sub Committee
14	
15	<i>(planning site visits)</i>
16	
17	
18	2 pm Children and Families Committee
19	10 am General Licensing Sub Committee
20	10 am Strategic Planning Board
21	10.30 am Highways and Transport Committee
22	10 am Shared Services Joint Committee <i>(planning site visits)</i>
23	
24	
25	10.30 am Adults and Health Committee
26	2 pm Health and Wellbeing Board
27	10 am Southern Planning Committee
28	10.30 am Environment and Communities Committee 2 pm Audit and Governance Committee
29	<i>(planning site visits)</i>
30	

OCTOBER 2023	
1	
2	
3	
4	10 am Northern Planning Committee
5	10.30 am Corporate Policy Committee
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	10 am General Appeals Sub Committee
11	-
12	10 am General Licensing Sub Committee
13	
14	
15	
16	
17	
18	11AM COUNCIL
19	
20	<i>(planning site visits)</i>
21	
22	
23	
24	2pm Health and Wellbeing Board (informal meeting)
25	10 am Strategic Planning Board
26	
27	
28	
29	
30	
31	

Work Programme – Corporate Policy Committee – 2021/22

Reference	Committee Date	Report title	Purpose of Report	Report Author /Senior Officer	Consultation and Engagement Process and Timeline	Equality Impact Assessment Required and Published (Y/N)	Part of Budget and Policy Framework (Y/N)	Corporate Plan Priority	Exempt Item and Paragraph Number
CP/34/21-22	3 Mar 2022	Emergency Assistance Scheme	To approve the final scheme for 2022/23.	Director of Finance and Customer Services (s151 Officer)	Yes	Yes	Yes	An open and enabling organisation	No
CP/38/21-22	3 Mar 2022	Health and Safety and Workforce Reporting	To consider a quarterly report on health and safety and workforce for Quarter 3.	Executive Director Corporate Services	Corporate Health and Safety Forum	No	Yes	An open and enabling organisation	No
CP/39/21-22	3 Mar 2022	Open Data - Annual Report	For implementation in March 2022.	Executive Director Corporate Services	TBC	TBC	No	An open and enabling organisation	No
CP/40/21-22	3 Mar 2022	Performance Reporting Update	To review a report on arrangements for performance reporting.	Executive Director Corporate Services	No	No	No	An open and enabling organisation	No
CP/41/21-22	3 Mar 2022	Terms and Conditions Review	To consider a progress update on the Terms and Conditions Review.	Executive Director Corporate Services	Trade Unions	TBC	No	An open and enabling organisation	No
CP/57/21-22	3 Mar 2022	Digital Strategy	To approve the Digital Strategy.	Director of Finance and Customer Services (s151 Officer)	Completed	Yes	Yes	An open and enabling organisation	No
CP/47/21-22	3 Mar 2022	EDI Strategy and action plan	To agree action plan with at least six-monthly updates.	Executive Director Corporate Services	EDI Board	Yes	Yes	An open and enabling organisation	No
	3 Mar 2022	Cyber Security	To provide information and assurance on Cyber Security within the Council and outlines key aspects to assure the that information is continued to be treated as a valued asset, with on-going measures to protect and manage it in line with compliance.	Executive Director Corporate Services	No	No	Yes	An open and enabling organisation	No

Reference	Committee Date	Report title	Purpose of Report	Report Author /Senior Officer	Consultation and Engagement Process and Timeline	Equality Impact Assessment Required and Published (Y/N)	Part of Budget and Policy Framework (Y/N)	Corporate Plan Priority	Exempt Item and Paragraph Number
CP/28/21-22	Apr 2022 TBC	Approach to Consultation and Engagement	To develop a new approach to consultation and engagement methods/processes.	Executive Director Corporate Services	Yes	Yes	Yes	An open and enabling organisation	No
	14 Apr 2022	Community Governance Review report	To report on the outcome of the consultation and the advice from the CGR Working Group	Executive Director Corporate Services	Statutory process With decision-making at full Council	TBC	TBC	An open and enabling organisation	No
CP/42/21-22		Commercial/Enterprise Strategy	To approve a new strategy as part of the BTFP.	Executive Director Corporate Services	Yes	Yes	Yes	An open and enabling organisation	No
CP/43/21-22		Ways of Working with Town and Parish Councils	TBC	Executive Director Place	Yes	Yes	Yes	An open and enabling organisation	No
CP/44/21-22		Local Members' Say in Local Decisions	TBC	Director of Governance and Compliance (Monitoring Officer)	TBC	TBC	Yes	An open and enabling organisation	No
CP/45/21-22		MoD Employer Recognition Award - Gold and Silver Schemes	TBC	Director of Commissioning	TBC	TBC	Yes	An open and enabling organisation	No
CP/48/21-22		Corporate Peer Challenge Annual Update	TBC	Executive Director Corporate Services	TBC	TBC	Yes	An open and enabling organisation	No

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **Finance Sub-Committee**
held on Wednesday, 5th January, 2022 in the The Capesthorne Room - Town
Hall, Macclesfield SK10 1EA

PRESENT

Councillor A Stott (Chair)

Councillors D Brown, S Gardiner, N Mannion, B Puddicombe, A Farrall and
J Saunders (for Cllr Clowes)

OFFICERS

Alex Thompson, Director of Finance and Customer Services
Paul Bayley, Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services
Julie Gregory, Legal Team Manager
Paul Mountford, Democratic Services

OTHER MEMBERS PRESENT

Councillors S Carter (as Chair of the Shareholder Working Group and a
visiting member) and J Clowes (as a visiting member) (both attended via a
Teams link)

APOLOGIES

Councillors Q Abel, S Carter and J Clowes

36 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor D Brown declared a personal interest as a member of the
Shareholder Working Group and as a recipient of a pension from the
Council's pension fund.

Councillor S Gardiner also declared a personal interest as a future
recipient of a pension from the pension fund.

37 PUBLIC SPEAKING/OPEN SESSION

There were no public speakers.

38 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**RESOLVED**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 1st December 2021 be approved
as a correct record.

39 DRAFT CAPITAL STRATEGY 2022-26

The Sub-Committee considered the draft Capital Strategy for 2022-26.

The Sub-Committee had oversight of the Capital Strategy and was being asked to comment on the current strategy during the MTFS consultation period.

Members made the following comments in relation to the draft Capital Strategy:

- The review of forecast spending in order to improve capital planning and reduce slippage in the capital programme was welcomed.
- Capital investment in highways infrastructure could be used as a way of reducing pressure on the revenue budget for highways maintenance.
- Whilst it was noted that the Assets Board and the Capital Programme Board were not decision-making bodies, consideration should be given to the question of member oversight and whether the existing governance arrangements provided the required level of visibility under the new committee system.

RESOLVED (unanimously)

That the Sub-Committee

1. notes the current Cheshire East Council Capital Strategy as set out in Appendix 1;
2. notes that officers will continue to review the Capital Strategy during the Medium Term Financial Strategy consultation period; and
3. notes the activities to date in developing the revised Capital Strategy as detailed in the background section to the report.

40 DRAFT INVESTMENT STRATEGY 2022/23

The Sub-Committee considered the draft Investment Strategy 2022/23 in light of the ongoing budget consultation document.

The report set out the Council's approach to managing investments in 2022/23.

Members referred to the consultation by CIPFA aimed at reducing speculative investment which could cause unnecessary risk in the delivery of services. In this respect, the Director of Finance and Customer Services gave an assurance that the Council was not at risk as a result of its current investment activities.

RESOLVED (unanimously)

That the Sub Committee notes the draft Investment Strategy for 2022/23 as set out in Appendix 1 to the report.

41 DRAFT RESERVES STRATEGY 2022/23

The Sub-Committee considered the draft Reserves Strategy 2022/23 as part of the consultation process for the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

The report provided information about the requirements to maintain financial reserves and to provide statements on the types of reserves and current and predicted balances. The Strategy identified the potential use of reserves in the medium term.

Members wondered whether the current level of General Reserves at 3.6% was adequate or should be reviewed. The Director of Finance and Customer Services advised that the Council's reserves, whilst low, had remained at the same level for years. The Council was required to apply certain financial stress tests laid down by CIPFA to ensure that its reserves position was robust and sustainable. The Council's external auditors were satisfied that the reserves had been set in the proper manner.

Members asked about the level of reserves held by neighbouring and comparator authorities. The Director undertook to provide the information for all members of the Sub-Committee.

RESOLVED

That the Sub-Committee notes the draft Reserves Strategy for 2022/23 as set out in Appendix 1 to the report.

42 DRAFT TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2022/23

The Sub-Committee considered the draft Treasury Management Strategy 2022/23, as part of the performance management framework, during the Consultation Period of the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

It was noted that despite significant disruption to financial markets and the Council's cashflows due to the pandemic, there was no material amendment required to the Treasury Management Strategy.

Members asked whether the Council should be making loans to other local authorities. The Director of Finance and Customer Services advised that lending to other local authorities was a useful way of earning income on surplus cash.

RESOLVED (unanimously)

That the Sub-Committee notes the draft Treasury Management Strategy for 2022/23 as set out in Appendix 1 to the report.

43 MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2022/23 - 2025/26

The Sub-Committee considered the Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2022 to 2026 as part of the budget consultation.

All Committees were being asked to provide feedback in relation to their financial responsibilities as identified within the Constitution and linked to the budget alignment approved by the Finance Sub-Committee in July 2021. Responses to the consultation would be reported to the Corporate Policy Committee to support that Committee in making recommendations to Council on changes to the current financial strategy.

Appendix 1 to the report contained the Budget Engagement document, including the survey questions that had been used during the consultation period, which closed 4th January 2022.

The Provisional Settlement announced on 16th December 2021 had varied the assumptions contained in the Budget Engagement document. The Director of Finance and Customer Services provided a verbal update on the changes announced and the impact on the estimated funding envelope. The allocations to local government were only for the next financial year. For Cheshire East Council, this amounted to about £6m more for one year than was currently in the consultation document.

In response to a question from members, the Director of Finance and Customer Services confirmed that the figure of £2.1m available in 2023/24 as a result of the Central Pension adjustment was part of the overall balanced position and had already been allocated. He added that as a result of an aggressive increase in pension contributions over recent years, the pension fund had improved significantly, and there was no longer any need to pursue such an aggressive policy.

Reference was made to a table showing how Council tax was spent, and it was suggested that the term 'Place' would be unfamiliar to many people and should be defined.

RESOLVED (unanimously)

That the Sub-Committee

1. notes the MTFS 2022 to 2026 Consultation Document (Appendix 1 to the report) and the proposals relevant to the responsibilities of the Sub-Committee as outlined in the Constitution, as set out in the following paragraphs and on the following pages of the Consultation Document:
 - 26) Minimum Revenue Provision (page 26)
 - 27) Changes to unringfenced specific grant estimates (page 26)
 - 28) Council Tax (page 27)
 - 29) Business Rates Retention Scheme (page 27)
 - 30) Central Pension Adjustment (page 28)
 - 31) Bad Debt Provision – change in provision (page 28)

32) Use of Earmarked Reserves (page 28)

2. notes the impact of the local government financial settlement on the MTFS Consultation Document as reported by the Director of Finance and Customer Services;
3. notes the other elements of the MTFS Consultation Document relating to the responsibilities of the Sub-Committee (including WOC Business Plans, and Reserves levels); and
4. notes that the minutes of this meeting would form the consultation response of the Sub-Committee for consideration by the Corporate Policy Committee.

44 SHAREHOLDER WORKING GROUP REPORT

The Sub-Committee considered the report of the Shareholder Working Group on matters considered at its meeting on 20th December 2021. The report was presented by the Chair of the Working Group, Councillor S Carter.

The Working Group had met to consider the following matters:

- The Ansa business plan 2022/23.
- The ASDV review as it related to Orbitas Bereavement Services.
- The implications of recent Public Interest Reports on the Cheshire East Group structure.

The Working Group had considered the Ansa Business Plan in terms of strategy, value for money, impact and risk, control, and service delivery and had concluded that the majority of items considered presented low risks to the Cheshire East Group. The Working Group was reassured that the financial forecast for 2022/23 aligned with the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy. The Working Group noted that no dividend was forecast for 2021/22, although if profit forecasts from commercial activity were achieved there may be a prospect for dividend payments in future.

With regard to the ASDV review, the Working Group saw a clear benefit from rebranding Orbitas to emphasise its alignment to the Council. Otherwise the working group did not recognise any compelling case for significant change at this point. However, it was recognised that the ongoing uncertainty of the review was counter-productive to the commercial development of the company. It was also clear that there were synergies between the operations of Ansa and Orbitas that could realise tangible benefits if a closer working relationship were developed.

The Working Group had received a presentation that analysed the recommendations of recent public interest reports, related to wholly-owned companies, compared to the current approach at Cheshire East. The Working Group was satisfied that the scale of financial issues identified in the public interest reports had not materialised within the Cheshire East group structure, although it was recognised that there were risks in the

current arrangements. The Working Group concluded that additional analysis was required to understand the options available to further mitigate any risks. It was determined that the most appropriate approach would be to commission a report from the Monitoring Officer.

RESOLVED (unanimously)

That the Sub-Committee

1. notes the update from the Chair on the Ansa business case 2022/23 at Appendix 1 to the report: Shareholder Working Group – WOC Business Plan Review Template;
2. notes the report of the ASDV Review Programme Board as it related to Orbitas Bereavement Services Ltd (Confidential Appendix), and:
 - (a) approves the rebranding of Orbitas to enhance recognition of its role in providing Cheshire East Bereavement Services, this to take effect from 1st April 2022;
 - (b) approves that the company's status within the Cheshire East Group remain unchanged;
 - (c) approves that the Chair of the Finance Sub-Committee write to the board of Orbitas encouraging closer working with Ansa, and requesting written evidence of such within the next six months;
 - (d) approves the inclusion of the Bereavement Services contract on the Procurement Pipeline Report for a period of 5 years, with an extension option for a further 3 years, at a value determined by the commissioner for bereavement services in line with the current Medium Term Financial Strategy; and
3. agrees that an item be added to its work programme entitled 'Review of the impact of Public Interest Reports as they relate to the Cheshire East Group Structure', the target date for this report to be the first meeting of the Sub-Committee in the 2022/23 Financial Year.

45 PROCUREMENT PIPELINE

The Sub-Committee considered an update of the pipeline of procurement activity up to April 2024.

The report included information on contracts awarded by the Council since April 2021 and provided an update on the number of cases where, and reasons why, procurement activity had required the use of waivers.

Details of all waivers, without any information redacted, would be presented to the Sub-Committee in Part 2 of the meeting as they contained commercially sensitive information and/or Officer Details.

RESOLVED (unanimously)

That the Sub-Committee

1. notes the procurement pipeline of activity in Appendix 1 to the report;
2. approves the business-as-usual procurements and the Significant Decisions which require service Committee approval (Appendix 1, column G);
3. notes the contracts awarded by the Council since April 2021 as set out in Appendix 2; and
4. notes that purchase card expenditure above £500 is now published on the Council's transparency pages.

46 RE-PROCUREMENT OF A CONSTRUCTION RELATED CONSULTANCY SERVICES FRAMEWORK 2022-2026

The Director of Finance and Customer Services advised that this item had been placed on the agenda before it had been determined whether or not it involved a significant decision requiring the Sub-Committee's approval. Under the previous item on Procurement Pipeline, the Sub-Committee had approved the business-as-usual procurements which included the re-procurement of a construction-related consultancy services framework. Therefore, no further decisions were required.

47 WORK PROGRAMME

The Sub-Committee considered its work programme for 2021/22.

RESOLVED

That the work programme be noted.

48 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED

That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item pursuant to Section 100(A)4 of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 and the public interest would not be served in publishing the information.

49 **PROCUREMENT PIPELINE**

The Sub-Committee considered details of the waivers referred to in the Procurement Pipeline report.

Members noted that under the previous executive form of governance, Cabinet Portfolio Holders were regularly briefed on waivers within their areas of responsibility. Under the new committee system, there appeared to be no such member oversight. It was suggested that some form of member oversight should be brought into the process, for example the briefing of the relevant committee chair.

The Director of Finance and Customer Services undertook to discuss the matter with the Monitoring Officer, and in addition would see what other local authorities were doing.

RESOLVED

That the Sub-Committee notes the reasons for 17 waivers approved between 1st September 2021 and 30th November 2021 (27 in total in 2021/22).

The meeting commenced at 2.00 pm and concluded at 4.55 pm

Councillor A Stott (Chair)

Schedule of Urgent Decisions

Urgent decisions made following Member consultation

Date	Summary of decision	Decision on behalf of	Members, MO/S151 consulted	Status
19 Jan 2022	<p>Approval of a Supplementary Revenue Estimate for the 2021/22 Financial Year, of £827,108.95 to be funded from the Additional Restrictions Grant.</p> <p>The Executive Director of Place be authorised to distribute funding from the Grant, subject to the conditions set out in the appendix to the decision record and to consultation with the Chair of the appropriate Committee.</p> <p>The Executive Director of Corporate Services be authorised to distribute funding from the Grant, subject to the conditions set out in the appendix to the decision record and to consultation with the Chair of the appropriate Committee.</p>	Corporate Policy Committee	Yes	Completed

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