

# Children and Families Committee

## Agenda

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**Date:** Wednesday, 6th October, 2021  
**Time:** 2.00 pm  
**Venue:** The Ballroom, Sandbach Town Hall, High Street, Sandbach, CW11 1AX

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**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](https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/council_and_democracy/council_information/coronavirus/testing-for-covid-19.aspx)

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

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

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

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the previous meeting held on 12 July 2021.

4. **Public Speaking/Open Session**

In accordance with paragraph 2.24 of the Council's 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 each to speak, and 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.

5. **All Age Carers Hub and Strategy** (Pages 13 - 86)

To approve the draft carers strategy and the recommissioning of the All Age Carers Hub contract.

6. **Update report on the 2021/2022 Action Plan to address the ILACS recommendations** (Pages 87 - 112)

To receive the operational development plan.

7. **Children and Families Performance Report Quarter 1 2021-22** (Pages 113 - 120)

To consider key performance measures.

8. **School Organisation: Academisation of Schools: Middlewich High School** (Pages 121 - 136)

To consider and approve school capital/organisation plans.

9. **School Organisation: Academisation of Schools: Forward Plan** (Pages 137 - 142)

To note the status of academy conversions across Cheshire East Schools.

10. **Corporate Parenting Committee Annual Report 2020-21** (Pages 143 - 176)

To receive the Corporate Parenting annual report.

11. **Update on Afghan Families Resettlement Scheme**

To receive a presentation on the Afghan Families Resettlement scheme.

12. **Work Programme** (Pages 177 - 180)

To consider the Work Programme and determine any required amendments.

**Membership:** Councillors K Flavell (Chair), C Bulman (Vice Chair), M Addison, L Anderson, M Beanland, J Buckley, D Edwardes, S Handley, G Hayes, I MacFarlane, J Saunders, L Smetham, L Smith

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**CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL**

Minutes of a meeting of the **Children and Families Committee**  
held on Monday, 12th July, 2021 at The Ballroom, Sandbach Town Hall, High  
Street, Sandbach, CW11 1AX

**PRESENT**

Councillor K Flavell (Chair)  
Councillor C Bulman (Vice-Chair)

Councillors R Bailey, M Beanland, J Buckley, B Burkhill, C Clowes  
D Edwardes, S Handley, G Hayes, I Macfarlane, L Smetham and L Smith

**OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE**

Ged Rowney, Interim Director of Children's Services  
Kerry Birtles, Director of Children's Social Care  
Jacky Forster, Director of Education and 14 – 19 Skills  
Ali Stathers-Tracey, Director of Prevention and Early Help  
Deborah Nickson, Legal Team Manager (People) and Deputy Monitoring  
Officer  
Paul Goodwin, Head of Financial Services & Deputy Chief Finance Officer  
Brian Reed, Head of Democratic Services and Governance  
Josie Lloyd, Democratic Services Officer

**1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M Addison, D Marren and J Saunders. Councillors R Bailey, B Burkhill and J Clowes attended as substitutes.

**2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Declarations of interest were received from Councillor R Bailey, who informed the committee that she had a relative serving on the Audlem St James School governing body, and Councillor M Beanland who informed the committee of his role as school business manager at Lacey Green Primary Academy.

**3 PUBLIC SPEAKING/OPEN SESSION**

There were no public speakers.

**4 SCHOOL ORGANISATION: PROPOSAL FOR THE PROVISION OF A NEW PRIMARY SCHOOL, KINGSLEY FIELDS, NANTWICH**

Consideration was given to a report which sought approval to proceed with undertaking the free school presumption process to identify and obtain agreement for a new school sponsor. It was noted that a period of

informal engagement would be undertaken with local ward Members and wider stakeholders at the beginning of the process to help inform the specification of the school. A further period of statutory consultation would be undertaken following the appointment of a sponsor, and another report would be presented to the committee following this.

**RESOLVED –**

That approval be given:

1. To proceed with the free school presumption process which will include undertaking a consultation, in accordance with the Department for Education guidelines, with the local community, local schools, local councillors, town council and local MP. This is not the formal statutory consultation which sponsors are required to undertake.
2. To proceed with the transfer of the proposed school site into the Council ownership, as detailed in the Section 106 agreement, together with any other agreements associated with or ancillary to the transfer.
3. To progress with the process of attracting potential sponsors to run the new school.

**5 SCHOOL ORGANISATION: PROPOSED EXPANSION OF SPRINGFIELD SPECIAL SCHOOL ONTO A SATELLITE SITE**

Consideration was given to a report on the proposal to use an existing Cheshire East asset (Dean Row Centre) as a satellite site for the expansion of Springfield School, Crewe.

It was noted that, owing to the cancellation of the full Council meeting scheduled for 21 July, the urgency of this matter may require it to be dealt with under the council's Urgent Decision Procedure.

**RESOLVED –**

That the committee:

1. Approves the proposed expansion of Springfield School (by way of a satellite site) from 170 pupil places to 250 places (an increase of up to 80 places) from September 2022.
2. Approves the procurement of a contract of works and authorise the Director of Children's Services to award a construction contract to facilitate the provision of additional places at Springfield School (satellite site) together with any other agreements associated with or ancillary to the contract.

3. Recommends that full Council approves a fully funded Supplementary Capital Estimate of £3m to be included as a named scheme within the Children and Families Capital Programme, which is being funded by capital grants.

## **6 SCHOOL ORGANISATION: ACADEMISATION OF SCHOOLS**

Consideration was given to a report on the proposed delegation of current and future conversions, including academy leases, jointly to the Executive Director of Children Services and the Executive Director of Place.

The committee noted an error in paragraph 5.4 of the report and clarity was given that this should refer to two schools rather than three. It was also noted that the spelling of the names of the two schools to convert should be corrected

### **RESOLVED –**

That the committee:

1. Delegates to the Executive Director of Children's Services in consultation with Chief Finance Officer and Monitoring Officer authority to take all steps necessary to agree and execute the commercial transfer agreement, novation of third party contracts, Shared Use Agreements/Facilities Access Agreements, staffing and information transfer.
2. Delegates to the Executive Director of Place in consultation with Chief Finance Officer and Monitoring Officer to take all steps necessary to agree and execute any transactions in relation to land, facilities or shared use agreements.
3. Notes that the Chief Finance Officer has authority to take all steps necessary to agree, transfer and adjust relevant budgets and allocate balances in accordance with Department for Education Guidance.
4. Notes that no delegation may be exercised to execute any agreement as per recommendations 2.1 ,2.2 or 2.3 of the report where: a) the school has a deficit of £100k or there is any significant impact on the Medium Term Financial Strategy b) there are substantive third party land interests c) any public funds are to be reclaimed under section (land contributions) d) any current or proposed legal claim has been identified e) where an indemnity is sought against Cheshire East Council on any matter.
5. Approves in principle the academy transfer of Bosley Primary School and Audlem Primary School.

## **7 VARIATION TO LA CO-ORDINATED SCHEME AND ADMISSIONS ARRANGEMENTS**

Consideration was given to a report on a new School Admissions Code, due to come into force on 1 September 2021 subject to parliamentary approval, and the need to vary the Local Authority Co-ordinated Scheme and Admissions Arrangements 2021-22 and 2022-23 to meet the new requirements and statutory duties around school admissions.

The committee requested that the training sessions aimed at explaining the changes and the steps that schools need to take to comply with the new Code, as referred to in the report, be repeated in the new academic year.

The Chair thanked officers Mark Bayley, Joanne Prophet and Joanne Bowkett for their work.

**RESOVLED –**

That the Committee approves arrangements to be varied as below:

1. References to School Admissions Code 2014 updated to 2021.
2. Clarification that reference to Previously Cared for Children includes those previously in State Care outside of England and ceased to be in State Care as adopted (e.g. Appendix 2 -paragraph 20.1).
3. Confirmation that Admission Authorities may opt out of the Co-ordinated scheme and this will be published on the Cheshire East website.
4. Changes around addresses that can be used for children of Service Personnel and Crown Servants coming from overseas (e.g. Appendix 2 paragraph 1.7).
5. Approval of Local Authority Co-ordinated Scheme and Admissions Arrangements at Appendix 1 and 2.
6. Approval to adapt the above Local Authority Co-ordinated Scheme and Admissions Arrangements should any additional statutory changes be requested as part of the parliamentary approval.

**8 EARLY HELP TOGETHER BOARD QUARTERLY REPORT APRIL 2021**

Consideration was given to a report that summarised progress made against the Early Help Together Board Strategic Action Plan. A request was made for an overview of organisations represented on the board to be circulated to the committee.

**RESOLVED –**

1. That the committee note the progress made against the Early Help Together Board Strategic Action Plan.
2. That an overview of organisations represented on the board be circulated to the committee.

**9 SEND REVISIT UPDATE**

The committee received a presentation on the Ofsted SEND revisit, the outcome of which noted that the council had made sufficient progress since its previous inspection.

The committee thanked those involved for their hard work and effort to deliver this positive result.

**RESOLVED –**

That the update be noted.

**10 CHILDCARE SUFFICIENCY CAPITAL GRANTS**

Consideration was given to a report on a new policy required to comply with the latest capital grant approval processes, as set out in the Constitution.

**RESOLVED –**

That the committee approves the policy for the Early Years and Childcare Capital Grant (25 June 2021).

**11 CHILDREN AND FAMILIES PERFORMANCE REPORT QUARTER 4 2021-22**

Consideration was given to a report that outlined performance data related to children's services that fell within the responsibility of the committee, from quarter 4 of 2020-21, which included an update on how Covid-19 had impacted performance measures.

**RESOLVED –**

That the committee:

1. Notes the performance of children's services for quarter 4 of 2020-21.
2. Provides support and challenge in relation to performance for children and young people in Cheshire East.

**12 CHILDREN AND FAMILIES BUDGETS 2021-22**

Consideration was given to a report that outlined the Children and Families budgets for 2021/22. A request was made for further detail to be provided on the plans for adult education.

It was confirmed that budget related training was planned to be arranged for members of the committee.

**RESOLVED –**

That the committee:

1. Notes the decision of the Finance Sub-Committee to allocate the approved capital and revenue budgets, related policy proposals and earmarked reserves to the Children and Families Committee, as set out in Appendix A.
2. Notes the MTFS timelines, as set out in paragraphs 5.12 – 5.16.
3. Notes the supplementary estimates and virements as set out in Appendix B.

**13 APPOINTMENTS TO SUB-COMMITTEES, WORKING GROUPS, PANELS, BOARDS AND JOINT COMMITTEES**

Consideration was given to a report on the committee's appointments to the Corporate Parenting Committee, Local Authority School Governor Appointments Sub-Committee and the Cheshire East Health and Wellbeing Board. The names of Members to be appointed to these bodies would be confirmed following the meeting.

It was noted that the report contained an error on the political proportionality of the Corporate Parenting Committee and that the report should instead read as: Con:5; Lab:4; Ind: 3; Lib Dem: 0; R. Ind: 0; NGI:0

It was agreed that the Liberal Democrat Member who previously sat on the Corporate Parenting Committee would remain on the committee as an associate, non-voting member.

It was agreed that a joint working group would be established with the Adults and Health Committee which would comprise three members of each committee on an ad hoc, voluntary basis to consider reports and matters that crossed the remits and responsibilities of both committees.

**RESOLVED –**

1. That the Children and Families Committee appoints members to the Corporate Parenting Committee as follows: Con:5; Lab:4; Ind:3; Lib Dem:0; R. Ind:0; NGI:0
2. That the Children and Families Committee appoints the Local Authority School Governor Appointments Sub-Committee with a membership of 5; the proportionalities being as follows: Con:2; Lab:2; Ind:1; Lib Dem:0; R. Ind:0; NGI:0
3. That the Children and Families Committee nominates one member to the Cheshire East Health and Wellbeing Board

#### 14 **WORK PROGRAMME**

Consideration was given to the committee's work programme.

#### **RESOLVED –**

That work programme be noted.

The meeting commenced at 2.00 pm and concluded at 5.45 pm

Councillor K Flavell (Chair)

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*Working for a brighter future together*

## **Children and Families Committee**

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**Date of Meeting:** 6 October 2021

**Report Title:** All Age Carers Hub and Strategy

**Report of:** Nichola Thompson, Director of Commissioning

**Report Reference No:** AH/09/21-22 and AH/10/21-22

**Ward(s) Affected:** All

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### **1. Executive Summary**

- 1.1.** The Care Act 2014 and Children's and Families Act 2014 sets out the duty for the Council and partners to provide services for carers regardless of their age. In response, the Council published its All Age Carers Strategy 2016-18. Leading from the actions within the strategy the Council commissioned the All Age Integrated Carers Hub in April 2018.
- 1.2.** The report provides details on the journey so far for carers services in Cheshire East, the initial results of consultation and engagement that has already taken place, as well as plans for further engagement and consultation for the Carers Strategy.
- 1.3.** The contract for the All Age Integrated Carers Hub will end on 31 December 2022. This report recommends the joint re-commissioning of the All Age Carers Hub with Cheshire Clinical Commissioning Group and seeks permission to procure the service.
- 1.4.** The Council's current All Age Carers Strategy 2016-18 needs to be reviewed to reflect up-to-date local information, analysis, demand, customer experiences and service gaps. This report outlines the review and refresh of the Council's All Age Carers Strategy 2021-25 and seeks approval to go out to wider public consultation and engagement.
- 1.5.** The key milestones for the successful delivery of the project are aligned to the 6 stages of the commissioning cycle (see Appendix 1).

## **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1.** That the Adults and Health Committee and Children and Families Committee:
- 2.2.** Approve the draft carers strategy as outlined in Appendix 2 for the basis of consultation.
- 2.3.** Following consultation of the strategy, note that the final version of the All Age Carers Strategy will be presented for approval to the Adults and Health Committee, and Children and Families Committee.
- 2.4.** Approve the recommissioning of the All Age Carers Hub contract which ends in December 2022, with Cheshire West and Chester Local Authority, and Cheshire Clinical Commissioning Group.
- 2.5.** Delegates authority to the Director of Commissioning to award the jointly commissioned All Age Carers Hub contract.

## **3. Reasons for Recommendations**

- 3.1.** To meet our obligations to the Care Act 2014 and Children's and Families Act 2014, and the Council Corporate Plan 2021-25 we need continue to review, consult and progress with the All Age Carers Strategy and the re-commissioning of the All Age Carers Hub.
- 3.2.** The All Age Carers Hub model has been working well in Cheshire East, however from our survey with carers in February 2021 there is still a need to continue with this journey, to improve the single point of contact for all carers in Cheshire East and this would be well served by the re-commissioning of the All Age Carers Hub.
- 3.3.** That the All Age Carers Hub is approved for recommissioning prior to the final version of the All Age Carers Strategy being submitted to committee for approval to publish.

## **4. Other Options Considered**

- 4.1.** Decommissioning - although the Council has a statutory obligation to provide services for carers, we also recognise the valuable contribution carers make to the local community and the support to the social care and health system. Providing access to information, advice and guidance at an early stage prevents carer breakdown and longer-term impacts on carers. Although there would be an immediate financial saving, the subsequent demand on the social and health care would outstrip any initial savings.

## 5. Background

- 5.1. The Care Act 2014, Children and Families Act 2014 sets out the Council's responsibility for carers and the need to improve health and wellbeing outcomes for carers.
- 5.2. The above legislation provides a coherent framework for young carers and requires the Council to offer children and young people the right to 'young carer's assessment' and introduces the 'whole family' approach to assessment and support. It requires the Council to consider the needs of young carers who are providing or intending to provide care. Additionally, the act requires Adults and Children's Departments to work together to avoid and reduce multi-assessment and allow departments to combine assessments and the right to transition assessment.
- 5.3. We are required to provide statutory information for the Children's Commissioner including Young Carers Data, in 2015-16 the Young Carers Data Collection Document only recorded a figure of 13 young people that had received a young carer's assessment by the Council.
- 5.4. The Council carried out a whole system redesign of services to carers in 2017, this involved engagement and consultation with all carers. Carers told the Council that they needed a single point of access, 24/7 helpline and help much earlier support to prevent carers breakdown. Children and Families Services identified the need to provide an individual young carer's assessment and provide better tailored support for young carers. These comments and concerns were fed into the Cheshire East Carers Strategy 2018. In response to the feedback, the Council in partnership with the Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCG), tendered for an organisation that would provide the Cheshire East All Age Carers Hub.
- 5.5. The current All Age Carers Hub contract is jointly commissioned across the Council and NHS Cheshire CCG via the Better Care Fund (NHS 2006 Act, s75). The service was commissioned in 2018, a service descriptor which includes the aim, description and outputs forms part of the legal agreement. The service supports the delivery of the four Better Care Fund metrics with a primary focus on reducing non-elective admissions and reducing the number of people admitted to residential care. There is annual monitoring of the performance of the All Age Carers Hub through the Better Care Fund End of Year report which is presented to the Health and Wellbeing Board.
- 5.6. The integration of carers service through an 'Hub and Spoke' model would coordinate early help support for adult, parent, and young carers, and has provided a single point of access at any stage of a carers journey. It also provided other many benefits, below is a snapshot of some of the All Age Carers Hub key activities:
  - Single point of access
  - 24/7 Carers Helpline

- Peer Support, networking
- Access to early help services e.g. Living Well Fund and Take a Break, Crisis support
- Community based support
- Online assessments via Live Well
- Reduce hospital admissions.

- 5.7.** The contract was awarded to nCompass in partnership with the Alzheimer's Society and was available for all carers in Cheshire East from 1 April 2018 to 31 December 2022.
- 5.8.** Since this date the service has continued to develop its service to respond to carers needs and feedback. A key achievement was changing the adult's statutory carers assessment in February 2020, moving to an online assessment accessible via the Council Live Well website. In March 2020 the online assessment system also included young carers. This process change means that carers in Cheshire East receive a single point of access/assessment from the first point of contact. Equally it also reduces double counting and for the Council provides a better reflection of the number of young carers the Council was supporting, which previously was not reflected on the LiquidLogic case management system.
- 5.9.** There has been a significant change to the whole approach of carers assessments, which now focus on the personalised outcomes for the individual rather than just a means of accessing services. The Hub have incorporated the Council's statutory assessment with their own assessment which includes wellbeing outcomes. Therefore, as well as being assessed for carers support, it looks at different ways that caring affects a carers life and the services that can support the carer. The assessment includes the physical, mental and emotional wellbeing and this is at the heart of this assessment. A review of the outcomes is carried out at 3 months and the carer's wellbeing is reassessed; this is followed with an annual review.
- 5.10.** The pandemic has amplified the importance of the caring role, and its significant function on the health and social care system. The report '*Caring behind closed doors: 6 months on*' (2020) produced by Carers UK, promotes the crucial part carers play on the system and the health and wellbeing inequalities many carers face. During the pandemic there was a need to shift services to vertical platforms, providing a big challenge to the All Age Carers Hub. The All Age Carers Hub combined its effort by increasing the digital platform access, wellbeing telephone calls and home visits where appropriate.
- 5.11.** The All Age Carers Hub worked with the People Helping People service to ensure no carer was left struggling at this difficult time. Initially in March 2020 we saw a decrease to the number of referrals to the service, but this

has now increased by 110% in the number of referrals for support comparing Quarter 1 to Quarter 4 (2020/21).

**5.12.** The All Age Carers Hub played a key part in acting as the single point of access for vaccines to carers. It ensured all carers gained registration and assessment. It ensured all carers were listed on the GP Carers Register.

**5.13.** To date Cheshire East has 5061 carers registered with the service. The key highlights of the performance in 2020/21 are:

- 1644 adult carers referred to the Carers Hub for information, advice and/or support services – 71% of these were new referrals that had not previously registered with the Hub.
- 538 adult carers awarded a Living Well fund to enable them to take a break from their caring role.
- 589 statutory adult carers assessments completed.
- 310 carers have taken up the offer of an Emergency Card to let others know they are a carer if they are in an accident / taken ill.
- 186 wellbeing calls by volunteers to carers, not able to engage with the online groups, through the CHAT line (not previously offered before the pandemic).
- 78% increase in referrals from Council teams following early identification through People Helping People and online briefing sessions run by the Hub.
- Carers' outcomes remained positive in 2020-21, carers outcomes are assessed at the start of their journey and then reviewed 3 months on. From these assessments we can see that on average 97% of adult carers felt their ability to manage their caring role had improved following support from the Carers Hub. 96% of carers reported increased choice, control and independence; 95% felt engaged, involved and that they have a voice; and 98% reported improved emotional wellbeing.
- 147 young carers were referred to the Young Carers service and 84% were new referrals not previously known to the Hub.
- 111 young carers accessed the Living Well Fund grant to enable them to take a break from their caring role.
- 99 statutory young carers assessments were completed.
- 45 young carers group support sessions held (majority over Zoom) with an average of 30 young carers attending each session by Quarter 4.

- In 2020-21, the Carers Hub changed the method they use to assess young carers outcomes and now use the Positive and Negative Outcomes of Caring (PANOC-YC20) tool. This tool highlights that young carers can experience both positive and negative impacts of caring. 100% of young carers felt their positive outlook had improved and 100% had improved relationships, self-esteem, and resilience. 58% felt that the emotional impact of their caring role had been reduced.

**5.14.** The refreshed All Age Carers Strategy for 2021-25 aims to support the shift in social care and health transformation, providing key messages for specific markets and carers. It will start with asking the following questions:

- Who are our carers – demographics?
- What support and services are in place at the moment, and what is not available and should be?
- What carers tell us, including the accessibility and quality of services for carers and what they tell us is needed?
- What support and services the Council think people will need in the future?

**5.15.** The draft All Age Carers Strategy has been developed jointly by the local authority with NHS Cheshire CCG to ensure that it developed in line with the recently published White Paper 'Integration and Innovation: Working Together to Improve Health and Social Care for All' and is therefore acknowledges Health and Social Care integration developments. Its development is part of the recommissioning activity that is undertaken by the Council, with the results of the coproduction, engagement and consultation influencing the service specification for the All Age Carers Hub.

**5.16.** With the delivery of health and social care services focusing on how they achieve integrated ways of delivering services, it is more important than ever to have a clear offer and vision for carers' services, which builds on the aspirations and statutory frameworks of The Care Act (2014) and Children and Families Act 2014; and prepare for the implementation of the White Paper 'Working together to improve health and social care for all' in 2022.

**5.17.** The initial formal consultation and engagement process will shape the development of the draft All Age Carers Strategy.

## **6. Consultation and Engagement**

**6.1.** Consultation, engagement is a continual process for commissioning as it provides the intelligence that inform the strategy, policy, quality assurance and performance of all our services. Equally, carers are affected by the

decision the council makes on services to the cared for individual. Therefore, carers have been consulted and engaged with on several services, strategies and policies. These include the following:

- Carers Survey (February 2021) – included within Appendix 4
- Survey for carers - Living Well Fund (2020)
- Day Opportunities
- Assistive technology charging policy
- Dementia Strategy
- Autism consultation
- Cheshire East Carers Forum

**6.2.** The next steps are to gain further feedback from carers, partner agencies, and professionals that will shape the strategy and future of the All Age Carers Hub service. However, with the current restrictions and uncertainty of the Covid-19 pandemic, the proposed consultation and engagement will include:

- Publication of the draft Cheshire Strategy on the Council website along with an online survey and questionnaire to receive comments.
- Communication will include social media campaigns with a press release to make residents aware of the Council's consultation and engagement process.
- Communication to all contracted providers on the Commissioning Intentions.
- Virtual online Market Place events for providers, advertised by the Chest Procurement Portal for wider markets to attend.
- Virtual service development events with carers, advertised by social media, the Council website and with current existing routes for example, Carers Forum, Parent Carers Forum, Older People Engagement Network.
- All relevant stakeholders will be notified including partners, members, and town/parish councils.
- Briefings to networks such as Health and Wellbeing Boards, and Children and Young People's Trusts of the development and results.

**6.3.** The Cheshire East Carers Forum aims to be a voice to inform service providers of the needs of carers and their families.



- 6.4.** The Cheshire East Carers Forum will facilitate two-way communication between carers and services used by all carers and their families in Cheshire East. The forum will work to provide feedback on services, offer constructive challenge to current services and input into decision making and planning for future service provision.

## **7. Implications**

### **7.1. Legal**

- 7.1.1.** The Council has a responsibility to provide suitable services for all carers as set out within The Care Act 2014 and Children's and Families Act 2014.
- 7.1.2.** There is an expectation enshrined in case law that any local authority making decisions affecting the public will do so fairly and in a way that cannot be said to be an abuse of power.
- 7.1.3.** It is therefore important to test the fairness of the Council's proposed strategy in relation to All Age Carers by way of consultation on any changes which potentially have the effect of withdrawing existing benefits or advantages available to carers. Such consultation will involve those directly affected by such changes as well as any relevant representative groups. The responses to the consultation will need to be conscientiously taken into account when Council decision makers make any future decision in adopting the strategy.
- 7.1.4.** Consultation approach is outlined in 6.2 of this report and will be conducted with adherence to the following:
- (a) the consultation must take place at a time when the proposals are still at a formative stage.
  - (b) the proposer must give sufficient reasons for any proposal to permit of intelligent consideration and response.
  - (c) adequate time must be given for consideration and response.
  - (d) the product of the consultation must be conscientiously taken into account in finalising the proposals
- 7.1.5.** It should be noted that failure to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) or breach of a duty to consult would risk the Council being subjected to legal challenge by way of judicial review.
- 7.1.6.** A legal collaboration agreement will be developed with all partners prior to the commencement of the commissioning and procurement activity, to clearly define the roles and responsibilities of each of the partners in relation to the procurement process and subsequent contract management.



**7.1.7.** Any procurement would need to be carried out in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and the Public Contract Regulations 2015.

**7.1.8.** Any service contract will contain suitable provisions to allow the Council to terminate the contract in event of funding from the Better Care Fund ceasing.

## **7.2. Finance**

**7.2.1.** The commissioning of an All Age Carers Hub service would offer an opportunity to ensure value for money, improved outcomes for carers by aligning services and creating consistency across Cheshire for residents.

**7.2.2.** Cheshire East Council spends £751,000 per annum on the All Age Carers Hub. This includes £661,631 from the Better Care Fund (BCF) and £89,369 from Children's and Families Services (CEC base budget). The BCF is a Pooled Budget operated in partnership with colleagues from Cheshire CCG. Funding is confirmed through the Comprehensive Spending Review and the NHS 5-year Plan. The current direction of travel is for increased integration and further extension of these shared financial arrangements.

**7.2.3.** The new contract would be for a 3-year period (1 January 2023 to 31 December 2026) with a possible 2 x 12 months extension period.

**7.2.4.** The budget for the full five years (including the 2 x 12 months extensions) would be £3,755,000.

## **7.3. Policy**

**7.3.1.** The All Age Carers Strategy will contribute towards the vision of the Corporate Plan 2021-2025 to be an open, fair, and green Council and help to deliver the priority to be a Council which empowers and cares about people. The All Age Carers Strategy enables the Council to be open and transparent about our commissioning intentions based on capacity, demand, engagement and coproduction in partnership with key stakeholders, and importantly with local residents and people who use carers services and those who may use them in the future.

**7.3.2.** The All Age Carers Hub and Strategy will comply with any of the new legislation requirements of the Build Back, Better: Our Plan for Health and Social Care, September 2021, HM Government.

## **7.4. Equality**

**7.4.1.** An Equality Impact Assessment has been started and a copy is attached in this report in Appendix 3.

- 7.4.2. The EIA will develop further during consultation and engagement with carers.
- 7.4.3. Inequalities identified will be actioned and addressed through the recommissioning activity and included as performance measures for the service to adhere to via the service specification and contract.

## **7.5. Human Resources**

- 7.5.1. There is no direct impact on any employees within Cheshire East Council.
- 7.5.2. All employees of the current provider/s will be eligible for TUPE, and during the tender all applicants will be provided with a full list of eligible employees.

## **7.6. Risk Management**

- 7.6.1. There is a potential risk that the governance timeline will not meet key deadlines and will slow the commissioning process down. Early progression and decision making will mitigate this as outlined in the project key milestones in Appendix 1.
- 7.6.2. With Cheshire Clinical Commissioning Group ceasing to exist from 31 March 2022, work is in progress to finalise/formalise a new structure for commissioning services in 2022. Although this may present some risks it will be mitigated by working in close partnership with representatives from the NHS Cheshire Clinical Commissioning Group, who will provide regular updates.
- 7.6.3. The Carers Hub is funded via the Better Care Fund, which contributes to most of the budget.
- 7.6.4. The Department of Health and Social Care published the White Paper 'Integration and innovation: working together to improve health and social care for all' (2021). The White paper set out the legislative proposals for a health and care Bill. The White Paper refers to the Better Care Fund it sets out a technical change to separate the fund from the process for setting the NHS Mandate.
- 7.6.5. The Better Care Fund planning and policy guidance for 2021/22 hasn't been released, the funding envelope for the Better Care Fund has been identified nationally and the local allocations have been set for 2021/22. In recent years the funding has only been guaranteed from year to year, the local allocations for Cheshire East haven't been released for 2022/23.

**7.6.6.** We have commissioned services to be delivered over multiple years with only an upfront guarantee that the current year's funding can be met from the Better Care Fund/Improved Better Care Fund. There is a risk that the Better Care Fund won't continue into 2022/23 and future years, typically the risk is highlighted and recorded through the corporate risk register. The All Age Carers Hub in Cheshire East was commissioned in 2018 over multiple years until 2022, at the time of the service being commissioned it wasn't known whether the funding would be guaranteed for the life of the contract from the Better Care Fund. Part of the ongoing mitigation of the risk is for the Better Care Fund Governance Group to receive ongoing updates about the All Age Carers Hub commission.

**7.6.7.** The service contract will include suitable termination provisions so that in the unlikely event that the Better Care Fund ceases, the Council can seek to terminate the contract for the All Age Carers Hub.

## **7.7. Rural Communities**

**7.7.1.** There are no direct implications for rural communities and the service would be developed to improve access.

**7.7.2.** There is a review with Cheshire West and Chester Council that could align some services within the All Age Carers Hub would improve access to carers living in rural communities across Cheshire. It would remove the postcode lottery, especially for those individual living on the boundaries of the two Councils.

## **7.8. Children and Young People/Cared for Children**

**7.8.1.** The service will be developed with young carers with a focus on those on Child Protection and Child in Need Plans.

**7.8.2.** Developing the multi-agency support and safeguarding approach will be part of the service development and shape the future offer.

**7.8.3.** A key development is to align the service with education settings. This will improve the identification of young carers to support at the earliest opportunity.

## **7.9. Public Health**

**7.9.1.** Supporting carers early with appropriate services reduces health and wellbeing inequalities. The future service will continue to focus on prevention and wider determinates on their health, this could be by signposting individuals to Public Health lifestyle and support programmes.

**7.10. Climate Change**

- 7.10.1.** The recommissioning of the service will include expectations around Social Value, this includes social, economic and environmental impacts. The service provider will need to demonstrate their impact on the environment throughout the life of the contract. This will be included as part of the service specification and monitored by quarterly performance measures. Targets around recycling, carbon reduction with the use of electric vehicles, employing people within the community it serves and offering services virtually or on a Place based locality will be measured continually.

<b>Access to Information</b>	
Contact Officer/s:	<p>Elizabeth Smith (All Age Carers Hub recommissioning) Senior Commissioning Manager <a href="mailto:Liz.Smith@cheshireeast.gov.uk">Liz.Smith@cheshireeast.gov.uk</a></p> <p>Jill Stenton (All Age Carers Strategy) Senior Commissioning Manager <a href="mailto:Jill.Stenton@cheshireeast.gov.uk">Jill.Stenton@cheshireeast.gov.uk</a></p>
Appendices:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Key Milestones and Commissioning Cycle</li> <li>2. All Age Carers Strategy</li> <li>3. Equality Impact Assessment</li> <li>4. Carers Survey</li> </ol>
Background Papers:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Cheshire East Council Corporate Plan</li> <li>2. Care Act 2014</li> <li>3. Children and Families Act 2014</li> <li>4. <a href="#">Caring behind closed doors: 6 months on: Carers UK 2020.</a></li> <li>5. Working together to improve health and social care for all – White Paper, February 2021</li> <li>6. Build Back, Better: Our Plan for Health and Social Care, HM Government, September 2021</li> </ol>

**Key Milestone and Commissioning Cycle**  
**All Age Carers Hub and Strategy Development**

**1. What is the question:**

- The development of the Project Initiation Document (PID) and Initial Business Case – June to August 2021
- Committee's Papers to approve recommissioning and consultation for the strategy – September/October 2021
- BCF Briefing – August 2021
- Service Review – June to December 2021
- Initiate EIA – June 2021
- Initiate DPIA – June 2021

**2. Know your customers:**

- Comprehensive Engagement and Co-production Plan – January to August 2021
- Needs Assessment – June 2021 to January 2022
- Review Business Case – January 2022

**3. Outcomes and Priorities:**

- Engagement and Coproduction programme– February 2021 to January 2022
- Outcomes Framework Developed – February 2022

**4. What will it look like:**

- Draft Service Specification, Contract and Performance Management
- Draft All Age Carers Strategy
- Framework – June 2021 to January 2022
- Draft Terms and Conditions – June to January 2022
- Commissioning Intentions Document– June to August 2021
- Procurement Strategy – June to December 2021

**5. How will we get there:**

- Finalise Service Specification, Contract and Performance Management Framework – February 2022
- Procurement – March to June 2022
- Award Contract – June 2022
- Formal Consultation on All Age Carers Strategy October 2021 – January 2022
- Publication of All Age Carers Strategy – March 2022

**6. Measure the impact:**

- Service Mobilisation – June to December 2022
- New service goes live – 1<sup>st</sup> January 2023
- Cheshire East Carers Forum to review the progress of the Strategy's Action Plan

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# Cheshire East All Age Carers Strategy

Version 1

## Helping shape Cheshire East All Age Carers Strategy 2021-2025

Caring for a family member or friend, unpaid, is a vital, valuable and important contribution to the delivery of adult social care and health services. You are the expert in care for those you look after, and we are asking you to help plan the new All Age Carers Strategy (2021-2025) which aims to:

- adapt local services to support carers in their caring role
- to help adult carers live a life outside of caring
- support young carers not to spend so much time caring that they can't live a child's life.

It is important that decisions about how to improve support for unpaid carers across Cheshire East are shaped by and for carers. So, whatever your age, background, experience, or caring role your help is valuable.

Please read this draft document to see the different ways you can take part. It has been jointly written by Carers in Cheshire East, Cheshire East Borough Council and Cheshire Clinical Commissioning Group.

### Executive Summary/Foreword

#### INSERT

#### 1. Introduction

Unpaid carers are our unsung heroes, and the Covid-19 pandemic amplified the importance this role has on society and public services. Most of us will become an unpaid carer at some point in our lives it is essential that advice, information, guidance and support that is available is accessible, appropriate and timely for carers.

The Care Act 2014 defines a carer as:

***‘A carer is someone who helps another person, usually a relative or friend, in their day-to-day life. This is not the same as someone who provides care professionally or through a voluntary organisation’.***

Carers are a valuable asset to our society but providing care can have an impact in terms of their own health; education; ability to remain employed; relationships and social life. Legislation such as the Care Act 2014 and Children’s and Families Act 2014 provides an opportunity to enhance our support to Carers as, for the first time, it places them on an equal footing with those they care for and recognises the importance of their own ‘wellbeing’.

Research tells us that the number of family and unpaid carers who provide care and regular support to another individual will increase substantially over the next ten to fifteen years because people are living longer. This means that there will be an increase in the number of people who are carers and that on average they will be undertaking caring roles for longer periods of time. The physical and mental health conditions associated with the ageing process means that family and unpaid Carers will need a range of support to enable them to feel valued and manage their caring responsibilities alongside enjoying their own lives.

It is estimated that there are over 40,000 hidden carers residing in Cheshire East (this number is approximate for the size of Cheshire East’s population. The stats are difficult to estimate as we know but this is ranged between 1 in 8 adults and 1 in 6 adults) we are currently working collaboratively with local, regional networks and carers to co-produce an all age carers strategy, to improve the service provision that supports all carers.

Cheshire East Council recognise the diversity of the caring role and aim to offer the right support at the right time through a whole system approach through all its policies and strategies.

The All Age Carers Strategy will be co-produced by carers, statutory partners and voluntary and community sector partners who provide services or have an interest in carers. It demonstrates our commitment to carers and seeks to respond to local



issues, outlining how everyone across the system is working together to improve the lives of our carers and those that they care for.

This Strategy aims to give an overview of national and local policy, using these to inform and shape Cheshire East priorities. We want to demonstrate how our priorities in Cheshire East have been created through the review of the data produced from the Carers Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) and the review of our current provision. We also aim to draw on and reflect the lived experience of Carers across Cheshire East and use these to help shape our priorities.

## **2. The Purpose of the Strategy?**

The All Age Carers Strategy for 2021-25 will support the shift in social care and health transformation, providing key messages for specific markets and carers. It will start with asking the following questions:

- Who are our carers – demographics?
- What support and services are in place at the moment, and what is not available and should be?
- What carers tell us, including the accessibility and quality of services for carers and what they tell us is needed?
- What support and services the Council think people will need in the future?

## **3. Our Vision**

Health and social care work effectively in partnership with other providers of services to support carers of all ages in Cheshire East ensuring that the voice of carers is centre stage and that their wellbeing and identified priorities are at the heart of all decisions. To make this real for carers, all the partners work as a team to support carers and their families, involving them in service and product design, delivery and evaluation.

#### **4. Our Mission**

We will ensure that carers within our community are recognised, valued and provided with timely and appropriate support. We will listen, understand, and engage with carers and together design robust support for all carers.

#### **5. Our Priorities**

In order to meet the ambitions set out within this Strategy, we have agreed a number of key priorities, which will be co-produced through extensive engagement and working with carers, families, professionals and our partners.

The key priorities for this strategy are:

- Health Inequalities (Health & Wellbeing)
- Early Help
- Prevention - Carer Breakdown/Respite
- Information & Access
- Employment, Education and Training
- The Carers Voice

#### **6. Our Aims**

Will be to ensure that all carers:

- Are valued and respected
- Are identified and recognised by health, social care, employers, education settings and wider partners.
- Are supported to have a life outside the caring role, including employment, training, volunteering, relaxation and leisure activities
- Are confident that they know who they can contact when they need information and advice.
- Have the time to take care of their own health and wellbeing needs
- Have a voice
- Have the right to be supported if they decide to stop caring or the caring role ends

- Have access to training to support them in their caring role

## **7. How the Strategy will be developed?**

The co-production and consultation will follow the principles of the Council's **Together** guidance.

We intend to consult with carers, organisations, stakeholders on the development of an All Age Carers Strategy adhering to the proposed timeline of key dates:

- Consultation and Engagement Process
- Development of Draft All Age Carers Strategy and Framework
- Consultation on Draft Strategy
- Launch of All Age Carers Strategy and Framework

The consultation and engagement events that will be planned in as many different formats and will tease out the positives learnt from the pandemic and work with our carers, stakeholders and organisations on how we can build on this.

We will consult with carers, providers (including staff) and service users around what support can be offered to carers and how can they be identified and supported to relevant services to continue their caring responsibilities in a positive way.

A Consultation document will be shared with our providers onto the Chest to seek further information and ideas around what is the local offer to support our carers and what ways can they as a provider support this.

A key part of consultation around the all age carers strategy will be operational staff undertaking reviews and reassessment of individuals needs, aspirations and outcomes, at the request of other strategies taking place including Cheshire East Connected Communities Strategy (what will be the offer for our carers from the VCFS).

We will consult with the above stakeholders to develop and review services that support our carers.

To avoid engagement overload, we intend to piggy back on the engagement activities of other services so we can ensure that carers are at the forefront of everything we do. We need to ensure that carers are fully engaged and assist in the co-production of services that support the carer and the cared for.

We will also consult with our colleagues and other stakeholders in other areas of the Council to ensure that the All Age Carers Strategy works in conjunction and aligns with their strategy and ensure carers play an active role in the development of those services which in turn aligns to the All Age Carers service.

Work is progressing regionally and nationally, CEC commissioners are engaged in all national and regional developments some of which will inform the All Age Strategy for example:

- Carers Passport
- G.P. registration for carers
- Employment for carers
- NICE Guildines.

#### **8. Our Journey So Far - 2014 to 2021**

In 2014, Cheshire East Health and Social Care came together as a partnership through the local Health and Well Being Board. The Board looks at the joint needs of the population and agree strategic plans. This was delivered through two transformation programmes; in South Cheshire this was called 'Connecting Care' and in Eastern Cheshire it was 'Caring Together', all of which prioritises the need to identify carers and provide support.

This was the start of the consultation and engagement with carers, partners, and professionals in Cheshire East. During these consultation and engagement events carers told the Council that they needed a single point of access, 24/7 helpline and help much earlier to prevent carers breakdown. The Children and Families Department identified the need to provide an individual young carers assessment. These comments and concerns were fed into the Cheshire East Carers Strategy 2016/18. Subsequently, the Council in partnership with the Clinical Commissioning Groups tendered for an organisation that would provide the Cheshire East Integrated All Age Carers Hub.

## **The All Age Carers Hub Model**

The integration of carers service through an 'Hub and Spoke' model would coordinate early help support for adult, parent, and young carers, and has provided a single point of access at any stage of a carers journey. It also provided other many benefits, below is a snapshot of some of the All Age Carers Hub key activities:

- Single point of access
- 24/7 Carers Helpline
- Peer Support, networking
- Access to early help services e.g. Living Well Fund and Take a Break, Crisis support
- Community based support
- Online assessments via Live Well
- Reduce hospital admissions

The Integrated All Age Carers Hub to date (June 2021) has 5061 carers registered with the service and has been key in developing a single point of access and assessment for carers.

## **Re-design of Carers Respite services**

### **Bed based Carer Respite and Community Respite**

Carer Respite support was recommissioned in December 2018. At the time, it was recognised that despite people being allocated a number of "nights" in a residential care home environment in order to provide a much needed break for carers, some service users and their carers were not making use of the support they were allocated. Consultation with service users and their carers resulted in the service being re-designed. Market engagement with service providers took place and in response to feedback from service users, carers and key stakeholders, the model of support was extended to include Community Respite support.

It was apparent that the bed based support offered a lifeline for many, however, some service users and carers were telling us that they didn't want to go into a residential care home, even if only for a few days. However, carers still needed a

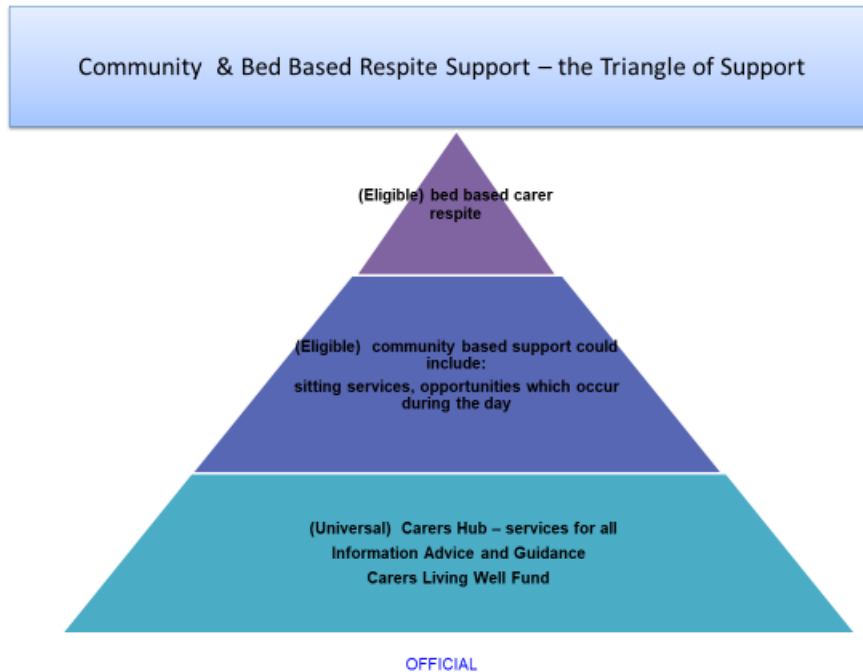
break. Community Respite was designed to enable the cared for person, to access support in their own home.

*Scenario - Mrs Jones (the carer), has become socially isolated as she is the sole carer for her husband Mr Jones (the cared for person). Mrs Jones emotional and physical wellbeing is deteriorating, Mr Jones is aware of this and it is exacerbating his condition as a result of the stress he is feeling. Both Mr & Mrs Jones are adamant that Mr Jones will not access bed-based respite support in a care home.*

*The Community Respite service could provide 6 hours of support every 4 weeks, to enable Mrs Jones to take a break and see her friends who she used to go walking with (improving both her emotional and physical wellbeing). Mrs Jones knows that Mr Jones is cared for in his own home and Mr Jones can receive the support he needs in an environment where he is comfortable.*

The new model of Carer Respite support, incorporating both a Community and Bed-based offer of support was implemented between December 2018 and April 2019. The Community Respite provision is a less intrusive model of support, however, the take up of the Community Respite offer was fairly limited, possibly because it was a new way of facilitating support for carers. The diagram below illustrates the model of support:





By 2020, the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic meant that the offer of both bed-based Respite and Community Respite support were severely impacted. Since residential care homes have been able to re-open, we are now seeing a steady increase, month by month on the number of bed-based Respite Support stays taking place. However, due to the significant challenges being faced throughout the Care at Home sector (which is the sector commissioned to deliver Community Respite), the ability to offer this service isn't practicable at present, as the sector are focusing on delivering essential care calls.

Care at Home is due to be recommissioned in 2021 with new contracts being mobilised in readiness for September 2021. Community Respite support is being considered as a service that will sit under the overarching Care at Home contract.

Bed based Respite support will form part of the overarching Accommodation with Care contract when the service is re-commissioned in 2024.

## **Development of the Carer's Forum 2021**

The Cheshire East Carers Forum will facilitate two-way communication between carers and services used by all carers and their families in Cheshire East. The forum will work to provide feedback on services, offer constructive challenge to current services and input into decision making and planning for future service provision.

By working co-operatively and collaboratively with local service providers carers can contribute to improvements in the services delivered for carers

- Through regular communication with carers ensuring they can decide whether to be involved in a piece of work/consultation.
- Ensuring a diverse forum membership and representation of diverse views from carers from all backgrounds and sectors of the community.
- Promoting a reputation and image of the Cheshire East Carers Forum which reflects its aims and values.
- By establishing the Cheshire East Carers Forum, it will help facilitate health and social care commissioners to work in partnership with Carers to develop and evaluate innovative new ways in supporting Carers and their cared for.
- Coproduction is key, the carers forum will work together as equal partners to improve, develop, and deliver services towards a common goal for all our children, young people, families, and adults.
- Using the [Together guide](#) that has been coproduced together with children, young people, families and adults living in Cheshire East

## **Engagement and Co-production**

The People Commissioner continually engage and consult residents on our services and strategies. Some recent consultation and engagement activities:

- Carers and their response to Day Opportunities Strategy
- Carers and their response to Assistive Technology charging policy
- Carer and their response to Dementia strategy
- Making Carers Visible CEC, NHS CCG and My CWA webinar – Carers supporting people living with dementia and Domestic Abuse



- Carers response to the autism strategy
- Transition Strategy
- Mental Health Strategy
- The End of Life Strategy

We are working with our Procurement and ConsultationConulstation teams to share all relevant consultation and engagement materials related to carers to ensure we reach out to our providers that offer support to carers and the cared for.

Carers are the continuous link in all that we do they are part of all the delivery plans with the above strategies and will continue to do so

Everything we commission, recommission or decommission for the future there is a section within all our service specifications requesting information on *‘what is their offer for carers, how do you identify a carer’?*

## **9. Where are we now?**

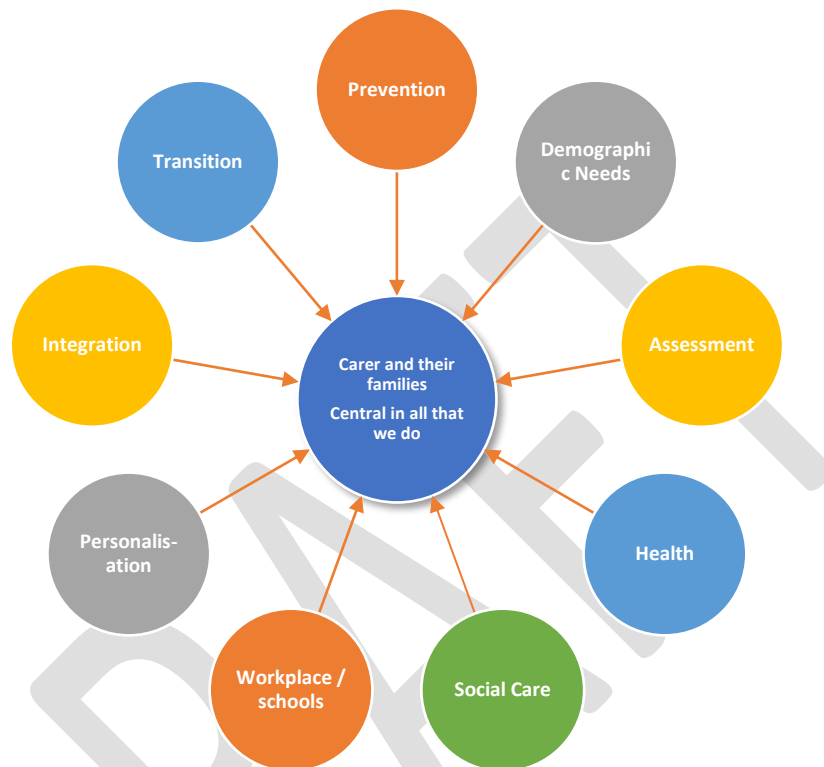
Cheshire East are in a position where services need to continue to be aligned, not only to address the current financial climate and population growth but also to ensure that services are streamlined to work closely together to provide the most effective service in a timely manner. This will benefit the carer and their families as the most appropriate service(s) will be offered.

The Strategy will address the following elements, and these will be incorporated into the strategic intentions:

- Health and Social Care needs
- Value of carers
- Population growth
- Financial challenges
- Whole system approach (including recent strategies).
- Employment and carers

The carer remains at the focal point of this strategy and future commissioned services that will support this.

**Figure 1: Elements of caring that need to be addressed**



Carers play such an important role in all that we do. The diagram above (Figure 1) shows that with every health and social intervention there is a carer involved. If we ensure that there are clear pathways for carers in all of the highlighted circles it will allow us to deliver the right support at the right time. For example, Young carers need to be identified as early as possible, so they receive the right support; a carer identified within their G.P practice to ensure they receive the right support at the right time.

Carers are not a homogenous group; their circumstances are wide ranging in terms of the type of care they provide and the amount of their time they spend caring. Some may care for a few hours a week, yet others may care for over fifty hours per week.

Covid has impacted on carers dramatically and we can see this by the high increase on carer referrals to the Cheshire East Carers Hub (over 500 new referrals in the last 9 months). COVID-19 pandemic continues to have a monumental impact on unpaid carers lives – not only because of the increased amount of care that many are having to provide, but because of the far-reaching effect that providing this care is having on many aspects of life:

- Relationships
- Mental and physical health
- Work
- Emotional well being

There have been positive innovations in technology-based support for carers a vast majority of carers have found life significantly more difficult. A decrease in support and sometimes complete closure of local services alongside the increase in are needs has led to most carers having to provide much more care.

<https://www.carersuk.org/for-professionals/policy/policy-library/caring-behind-closed-doors-six-months-on>

### **National Context & Demographics**

- 1 in 8 adults (around 6.5 million people) are carers
- Every day another 6,000 people take on a caring responsibility – that equals over 2 million people each year.
- 58% of carers are women and 42% are men.
- 1.3 million people provide over 50 hours of care per week.
- Over 1 million people care for more than one person
- As of 2020, Carers UK estimates there are around 13.6 million people caring through the pandemic.
- Carers save the economy £132 billion per year, an average of £19,336 per carer.

- 5 million people in the UK are juggling caring responsibilities with work - that's 1 in 7 of the workforce.
- However, the significant demands of caring mean that 600 people give up work every day to care for an older or disabled relative.
- Carer's Allowance is the main carer's benefit and is £67.25 for a minimum of 35 hours, the lowest benefit of its kind.
- People providing high levels of care are twice as likely to be permanently sick or disabled.
- 72% of carers responding to Carers UK's State of Caring 2018 Survey said they had suffered mental ill health as a result of caring.
- 61% said they had suffered physical ill health as a result of caring.
- 8 in 10 people caring for loved ones say they have felt lonely or socially isolated.

### Key statistics

- 4 in 5 unpaid carers (81%) are currently providing **more** care than before lockdown.
- More than three quarters (78%) of carers reported that the needs of the person they care for have **increased** recently.
- Most carers (64%) have **not been able to take any breaks at all** in the last six months.
- **More than half** (58%) of carers have seen their physical health impacted by caring through the pandemic, while 64% said their mental health has worsened

### Young Carers

Young Carers aged 5-17 years care for an adult or family member in the UK

A 1/3 of Young Carers reported having a mental health problem

<https://www.carersuk.org/for-professionals/policy/policy-library/caring-behind-closed-doors-six-months-on>

## **National Legislation**

### **The Care Act 2014**

The Care Act replaces previous legislation regarding Carers and people being cared for and has the following provisions:

- All Carers' have the right to an assessment when they appear to have needs
- All Carers have the right to support if they meet the eligibility criteria
- Local Authorities are required to provide information to Carers
- Local Authorities may arrange for other organisations such as charities or private companies to carry out assessments of need
- Local Authorities have a duty to promote an 'individual's wellbeing'
- Local Authorities must support Carers to achieve the outcomes they want in day-to-day life
- Local Authorities must have regard to whether the Carer works or wishes to do so
- Local Authorities must have regard to Carer participation in education, training, and recreation

The Care Act ensures that Carers have as many rights for support as those they care for. For those assessed as having eligible needs, authorities are required to provide advocacy and personal budgets.

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/23/contents/enacted>

### **The Children and Families Act 2014**

The Children and Families Act 2014 gives Young Carers the entitlement to the same help and support as Adult Carers. The legislation means that all Young Carers under the age of 18 are entitled to an assessment of their support needs. The Local Authority has to consider what services it can provide to meet these needs. Specific duties for Local Authorities under this legislation are:

- Taking reasonable steps to identify the extent to which there are Young Carers in their area with needs for support and, if so, what those support needs are
- Carry out an assessment for Young Carers upon request

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/6/contents/enacted>

### **The Children Act 1989**

A Local authority in England must assess whether a parent carer within their area has needs for support and, if so, what those needs are. A local authority in England must take reasonable steps to identify the extent to which there are Parent Carers within their area who have needs for support.

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/41/contents>

### **Young Carers**

The Care Act 2014, and Children's and Families Act 2014, make specific provision for Young Carers in the transition from children to adult's services. A young carer is someone aged under 18 who helps look after a relative with a disability, illness, mental health condition, or drug or alcohol problem. Young Adult Carers are young people aged between 16 and 25 who are caring for another child or young person, or an adult.

In relation to Young Carers, the Care Act requires that:

- Where it appears to a local authority that a Young Carer is likely to have needs for support after becoming 18, the authority must assess:
  - Whether the Young Carer has needs for support and if so, what those needs are;
  - Whether the Young Carer has needs for support after becoming 18, and if so, what those needs are likely to be;

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/23/contents/enacted>

## **Assessments for Young Carers**

The Care Act 2014 requires local authorities to consider the needs of Young Carers if, during the assessment of an adult with care needs, or of an adult carer, it appears that a child is providing, or intends to provide care. In these circumstances the local authority must consider whether the care being provided by the child is excessive or inappropriate; and how the child's caring responsibilities affects their wellbeing, education, and development.

Local authorities should ensure that adults' and children's services work together to offer Young Carers and their families an effective service, are able to respond to the needs of a young carer, the person cared for, and others in the family. This avoids the need for multiple assessments where children and adults find they are expected to give the same answers to professionals from different services, coming into their home at different times.

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/23/contents/enacted>

## **National Policy**

### **The Government's Carers Action Plan 2018 – 2020 'Supporting Carers Today'.**

This remains the current national policy for supporting Carers. The plan sets out the cross-government programme of work to support Carers until 2020. It is structured around the following themes:

- Services and systems that work for Carers
- Employment and financial wellbeing
- Supporting Young Carers
- Recognising and supporting Carers in the wider community and society
- Building research and evidence to improve outcomes for Carers

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/carers-action-plan-2018-to-2020>

### **The Prime Minister's Challenge on Dementia 2020**

The Prime Minister's challenge on dementia 2020 sets out a vision to create a society where those with dementia, their Carers and families, receive high quality compassionate care from diagnosis to end of life across all settings; at home, hospital or care home. Carers of people with dementia provide a vital role and we know that the availability of appropriate care and support and the quality of services has a significant bearing on whether Carers feel able to take a break from their caring responsibilities and providing Carers with better information, training and coping strategies, including emotional and psychological support, improves their quality of life.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prime-ministers-challenge-on-dementia-2020>

### **NHS England's Commitment to Carers 2014**

This identifies eight priority areas for the development of increased support to Carers in Primary Care. These are:

1. Raising the profile of Carers
2. Education, training, and information
3. Service development
4. Person-centred, well-coordinated care
5. Primary care
6. Commissioning support
7. Partnership links
8. NHS England as an employer

### **NHS Strategic Aims for Carers**

- To secure better outcomes of care for patients, and for the millions of people who care, unpaid.
- To build a carer-friendly NHS to a greater extent than ever before.
- To start to build an NHS where no carer feels left alone and that the NHS is there to support them in their caring journey

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- To change things so that carers are better able to look after their own health and wellbeing, manage the care of the person being cared for and are less likely to go into crisis.
- To increase recognition of carers as a vulnerable community and caring as a social determinant of health

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/commitment-to-carers-may14.pdf>

### **NHS Long Term Plan Commitment to Carers - Deliverables 2020-2024**

- Identifying and supporting carers, particularly those from vulnerable communities
- Introducing best practice quality markers for primary care
- Adoption of best practice carer passport schemes and development/ introduction of quality markers in hospital settings
- Ability to share caring status with healthcare professionals wherever they present via electronic health record
- Carers understand the out-of-hours options that are available to them and have appropriate back-up support in place for when they need it
- Young Carer “top tips” for general practice to include preventative health approaches, social prescribing, and timely referral to local support service.

This plan outlines a revised health model in which patients get more options, better support, and properly joined-up care at the right time in the optimal care setting. Supporting Carers is recognised as an important strand to this model, and in particular the following priorities are identified:

- Greater recognition and support for Carers in both primary and secondary care (including the implementation of Quality Markers for GP practices developed by CQC)
- Focus on supporting Carers in vulnerable communities
- A more proactive approach to identifying and supporting Young Carers
- Develop digitally enabled support
- Include Carers themselves in the development of Carer services

<https://www.longtermplan.nhs.uk/>

### **NHS Care Quality Markers 2019**

The NHS has introduced Care Quality markers that have been created through working in partnership with Carers Trust, Carers UK, and The Children's Society, and have been endorsed by the Care Quality Commission (CQC).

The markers consist of six questions that can be used by care services to demonstrate how effective they are in recognising and supporting Carers.

The questions have been based on what Carers, and their representatives, have told us matter most to them, and require the care service to show how they go about supporting Carers for each of the six themes identified. Each question is supported by a number of practical ideas that care services can put into place to help them develop the support they give to Carers. The care service completes an annual declaration as evidence of how it is supporting Carers and this evidence can be used for CQC inspections.

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/supporting-carers-in-general-practice-a-framework-of-quality-markers/>

### **Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) and Carers UK**

Guidance was issued in June 2019 on providing and commissioning Carers' breaks, plus advice and information for Carers on how to get a break. Research by Carers UK shows 46 per cent of unpaid Carers were unable to get a break in the last five years, even though they wanted one. Evidence indicates that there needs to be a wider choice of breaks available, and to ensure they are accessible, personalised, and enjoyable for both the carer – and the person they care for.

<https://www.scie.org.uk/carers/breaks/adults/commissioning>

<https://www.scie.org.uk/news/mediareleases/carers-respite-press-release>

### **Integration of Health and Social Care**

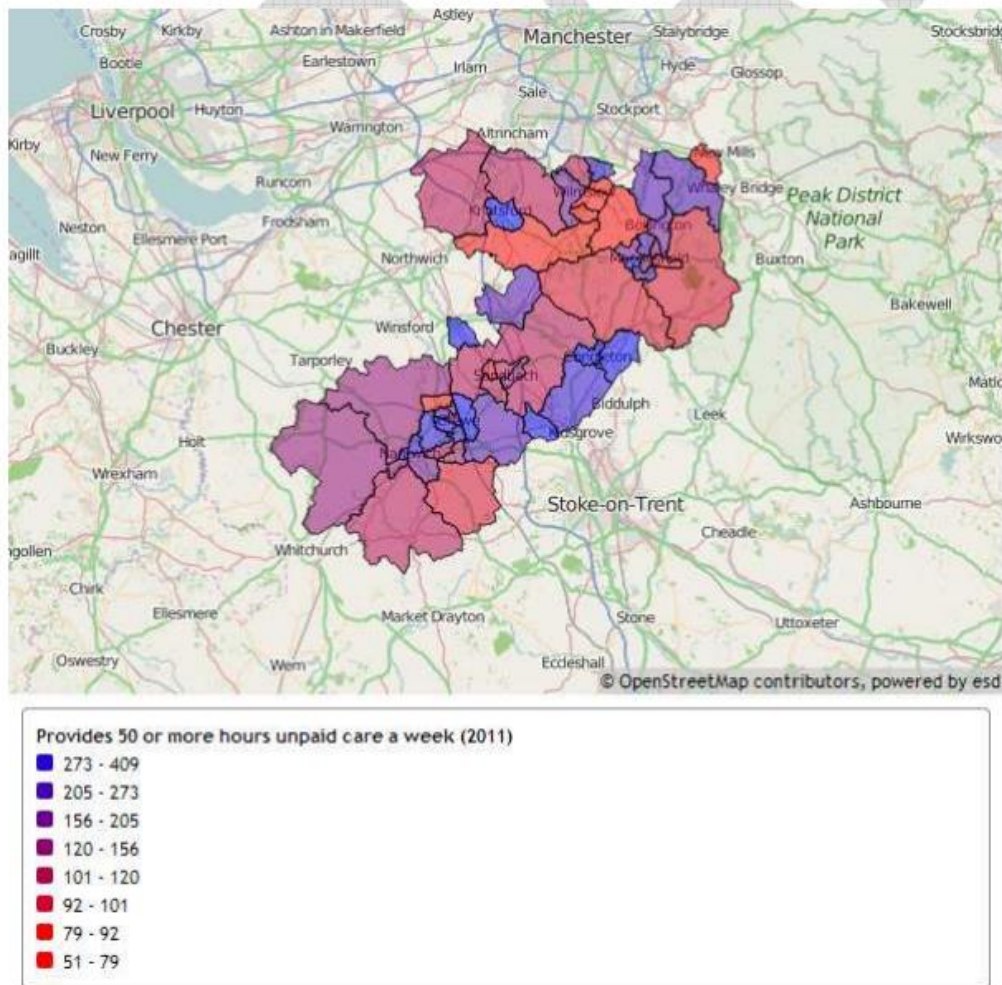
There is a drive throughout England for healthcare, social care, district and borough councils and the voluntary, community and faith sectors to develop integrated approaches to designing and delivering services. Cheshire East is driving hard the agenda along with other

partners to have an Integrated Care System (ICS) driving forwards a focus on the delivery of services in a local footprint. Promoting closer partnership working, these arrangements harness the potential of organisations that can link together to support carers and undertake their own action plans to align with the priorities in the strategy. There is a robust track record of health and social care working in partnership to envelop the support available to carers. However, we recognise that there is more to do, particularly to strengthen the governance that supports partnership work

### **Local Context & Demographics**

From the 2011 Census, we know that 12,453 people in Cheshire East identified themselves as caring for 20 hours per week or more, with a further 27,481 caring between 1 and 19 hours per week. Altogether that is almost 11% of the population of Cheshire East. caring for 50 hours or over has increased by nearly a third since 2001 to 8,014, with over 42% of them aged 65 or over Carers caring for 50 hours or more per week

### ***Carers caring for 50 hours or more per week by Cheshire East ward***



The 2021 Census is currently being evaluated; we would hope that the data gathered from the census will support the All Age Carers Strategy.

In Cheshire East there is a single point of access for carers to receive information, advice, and support through the Cheshire East Carers Hub. This is an all age service and supports young, adult and parent carers. To end of March 2021 there were 5,061 carers registered with the Hub. 1,160 new adult carers and 124 new young carers accessed the service in 2020/21.

The Cheshire East Carers Hub also carries out statutory carer's assessments on behalf of the Council. Between April 2020 and March 2021, the Hub completed 589 adult carers assessments and 99 young carers assessments.

## Health and Wellbeing

### Cheshire and Merseyside Health and Care Partnership Plan

The Cheshire and Merseyside Health and Care Partnership Plan has committed to actions that need to be taken across Health and Social Care and considers a more joined up approach to supporting all age Carers.

### Cheshire Clinical Commissioning Group Commissioning and Contracting Intentions 2020/21

The Cheshire Clinical Commissioning Group recognises the importance of Carers within their Cheshire Commissioning & Contracting Intentions 2020/21. Priority one is the development of a new service model to deliver person centred care for individuals and their Carer's.

The CCG wants to see:

- Increased number of people accessing support via social prescribers
- Increased focus on personalised care and people feeling empowered to self-care using digital options to make informed choices
- Reduced demand for appointments – GP, Hospital and Community Services
- Improved staff awareness of personal health budgets (PHB)
- Support Carers to maintain their caring role
- More people to access support to maintain their caring role
- Increase support to Young Carers
- Consistent offer for Carers across Cheshire
- 

They plan to implement this by

- Supporting the implementation of social prescribing link workers
- Continue to expand on current PHB offer and expand to children and young people and section 117 aftercare
- Community Contracts to support staff development and training around person patient centred care.
- Continue to build on programmes such as One You, Healthy You, and the NHS Long-term Plan

- To develop digital options for people to manage their own wellbeing
- Further developing an all age model to support Carers across Cheshire

<https://www.cheshireccg.nhs.uk/media/1782/cheshire-commissioning-and-contracting-intentions-2020-21.pdf>

The All Age Carers Strategy will align with the above priorities.

### **Local Need and Strengths (Assets)**

<https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/pdf/jsna/carers-jsna-june-2018-final-v2.pdf>

### **Healthwatch data**

<https://healthwatchcheshireeast.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Experiences-of-Unpaid-Carers-Registering-with-their-GP-Practice-in-Cheshire-Report-1.pdf>

### **Co-production together guide**

<https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/pdf/livewell/together/together-our-coproduction-guide-and-definition.pdf>

### **Corporate Plan**

[https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/council\\_and\\_democracy/council\\_information/consultations/corporate-plan-consultation.aspx](https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/council_and_democracy/council_information/consultations/corporate-plan-consultation.aspx)

### **Social Value**

<https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/pdf/business/procurement/cheshire-east-social-value-policy-nov-20.pdf>

## How will we achieve this?

### Key Delivery Actions

To enable us to successfully deliver the All Age Carers Strategy for Cheshire East several key delivery actions have been identified.

We will develop an outcomes-based approach to carers and their cared for and where services are provided for a carer that will achieve a set of results for the cared for.

We will deliver outcomes through working with the joint commission of the Carers Hub Service and by the development and Co-production of the All Age carers Strategy:

- Identifying the outcomes that are expected to be achieved prior to making any referrals to services
- Contracting for services based on outcomes and then monitoring based on those outcomes e.g. Joint commissioned carers service
- Work collaboratively with our health partners to ensure seamless pathways

Key Delivery Action	How we will achieve this?	Lead Organisation(s)
1. Develop a high quality and diverse range of services to support carers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a take a break service that will support carers</li> <li>• Emergency respite</li> <li>• Community respite</li> <li>• Flexible respite</li> <li>• Support Providers including the Voluntary Community and Faith Sector (VCFS) to support carers</li> <li>• Right information at the right time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commissioning Team including health</li> <li>• Communities Team</li> <li>• Commissioned carers service</li> <li>• Children's participation team</li> <li>• Schools / pastoral service</li> </ul>
2. Ensure that carers are supported and included in the support around the cared for	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of take a break service for carers</li> <li>• Commission of a joint hub and spoke carers service</li> <li>• Regular contract monitoring of commissioned carers service</li> <li>• Training and collaboration with all G.P practices</li> <li>• Collaboration with two hospitals for clearer carer pathways</li> <li>• Work collaboratively with children services and schools / education</li> <li>• Co-production of the All Age carers Strategy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commissioning Team including health &amp; children's services</li> <li>• Safeguarding team</li> <li>• Contracts and Quality Monitoring Team</li> <li>• Commissioned carers service</li> <li>• Carers Forum</li> </ul>



3. Encourage and increase the numbers of people using Direct Payments to carer support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide improved signposting and information about using direct payments</li> <li>• Promote alternative options in terms of carer support</li> <li>• Improve the Live Well site to support carers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commissioning Team</li> <li>• Live Well Team</li> <li>• Commissioned carers service</li> </ul>
4. Ensure Co-production in the future development of The All Age Carers Service across the whole of Cheshire East working closely and collaboratively with CWAC on the Joint Commission of the Carers Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work closely with carers, providers, operations teams to ensure we hear their voice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commissioned carers service</li> <li>• Carers Forum</li> <li>• Cheshire East Parent carer forum &amp; other forums</li> <li>• Schools and pastoral service</li> <li>• Children's Participation team</li> </ul>
5. Respond to the impact of COVID 19 and ensure carers are at the for front in all that we do	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build on the learning and feedback from the lockdowns</li> <li>• Encourage the use and access to technology for carers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commissioning Team</li> <li>• Operational Social Work Teams</li> <li>• Carers Forum</li> <li>• Other forums</li> </ul>
6. Ensure there is local support for carers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respond to need linking in with SW, G.P practices, hospitals</li> <li>• Revisit the Living Well fund and Carers Choice awards so we ensure that we support a carer where there is a real need e.g. care breakdown or to prevent care breakdown</li> <li>• Employment offer to support carers</li> <li>• Improve information and advice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commissioning Team,</li> <li>• Communities Team and health</li> <li>• Commissioned carers service</li> <li>• Carers Assessments</li> <li>• Carers Choice Awards</li> <li>• Living Well Fund</li> <li>• Local organisations</li> </ul>
7. Promote employment, volunteering, and skills development opportunities as an alternative to traditional day opportunities services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop stronger links between local employers, educational settings and community groups</li> <li>• Training and support on how to identify and support an employee who has caring responsibilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supported Employment Team</li> <li>• Operational Social Work Teams</li> <li>• Commissioned carers service</li> </ul>



<p><b>Staff with Caring Responsibilities</b></p> <p>The need to provide care is likely to affect most of us at some point in our working lives. With an ageing population and people living longer, many employees are finding themselves caring for older, disabled or seriously ill friends or family. Several people also fall into the 'sandwich generation' (those who care for ageing parents while supporting their own children) and have to juggle parental and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How can I provide care in a period of lockdown?</li> <li>• How can I juggle my childcare and caring responsibilities now that schools are closed?</li> </ul> <p>With support from CEC Human Resource Department, several support sessions have been held for CEC managers to raise the awareness of staff who have caring responsibilities. To encourage conversations</p>	<p>Develop the induction toolkit to support managers around support for carers</p> <p>Anything we commission will request what support they offer staff who have caring responsibilities</p> <p>Support sessions for staff who have caring responsibilities</p> <p>Have a clear definition of what it means to be a carer.</p> <p>Hold more support sessions for staff who have caring responsibilities</p> <p>Possible carer champions within the organisation</p> <p>Recognise carers within policies and procedures and regularly publicise your carers' policy/framework or guidance to all employees. Including induction documentation</p> <p>Do our commissioned services offer support for their staff who have caring responsibilities? 'What is their Offer'</p> <p>Promote other resources, such as occupational health and employee assistance programmes, and point to external sources of support</p>	<p>Commissioners</p> <p>CEC HR</p> <p>Children's team</p> <p>Administration and education</p> <p>Children's participation team</p> <p>Commissioned services</p> <p>Cheshire east Social Action partnership (CESAP)</p>
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with staff about any vulnerable household that are dependent on employees for care  8. Social Value	Need to raise awareness of the organisation's support for carers (through posters, leaflets, social events)	
<b>9. ICP</b>		

**References****Appendix****Abbreviations / Glossary****Acknowledgements****Key Documents****Budgets / Spend – Joint across Health and LA****Strategy Action/Implementation Plan**

**For further information of this draft document please contact**

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## EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM



Equality impact assessment is a requirement for all strategies, plans, functions, policies, procedures and services under the Equalities Act 2010. We are also required to publish assessments so that we can demonstrate how we have considered the impact of proposals.

Date 25.6.21	Version Number: V 1.1
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### Section 1: Description

Department	People	Lead officer responsible for assessment	Jill Stenton			
Service	Commissioning	Other members of team undertaking assessment	Colin Jacklin			
Date	25.6.21	Version	1.1			
Type of document (mark as appropriate)	Strategy X	Plan	Function	Policy	Procedure	Service
Is this a new/existing/revision of an existing document (mark as appropriate)	New	Existing	Revision X			
Title and subject of the impact assessment (include a brief description of the aims, outcomes , operational issues as appropriate and how it fits in with the wider aims of the organisation)  Please attach a copy of the strategy/plan/function/policy/procedure/service	<p><b>Carers Support Re-Commission and Draft Carers Strategy Development</b></p> <p>Existing support to carers is currently commissioned out to the Carers Hub service that covers the Cheshire East area. This contract is due to come to an end soon and a recommissioning process will commence in due course.</p> <p>It has been identified that many care issues cross Local Authority boundaries and some areas across the sub region have a greater level of accessibility than others. It has therefore been decided to run this a joint commissioning exercise between Cheshire East Council and Cheshire West &amp; Chester Councils. At the same time there is a need to refresh the existing Carers Strategy.</p>					

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	<p>The purpose of this EIA is therefore:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1). To assess any potential negative disproportionate effects on people with protected characteristics due to the recommission with particular reference to the change to its joint nature with Cheshire West and changed footprint</li> <li>2). To assess any potential negative disproportionate effects on people with protected characteristics due to the development of a new Carers Strategy</li> <li>3). To pay particular regard when assessing potential negative impacts, to the effects of the pandemic and forecast changes in demand and other determinants as the area enters into a recovery phase</li> </ol> <p>The outgoing strategies for reference are here:</p> <p> cec-carers-hub-eia-2018-signed-off-14.09.</p> <p> joint-carers-strategy-2016-2018.pdf</p> <p>The rationale for a single commission approach to carer support will remain unchanged and as described in the Carers Hub EIA above.</p> <p>The mission to recognise the vital support that carers provide and the need to promote available support, celebrate their importance and provide a support that will carefully and sensitively assess need provide practical support is also unchanged and as laid out in the previous strategy as above.</p> <p>A report is to be taken to the Council's Adult &amp; Health Committee to seek approval for the recommission of the carers hub. Research, reviews and consultation with residents and stakeholders will take place on the Pan Cheshire service offer.</p> <p>The Council has recently formed a Carers Partnership Board. This Board has met once and will be an excellent sounding board for this EIA.</p>
<p><b>Who are the main stakeholders?</b> (eg general public, employees, Councillors, partners, specific audiences)</p>	<p>People who use services Carers</p>

	Independent Sector Providers Commissioners Operational Staff NHS
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## Section 2: Initial screening

<b>Who is affected?</b> (This may or may not include the stakeholders listed above)	All the stakeholders identified.
<b>Who is intended to benefit and how?</b>	Carers, their families and the people they are caring for
<b>Could there be a different impact or outcome for some groups?</b>	Potentially
<b>Does it include making decisions based on individual characteristics, needs or circumstances?</b>	All social care services are offered on the basis of assessed eligible need.
<b>Are relations between different groups or communities likely to be affected?</b> (eg will it favour one particular group or deny opportunities for others?)	This will be identified through the on-going development of the strategy and this EIA which can be monitored by the Carers Partnership Board and any consultation processes. However, we don't anticipate that relations between different groups or communities will be affected, if anything they will be enhanced by greater links between the service provision and local stakeholders.
<b>Is there any specific targeted action to promote equality? Is there a history of unequal outcomes (do you have enough evidence to prove otherwise)?</b>	No – all decision and solutions will be based on a fully personalised approach. Alternative providers and future providers will be expected to evidence an equality and inclusion policy and plan.
<b>Is there an actual or potential negative impact on these specific characteristics? (Please tick)</b>	

Age		Y	Marriage & civil partnership		Y	Religion & belief		N	Carers	Y	
Disability		Y	Pregnancy & maternity		N	Sex		N	Socio-economic status	Y	
Gender reassignment		N	Race		N	Sexual orientation		N			
What evidence do you have to support your findings? (quantitative and qualitative) Please provide additional information that you wish to include as appendices to this document, i.e., graphs, tables, charts									Consultation/involvement carried out		
									Yes	No	
Age			There is strong evidence to confirm that caring responsibilities can have an especially negative impact on the lives of young people, and older adults. As the Strategy evolves so will this EIA in order to assess any disproportionate effects. These can then be fed back to the team developing the strategy to determine what mitigating actions can be put in place. As a starting point, existing data from the Carers Hub will be analysed to look at age profiles and any feedback that has been recorded about the negative impact of being young or elderly.							No	
Disability			We know that many carers are themselves elderly and may have disabilities/health conditions themselves. Existing data from the Carers Hub will be analysed to assess how many carers currently being supported fall into this category and any particular negative impacts that are surfacing.							No	
Gender reassignment			No recording of gender reassignment takes place on the Council's social care record system as such data on this will be unavailable. However, there is no known element in these proposals which is likely to lead to discrimination on the basis of this protected characteristic.							No	
Marriage & civil partnership			It is possible that caring duties could place additional strain in marriages for instance when one of the couple is carrying out caring duties. There is no known data on this and so could be a subject for discussion at the newly formed Carers Partnership Board and to see if further consultation is required.							No	
Pregnancy & maternity			It is possible that some couples who had been planning a family may have had to delay these plans if they have needed to take on some caring duties of a family member. There is no direct evidence of this as yet. However, this could							No	

	be a subject for discussion at the newly formed Carers Partnership Board and to see if further consultation is required.		
<b>Race</b>	Analysis needs to take place to establish if there is a disproportionately low take up of carer support from ethnic minority people. Anecdotal evidence suggests that many families especially from Asian, Afro-Caribbean and Chinese ethnicities tend to provide “in-family” care and not always seek needed support. This this could be a subject for discussion at the newly formed Carers Partnership Board to see if further consultation is required.		<b>No</b>
<b>Religion &amp; belief</b>	It is possible that families who take part in and our part of a religious community may benefit from emotional, spiritual and practical support e.g. through church support. It is not known what overall beneficial effect that this brings but could be a subject for discussion at the newly formed Carers Partnership Board and to see if further consultation is required.		<b>No</b>
<b>Sex</b>	The patterns of caring are different in men and women. The majority of adults caring are women although the percentage of carers who are men increases with age. As a starting point, existing data from the Carers Hub will be analysed to look at this.		<b>No</b>
<b>Sexual orientation</b>	Data is not routinely recorded related to this protected characteristic for customers. However, there is no known evidence to suggest an impact is likely for this group.		<b>No</b>
<b>Carers</b>	This protected characteristic group is the subject of this EIA.		<b>No</b>
<b>Socio-economic status</b>	Carers who have high levels of savings may not need to continue to work and choose to take up a caring duty (e.g. of a family member) and then give up work. This choice may not be possible for someone who has to maintain work in order to have sufficient income to live/keep their house/pay rent, bills etc. Additional strain may feature for people who have to maintain full-time work and commit to caring duties. As a starting point, existing data from the Carers Hub will be analysed to look at this and then discussed at the Carers Partnership Board to see if further consultation is required.		<b>No</b>
<b>Proceed to full impact assessment? (Please tick)</b>	<b>Yes</b>		<b>Date 25/6/21</b>

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If yes, please proceed to Section 3. If no, please publish the initial screening as part of the suite of documents relating to this issue

### Section 3: Identifying impacts and evidence

This section identifies if there are impacts on equality, diversity and cohesion, what evidence there is to support the conclusion and what further action is needed

Protected characteristics	Is the policy (function etc....) likely to have an adverse impact on any of the groups?  Please include evidence (qualitative & quantitative) and consultations	Are there any positive impacts of the policy (function etc....) on any of the groups?  Please include evidence (qualitative & quantitative) and consultations	Please rate the impact taking into account any measures already in place to reduce the impacts identified <b>High:</b> Significant potential impact; history of complaints; no mitigating measures in place; need for consultation <b>Medium:</b> Some potential impact; some mitigating measures in place, lack of evidence to show effectiveness of measures <b>Low:</b> Little/no identified impacts; heavily legislation-led; limited public facing aspect	Further action (only an outline needs to be included here. A full action plan can be included at Section 4)
Age	There is strong evidence to confirm that caring responsibilities can have an especially negative impact on the lives of young people, and older adults. As the Strategy evolves so will this EIA in order to assess any disproportionate effects. These can then be fed back to the team developing the strategy to determine what mitigating actions can be out on place.		Medium	As a starting point, existing data from the Carers Hub will be analysed to look at age profiles and any feedback that has been recorded about the negative impact of being young or elderly people.  This will help to shape the development of the new Carers Strategy and the



	<p>There would appear to be no disproportionate effect on this group regarding the service being expanded to the larger area.</p> <p>The effects of the pandemic may have increased the demand on existing informal caring duties. If the carer is themselves elderly or with a health condition then they may not have been able to directly carry out some of the previous support roles (e.g. going to the pharmacy or taking some respite and going out to the theatre/pub etc.). This will ease as all restrictions are eased but there may be some legacy effects that need to be analysed.</p>			recommissioning process for the Carers Support Service
<b>Disability</b>	<p>We know that many carers are themselves elderly and may have disabilities/ health conditions themselves.</p> <p>There would appear to be no disproportionate effect on this group regarding the service being expanded to the larger area.</p> <p>The effects of the pandemic may have increased the demand on existing informal caring duties. If the carer is disabled (and in a vulnerable group) then they may not have been able to directly carry</p>	.	Medium	<p>Existing data from the Carers Hub will be analysed to assess how many carers currently being supported fall into this category and any particular negative impacts that are surfacing.</p> <p>This will help to shape the development of the new Carers Strategy and the recommissioning process for the Carers Support Service.</p>

	<p>out some of the previous support roles (eg going to the pharmacy or taking some respite and going out to the theatre/pub etc.) This will ease as all restrictions are eased but there may be some legacy effects that need to be analysed.</p>			
<b>Gender reassignment</b>	<p>No recording of gender reassignment takes place on the Council's social care record system as such data on this will be unavailable. However, there is no known element in these proposals which is likely to lead to discrimination of the basis of this protected characteristic.</p>		Low	
<b>Marriage &amp; civil partnership</b>	<p>It is possible that caring duties could place additional strain in marriages for instance when one of the couple is carrying out caring duties.</p> <p>There would appear to be no disproportionate effect on this group regarding the service being expanded to the larger area.</p>		Medium	<p>There is no known data on this and so could be a subject for discussion at the newly formed Carers Partnership Board and to see if further consultation is required.</p>

	<p>The effects of the pandemic may have also put additional strain on couples with caring duties who have also had to contend with home education of their children during lockdown. There may be a legacy effect of this post-pandemic.</p>			<p>This will help to shape the development of the new Carers Strategy and the recommissioning process for the Carers Support Service</p>
<b>Pregnancy and maternity</b>	<p>It is possible that some couples who had been planning a family may have had to delay these plans if they have needed to take on some caring duties of a family member.</p> <p>There would appear to be no disproportionate effect on this group re the service being expanded to the larger area.</p> <p>No obvious COVID issues relate to this group.</p>		Medium	<p>There is no direct evidence of this as yet. However, this could be a subject for discussion at the newly formed Carers Partnership Board and to see if further consultation is required.</p> <p>This will help to shape the development of the new Carers Strategy and the recommissioning process for the Carers Support Service</p>
<b>Race</b>	<p>Analysis needs to take place to establish if there is a disproportionately low take up of carer support from ethnic minority people. Anecdotal evidence suggests that many families especially from Asian, Afro-Caribbean and Chinese ethnicities tend to provide “in-family” care and not always seek needed support.</p>		Medium	<p>This this could be a subject for discussion at the newly formed Carers Partnership Board to see if further consultation is required.</p> <p>This will help to shape the development of the new Carers Strategy and the</p>

	<p>There would appear to be no disproportionate effect on this group regarding the service being expanded to the larger area.</p> <p>The effects of the pandemic may have increased the demand on existing informal caring duties. If the carer is from an ethnic minority group it is more likely that they will not have historically sought support. If this non take up of support continued during lockdown then the increase demands and strain may have been felt even more acutely. This will ease as all restrictions are eased but there may be some legacy effects that need to be analysed.</p>			recommissioning process for the Carers Support Service.
<b>Religion &amp; belief</b>	<p>It is possible that families who take part in and our part of a religious community may benefit from emotional, spiritual and practical support e.g. through church support.</p> <p>There would appear to be no disproportionate effect on this group regarding the service being expanded to the larger area.</p>		Medium	<p>It is not known what overall beneficial effect that this brings but could be a subject for discussion at the newly formed Carers Partnership Board and to see if further consultation is required.</p> <p>This will help to shape the development of the new Carers Strategy and the recommissioning process for the Carers Support Service</p>

<b>Sex</b>	<p>The patterns of caring are different in men and women. The majority of adults caring are women although the percentage of carers who are men increases with age.</p> <p>There would appear to be no disproportionate effect on this group regarding the service being expanded to the larger area.</p> <p>The effects of the pandemic may have increased the demand on existing informal caring duties. Females are the predominant carers. Often their jobs are within sectors that have been hit harder by the pandemic. This could have a doubling effect if reduced income at the same time as maintaining significant caring duties.</p>		Medium	<p>As a starting point, existing data from the Carers Hub will be analysed to look at this.</p> <p>This will help to shape the development of the new Carers Strategy and the recommissioning process for the Carers Support Service</p>
<b>Sexual orientation</b>	Data is not routinely recorded related to this protected characteristic for customers. However, there is no known evidence to suggest an impact is likely for this group.		Low	
<b>Carers</b>	This protected characteristic group is the subject of this EIA.		High	
<b>Socio-economics</b>	Carers who have high levels of savings may not need to continue		Medium	As a starting point, existing data from the Carers Hub will

	<p>to work and choose to take up a caring duty (e.g. of a family member) and then give up work.</p> <p>This choice may not be possible for someone who has to maintain work in order to have sufficient income to live/keep their house/pay rent, bills etc. Additional strain may feature for people who have to maintain full-time work and commit to caring duties.</p> <p>There would appear to be no disproportionate effect on this group regarding the service being expanded to the larger area.</p> <p>The effects of the pandemic may have increased the demand on existing informal caring duties. If the carer is from a low income group then it is more likely that their job will have been furloughed (eg hospitality, travel, non-essential retail, beauty/hairstressing etc). This will ease as all restrictions are eased but there may be some legacy effects that need to be analysed.</p>			<p>be analysed to look at this and then discussed at the Carers Partnership Board to see if further consultation is required. This will help to shape the development of the new Carers Strategy and the recommissioning process for the Carers Support Service</p>
<p><b>Is this project due to be carried out wholly or partly by contractors? If yes, please indicate how you have ensured that the partner organisation complies with equality legislation (e.g. tendering, awards process, contract, monitoring and performance measures)</b></p>				

The same principles in this process will be applied to any potential provider, spec development and commissioning. The tendering and awarding process will consider this as part of the assessment process. Additionally, ongoing effective monitoring of contracts will take place. The provider will be organised, and Services provided, in a way which does not discriminate against the Service User or Employee in respect of any of the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.

#### Section 4: Review and conclusion

**Summary: provide a brief overview including impact, changes, improvement, any gaps in evidence and additional data that is needed**

The initial action that will be planned around all the above will focus on analysis of existing data from the Carers Hub. This will then be presented and discussed at the Carers Partnership Board to see if further consultation is required. This will help to shape the development of the new Carers Strategy and the recommissioning process for the Carers Support Service.

Specific actions to be taken to reduce, justify or remove any adverse impacts	How will this be monitored?	Officer responsible	Target date
Identification of individuals currently accessing services and good communications of the service change.	Carers Partnership Board  Carers is a cross cutting theme in most other groups and partnerships as well and so feedback will be sought from this wider network as well	Jill Stenton	25.6.21
<b>Please provide details and link to full action plan for actions</b>	A full action plan will be developed and a dedicate sub-group of the Carers Partnership Board will be formed to oversee this		
<b>When will this assessment be reviewed?</b>	23.8.21		

Are there any additional assessments that need to be undertaken in relation to this assessment?	N/A		
Lead officer signoff			
Head of service signoff			

Please publish this completed EIA form on your website

DRAFT



Draft Copy

Issue date – xx/xx/2021



## **Carers Provider Market Engagement Questionnaire**

Cheshire East Council is seeking to engage on the development and delivery of a comprehensive All Age Carers Strategy.

Anyone can become a carer, and carers come from all walks of life, all cultures and can be any age. Many feel that they're doing what anyone would do in the same situation, caring for a mother, father, wife, husband, son, daughter or best friend, for example. Around 3 in 5 people will be carers at some point in their lives.

There are nearly six million unpaid carers in the UK. You are a carer if you provide unpaid support with day to day living tasks or personal care to a family member or friend such as helping them to wash, get dressed, eat, taking them to appointments, or keeping them company when they feel lonely or anxious. Those you care for could be ill, frail, disabled, suffer from poor mental health or have a substance or alcohol misuse problem.

Often carers care for more than one person and there may be family situations where, for example, a couple mutually care for each other and there is no main carer.

In Cheshire East, around 42,000 people identify themselves as carers. This does not include the carers of all ages that we're unaware of, 'hidden' from mainstream services and support, either not recognising or choosing not to declare their caring role.

A young carer is someone under 18 who helps look after someone in their family, or a friend, who is ill, disabled, has a mental health condition or misuses drugs or alcohol. It could be a brother or sister or a parent or grandparent.

We are seeking to develop a co-produced All Age Carers strategy involving people who use services, their families/carers, and providers, that explains what the Council offers around the support for carers. The aim is to provide carers with choices, information and advice, support, and guidance to fulfil their role as a carer but also to assist them in whilst maintaining good health and wellbeing.

When services are provided, we want them to be of a high quality. We want to design a strategy to ensure that future carer services are relevant, flexible, affordable, and developed in line with the learning and good practice developed during the current pandemic so that we can ensure people's needs are met.

### **Why are we looking to engage?**

We need to ensure carers are better prepared for caring and can get support early to look after their own health and wellbeing with easily available advice and information as well as learning and training for carers to help them plan, prepare and provide care

## How will we engage?

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 Pandemic we are unable to hold face-to-face meetings at this present time. Therefore, we will be using a variety of ways to reach out to as many people, organisations, and forums as possible through questionnaires, virtual focus groups and online market engagement events.

## Completing this Questionnaire

We want to hear from providers who currently deliver services or those who may look to deliver them in the future and give you the opportunity to make comments and suggestions about the way that services are provided in the future in relation to supporting carers.

We are seeking to obtain the views from a wide range of providers of day opportunities, including voluntary sector organisations, community groups and organisations who can provide information and advice and how they identify and support carers within their environment.

Your responses will be used by commissioners, in commercial confidence, to help in the development of a co-produced All Age Carers Strategy for Cheshire East.

If possible, please try to limit the size of your response to each question to ensure that it is brief and to the point. Simple bullet point responses would be acceptable for certain questions. Please ensure that you clearly state any assumptions made when responding.

Please note, you are not obliged to answer all or any of the questions asked within the questionnaire. Your responses will not be scored in anyway. This is an information gathering exercise to inform our strategy and is not a pre-qualification process. Completion of this questionnaire does not create any formal relationship between the responder and the Council.

You must carefully consider the use of phrases such as “in confidence” or “commercially sensitive” when responding since they will not necessarily protect your organisation’s information from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. If any of the information submitted by your organisation is considered commercially sensitive, you should clearly identify such information as “commercially sensitive”.

At this point this is an opportunity for you to have your say and provide the Council with feedback to us to enable your organisation to have the opportunity to contribute and influence the future redesign, to ensure that services are fit for purpose, meet the assessed outcomes of carers and in turn help support the needs of the cared for.

<b>Name of Provider/Organisation:</b>
<b>Email Address:</b> <b>This will be used for contacting you regarding future developments around carer opportunities</b>
<b>1. Please provide a short summary (no more than 500 words) of the service you deliver that supports carers. This should include details on:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>The type of support provided (building based, community based, workplace based etc)</b></li> <li><b>client group(s) you support,</b></li> <li><b>location, of services</b></li> <li><b>current cost of attending the services (day/weekly rate if applicable)</b></li> </ul>
<b>If you don't currently deliver any services, please leave blank, add n/a and move on to Q2.</b>

<p>2. In terms of providing future services, please state how you could potentially help Cheshire East widen its current offer by supporting carers in developing innovative ways that can be cost effective providing positive outcomes for a carer and the cared for</p>

<p>3. What potential barriers or issues do you feel that would need to be taken into account and may prevent you (as a provider) from considering developing a wider offer for a carer (this could include cost implications, staffing capacity and capability, implications of COVID-19, locations etc)</p>

<p>4. Cheshire East Council are considering developing a Take a Break service for carers for the future commissioning</p> <p><i>Offering a take a break service for carers will give them an opportunity to take some time out from their caring duties knowing that their loved one is in safe hands either for a few hours of the day or to gain a good night's sleep to recharge their batteries</i></p> <p>Would your organisation be willing to tender to deliver commissioned services in the future? Please list any potential positive and negative aspects of this proposed approach.</p>

<p>5. Are there any other points of consideration that you feel that the Council would need to consider when commissioning breaks for carers</p>

Many thanks for taking the time to complete this questionnaire, your participation and responses are appreciated.

Deadline for questionnaire responses is **TBC**

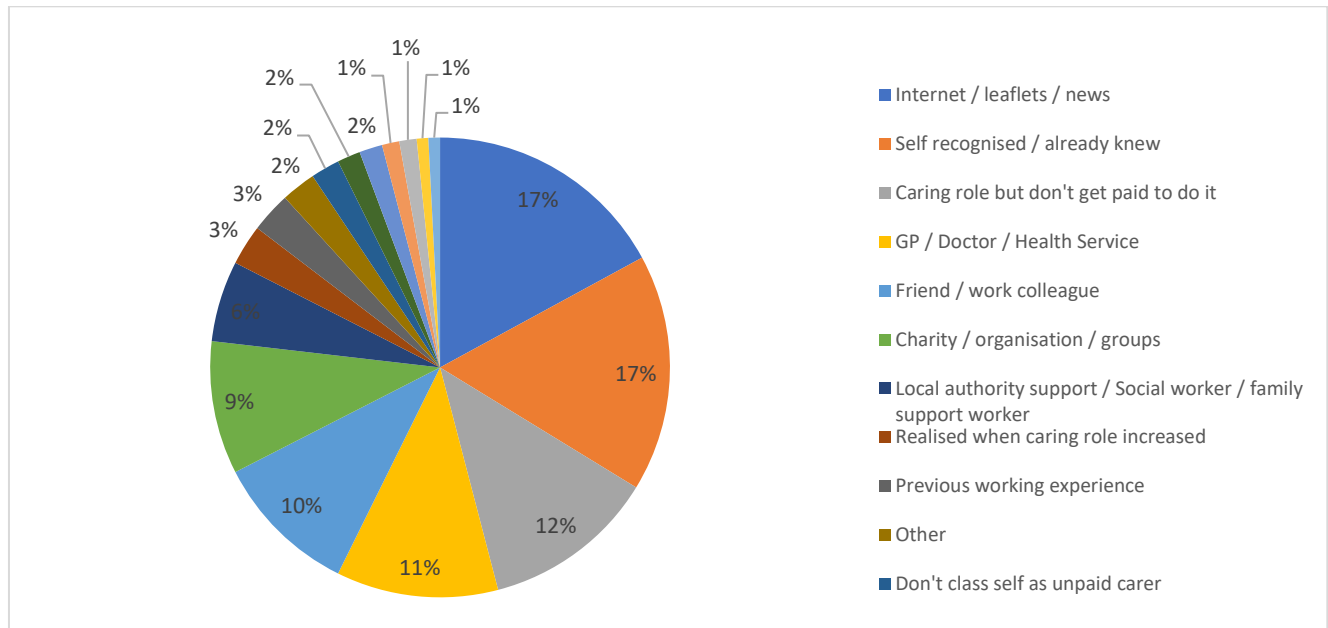
Please either email or upload completed forms via The Chest or if you have queries, these should be addressed to **TBC**

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## Cheshire East All Age Carers Survey Results

### 1. How did you know that you were an unpaid carer?

Mixture of reasons given for how carers recognised they had an unpaid caring role. Largest number of comments reflected that they used the internet, leaflets and/or news articles; or were able to recognise themselves easily that they were a carer. A number of people commented how it was the fact they didn't get paid to provide care that emphasises how they are an 'unpaid' carer.



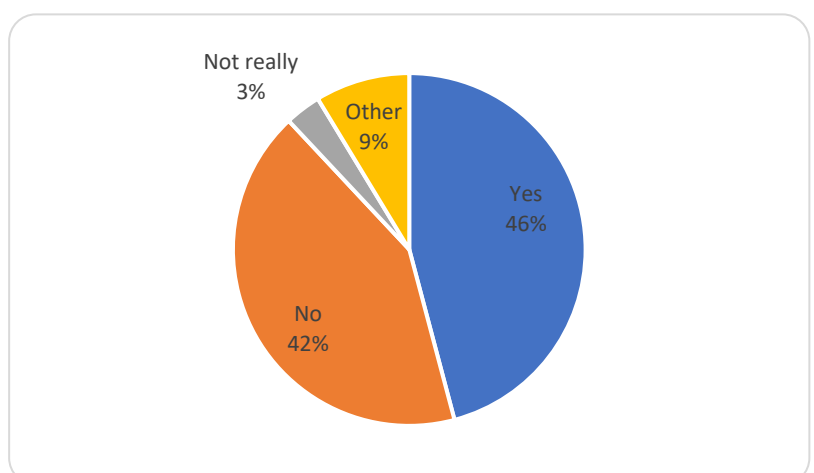
### 2. Did it take you a while to realise that you were an unpaid carer?

Fairly even split between people noting that Yes it did take time to realise and No it didn't. Other comments included:

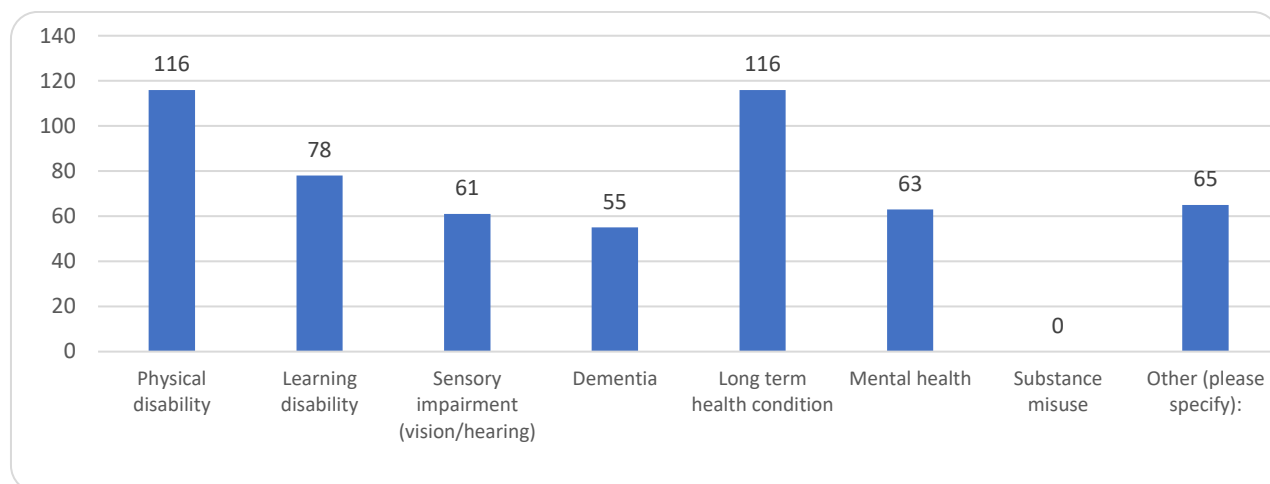
*"You care because they are family and you do what you do because you love them"*

*"I'm not. I'm a mum, wife, daughter... I also don't recognise paid support staff as 'carers'. Why are they referred to as 'carers', not 'paid carers'?"*

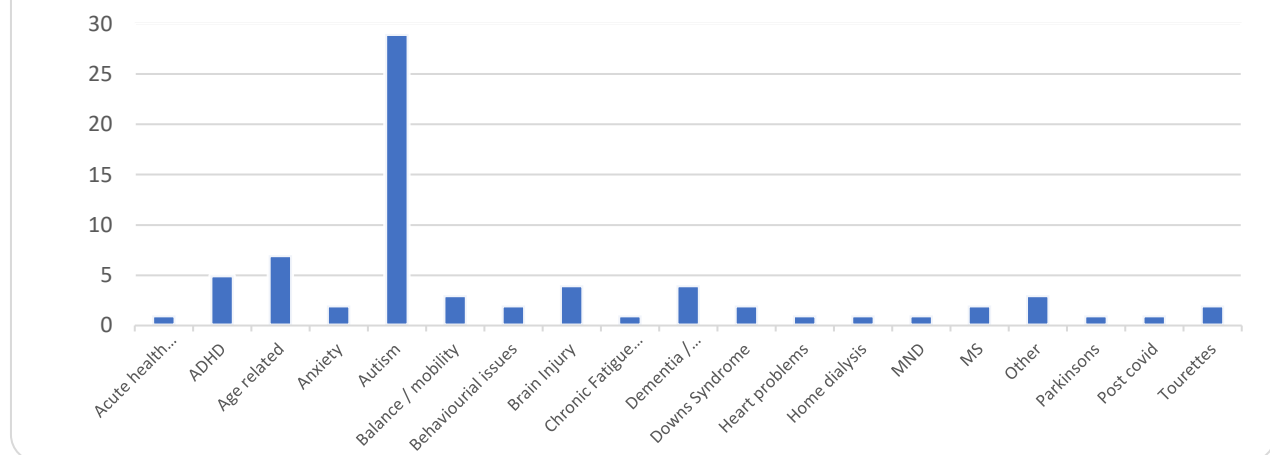
*"Covid-19 has brought home to me that I am an unpaid carer when I realised my parents wouldn't cope if I was ill. This has caused me a lot of worry."*



### 3. Thinking about the person you care for, which below best describes their situation?

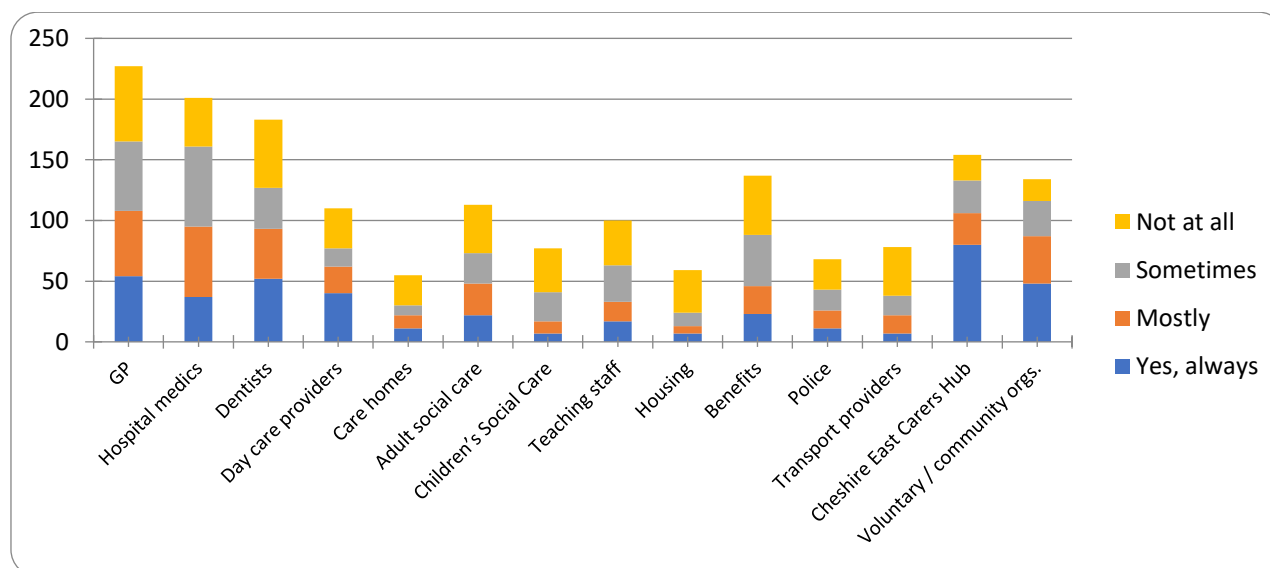


#### Other conditions noted:

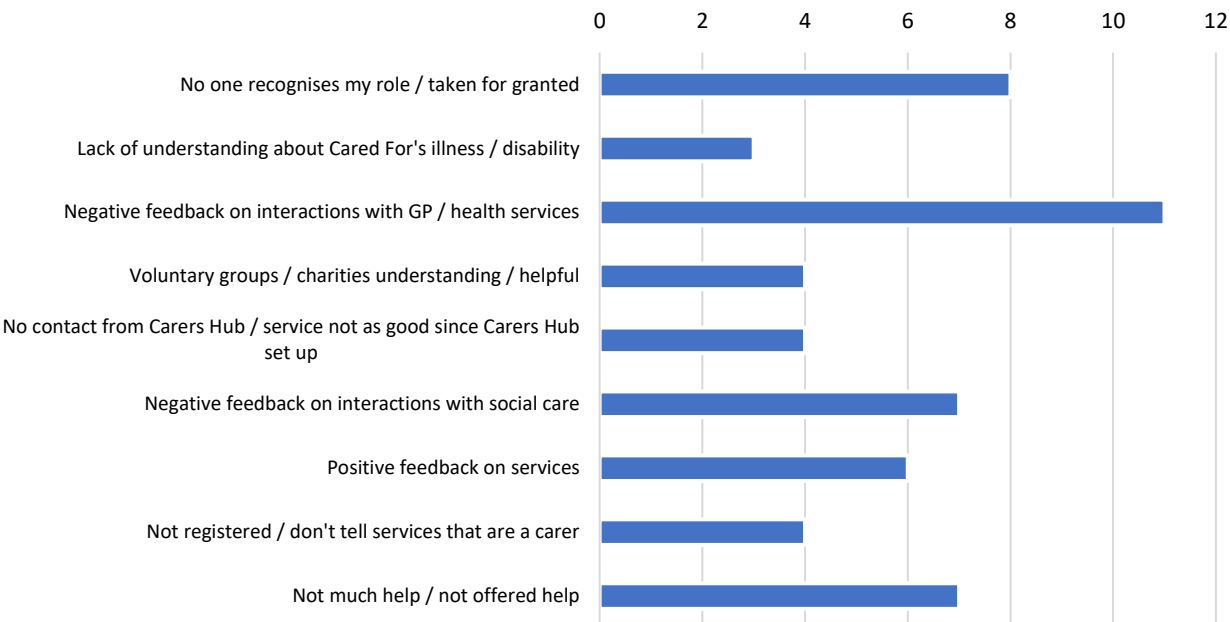


The main 'other' condition noted was Autism.

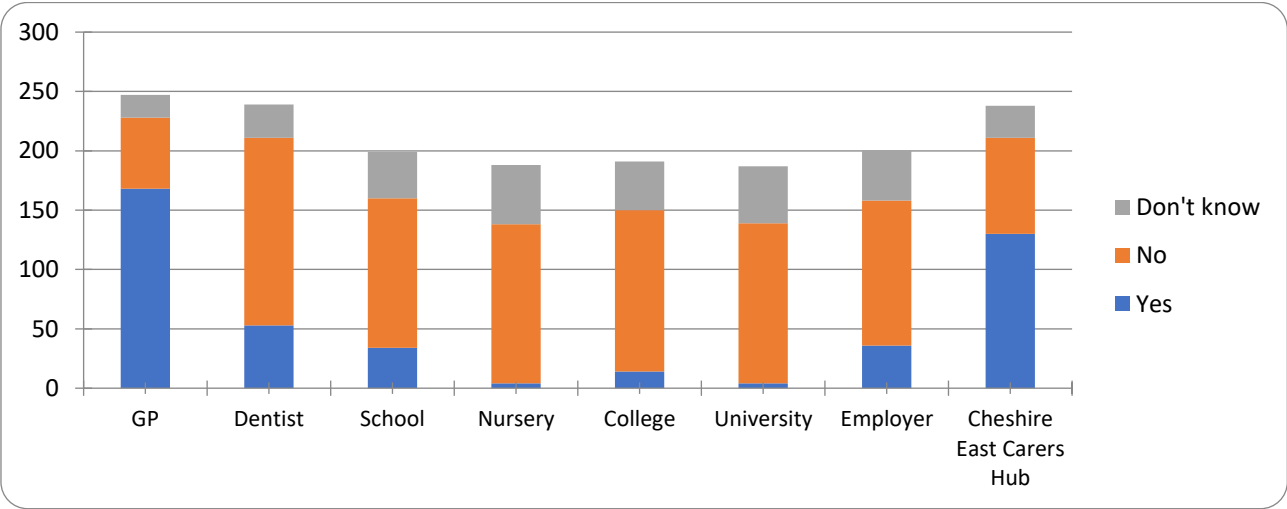
### 4. Do you feel that your role as a carer is seen and respected by the services listed below?



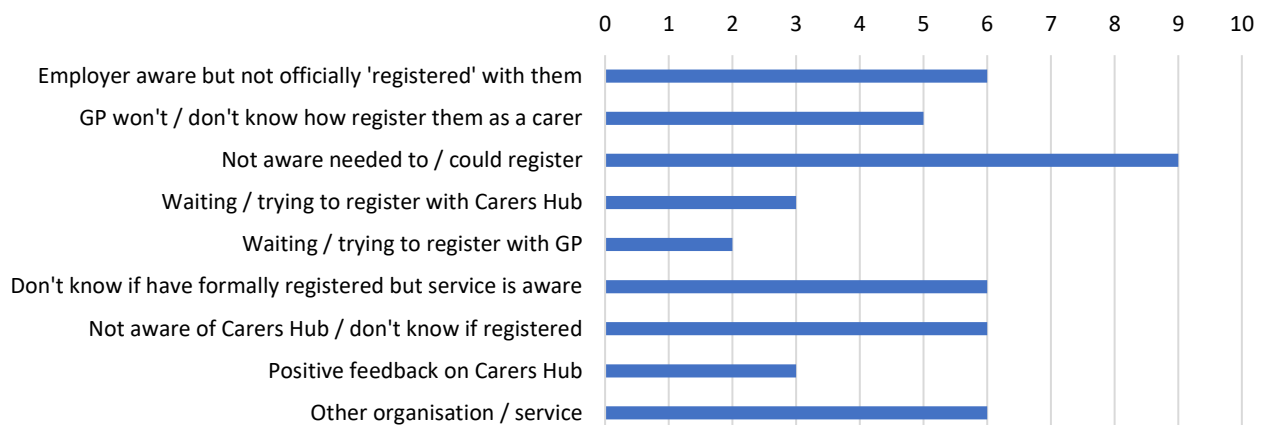
Themes of other comments made for do you feel that your role as a carer is seen & respected



5. Have you registered / recorded your role as an unpaid carer with any of the services below?

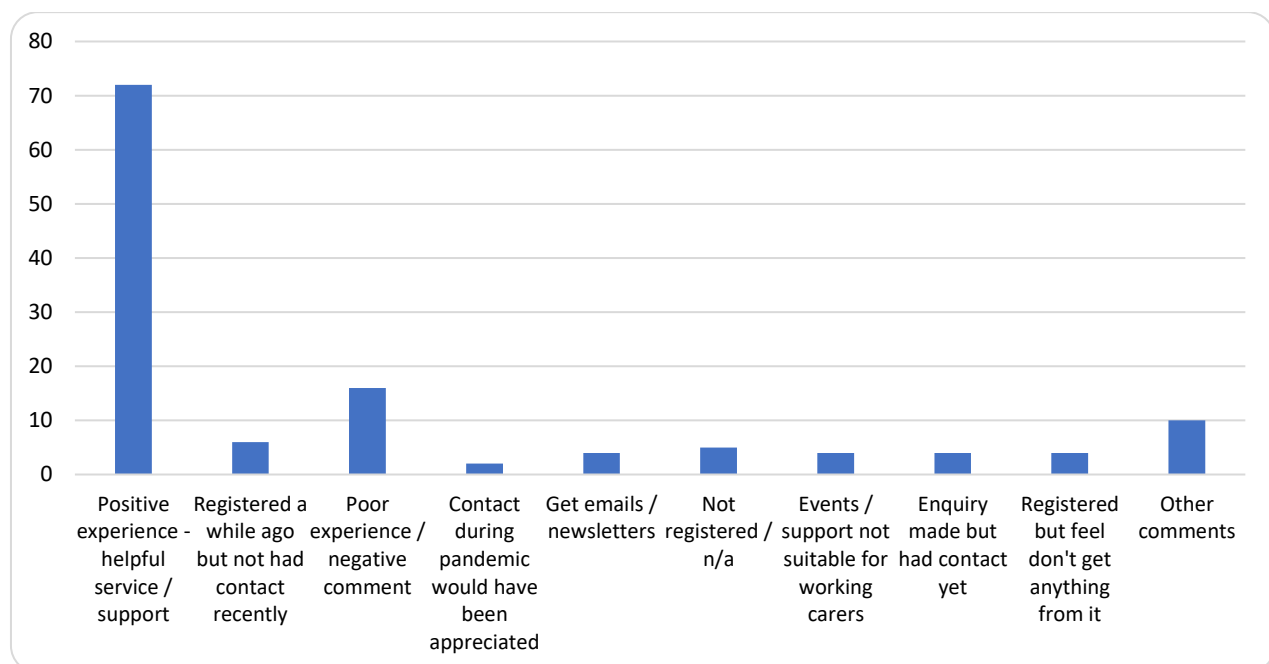


### Themes of other comments for have you recorded / registered your role as a carer



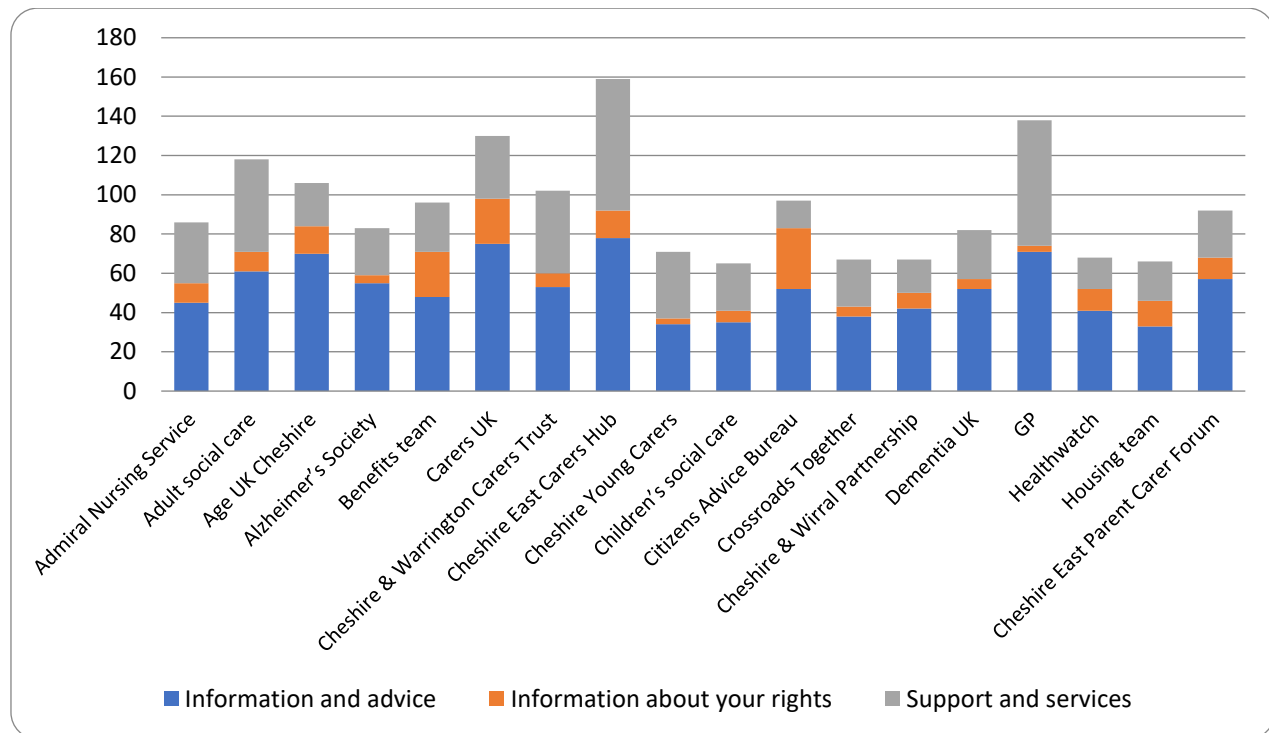
### 6. We asked carers to share their experiences of registering with the Cheshire East Carers Hub.

127 carers gave an answer to this question and the below chart summarises the themes of their answers. There were 72 comments (57%) noting a positive experience of registering with the Carers Hub



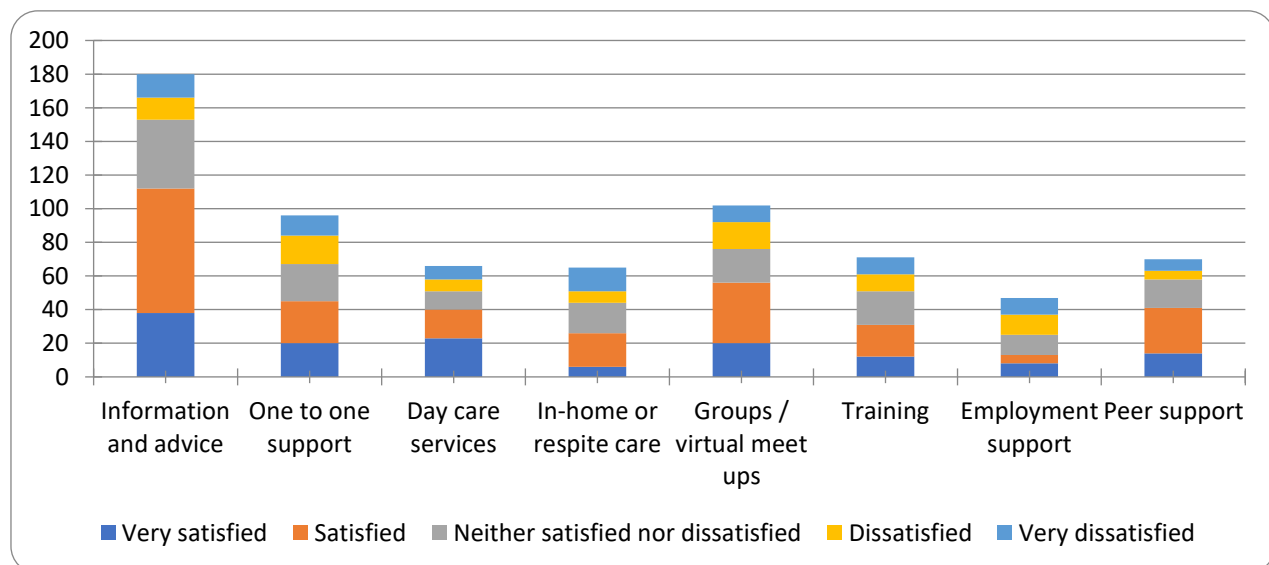


**7. Where would you go to seek information, advice and support about your rights and your role as a carer?**



Other organisations noted include Space4Autism, SENDIASS, Cheshire Buddies, Ruby's fund, MND Association, Dementia Reablement, In Control, Kidney Care UK, peer support and ADCA. There were also a number of comments from carers that they would have liked to select more than one option for some services as they use them for more than one element (e.g. information, advice and support).

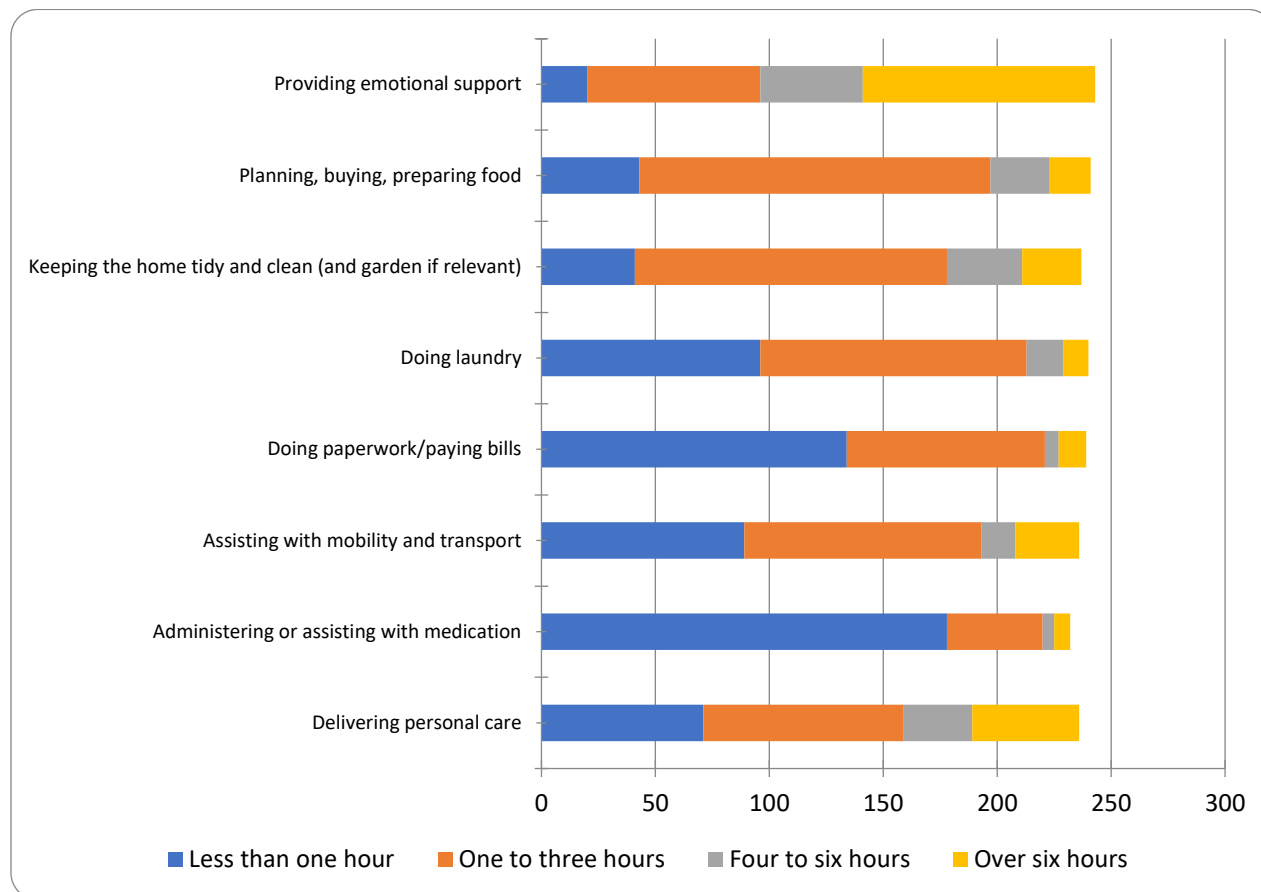
**8. If you have received support in your caring role, what types of support have you had and how satisfied or dissatisfied were you with this?**



Comments received in relation to this question were mixed. A number of other services were mentioned including positive feedback for Space4Autism, Admiral nurses at ECH and Cheshire & Warrington Carers

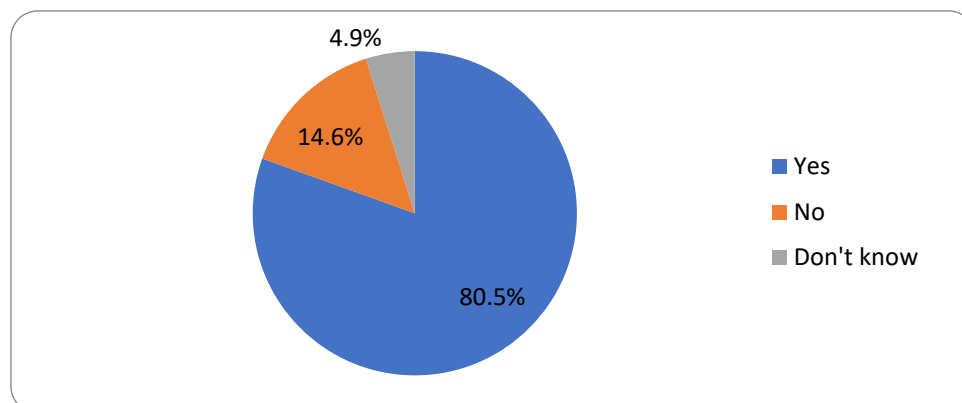
Trust. Some carers noted that they had not received any support, a couple noted that support groups are not always local and have trouble with transport and that can't attend some groups as can't leave the person they care for alone.

**9. Thinking about your role as a carer, select the average number of hours you think you spend each day on the support tasks below?**

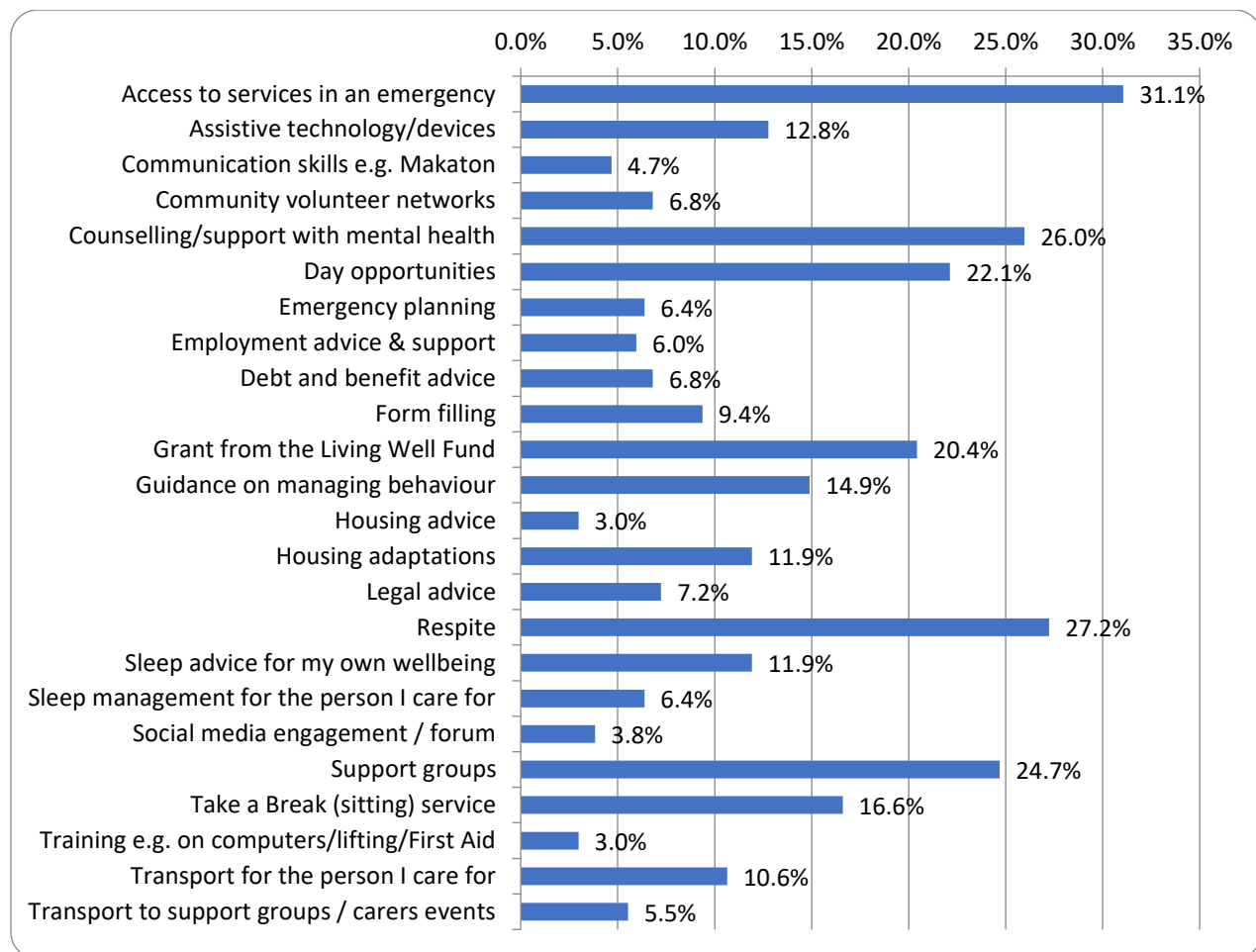


Carers spend the most amount of time each day providing emotional support and delivering person care. Tasks taking a medium length of time include food tasks, cleaning and laundry. Administering medications and doing paperwork are tasks that take the shortest amount of time.

**10. Do you feel if this has increased in the last year due to the impact of Covid?**



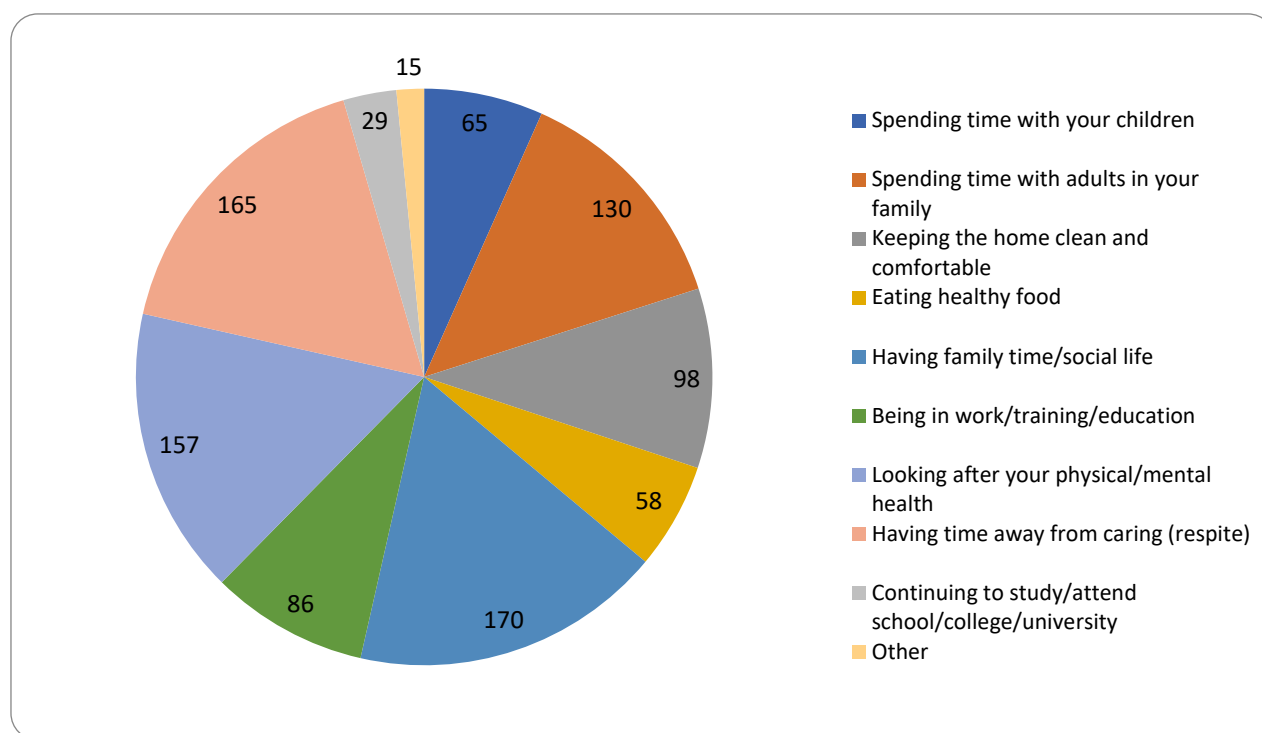
**11. Which of the following types of information and support would help you the most in your caring role?**



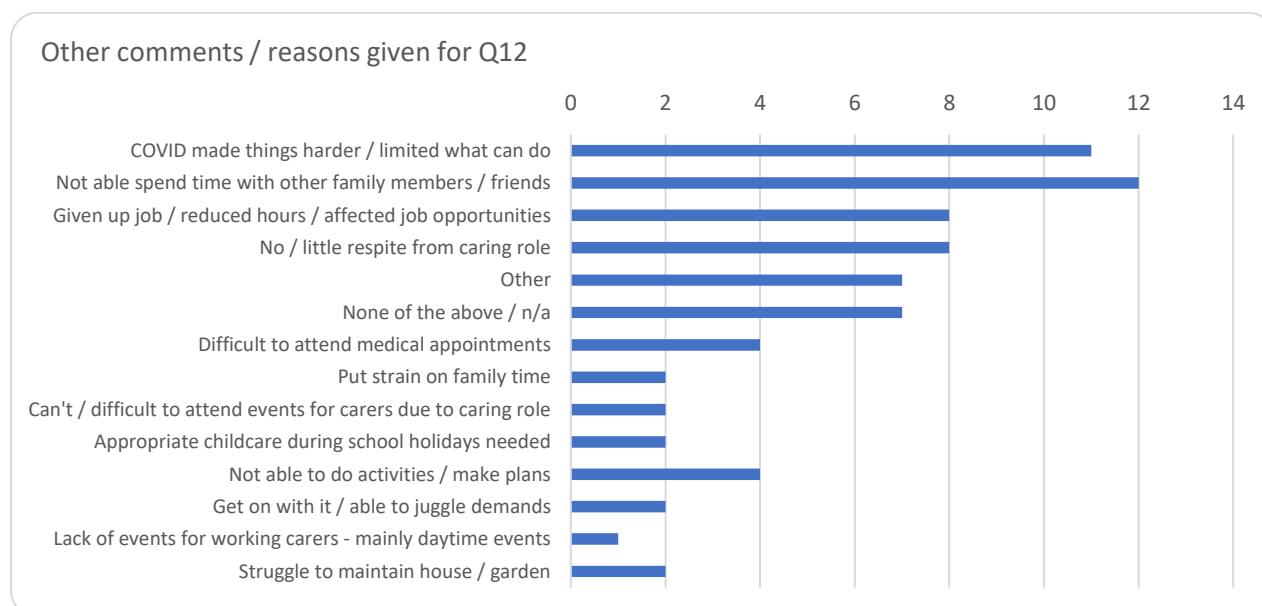
Top 5 types of information & support identified by carers that would help them most:

Access to services in an emergency	31.1%
Respite	27.2%
Counselling / support with mental health	26.0%
Support groups	24.7%
Day opportunities	22.1%

**12. Does your caring role make it difficult for you to do any of the activities below?**

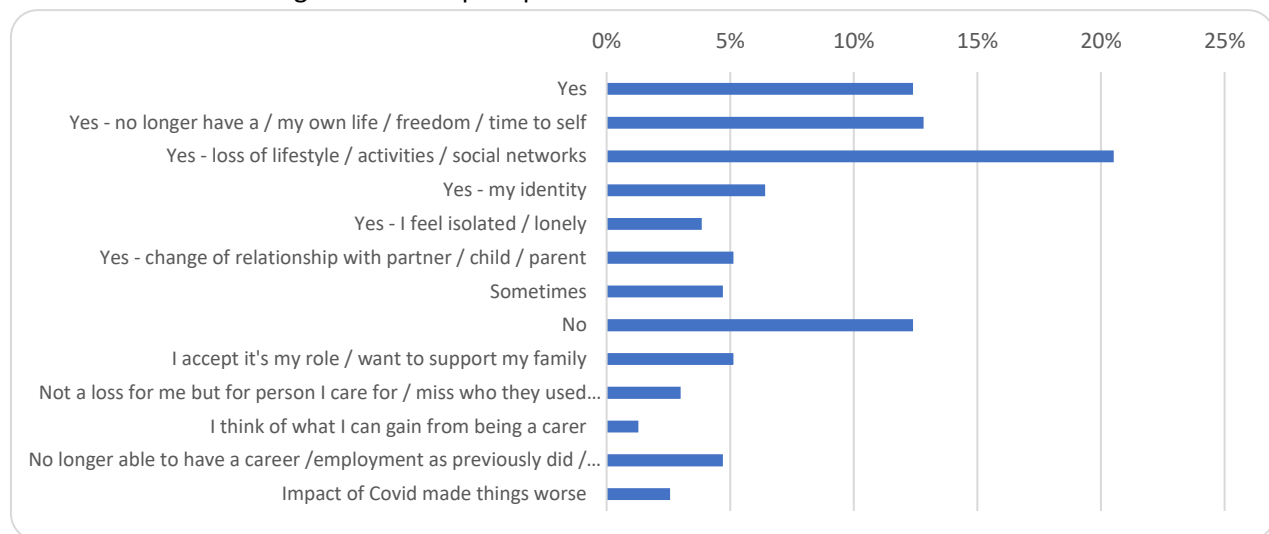


The highest number of responses for having family time / social life, looking after their own physical / mental health and having time away from their caring role. This was also reflected in the other comments made, as well as the impact of COVID and lockdowns on being able undertake activities outside of caring role.



### 13. Do you feel any sense of loss because of your caring role?

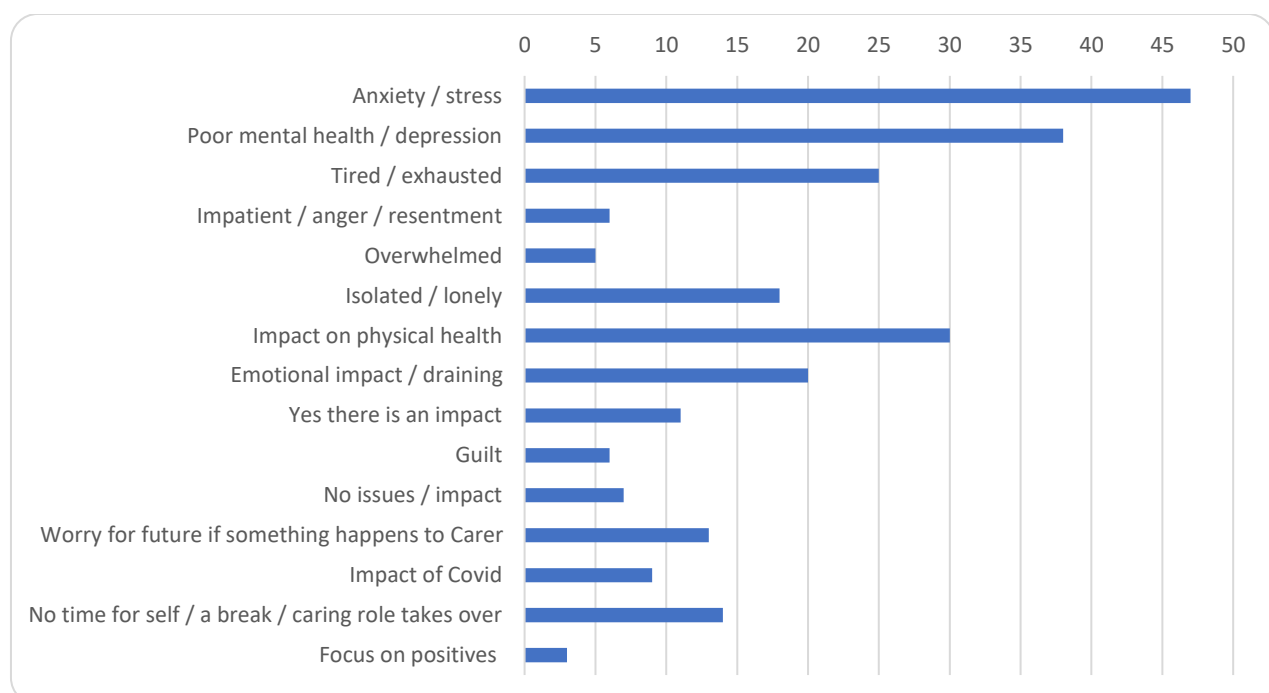
Themes of the answers given to this open question.



69% of carers noted that they have experienced some sense of loss because of their caring role. 21% noted in particular that they have experienced a loss of their own lifestyle with no longer being able to partake in hobbies, activities and social networks due to caring for someone else. 13% noted that their caring role hadn't caused a sense of loss. The impact of Covid & lockdowns has also made situations worse for a few carers.

### 14. Please tell us if your caring role has affected your emotional, mental or physical wellbeing

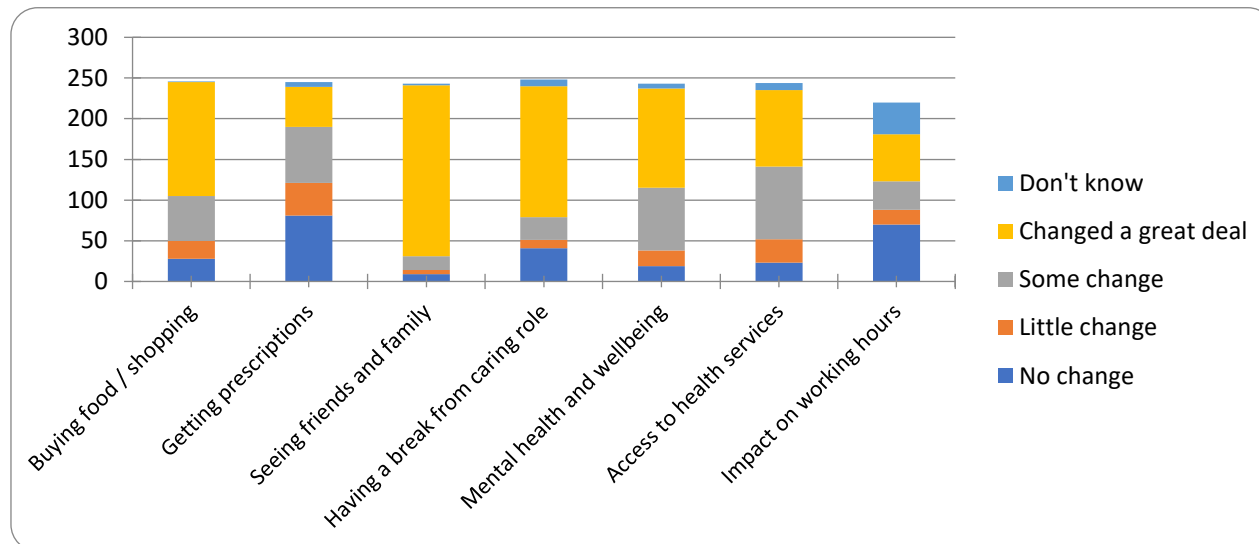
This was an open question, so the answers have been collated into themes.



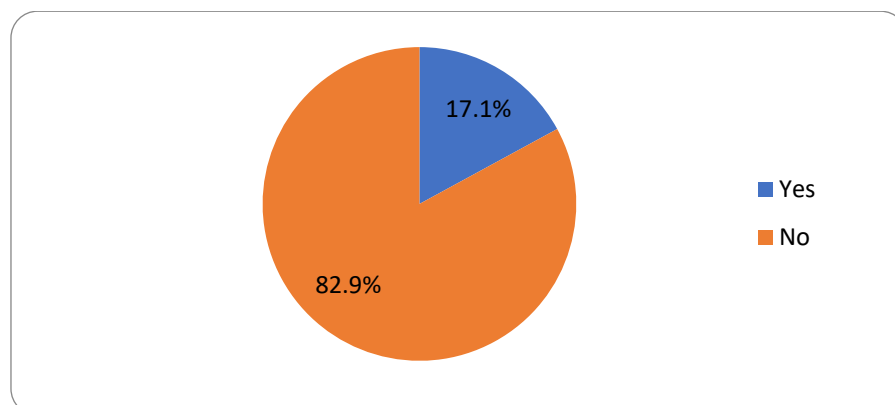
The most comments were about the impact their caring role has had on their mental health with 47 comments relating to anxiety and / or stress and 38 noting depression and increase in poor mental health.

There were 30 comment noting a negative impact on the carer's physical health. There were some comments noting there hasn't been an impact and 3 comments saying they try to look at the positives and what they can gain as a carer.

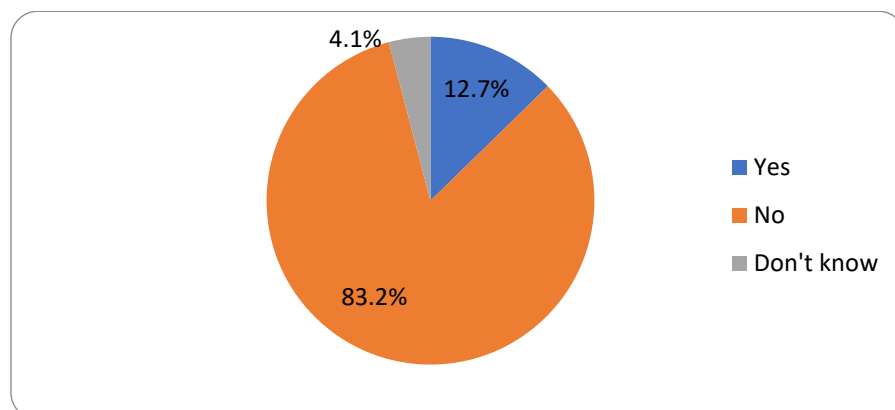
**15. How much has Covid-19 impacted you in your role as a carer?**



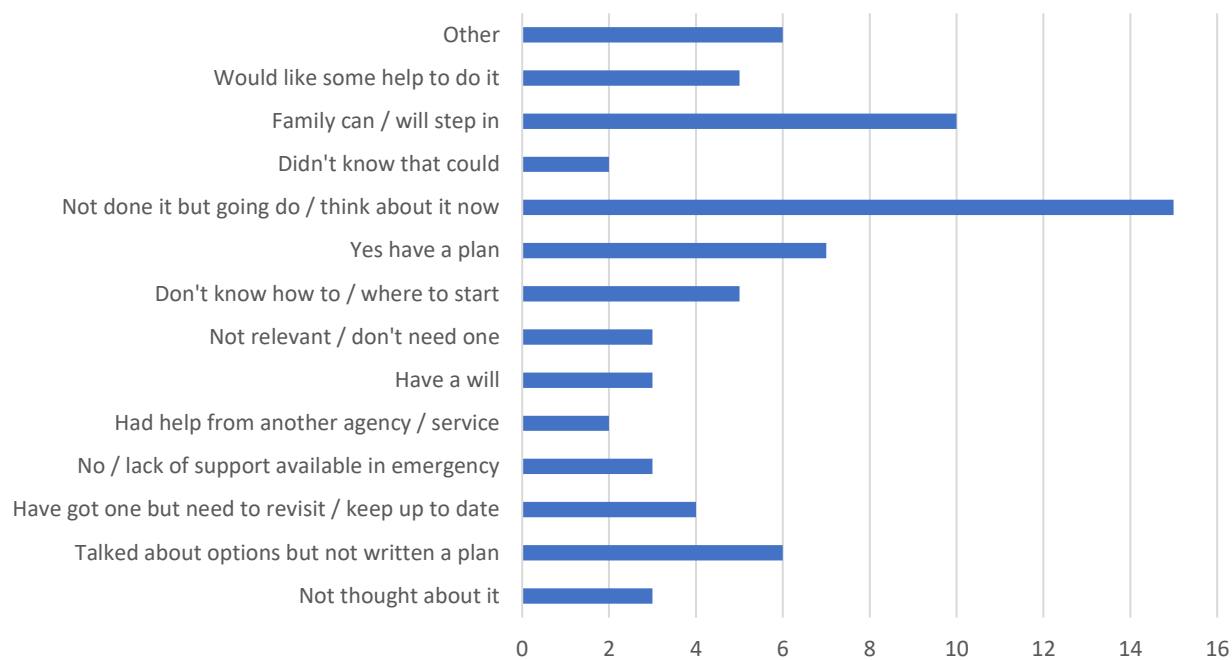
**16. Have you contacted the Cheshire East Carers Hub to request support during Covid-19 pandemic?**



**17. Have you written an emergency plan in case you are unable to continue to provide care at any time?**

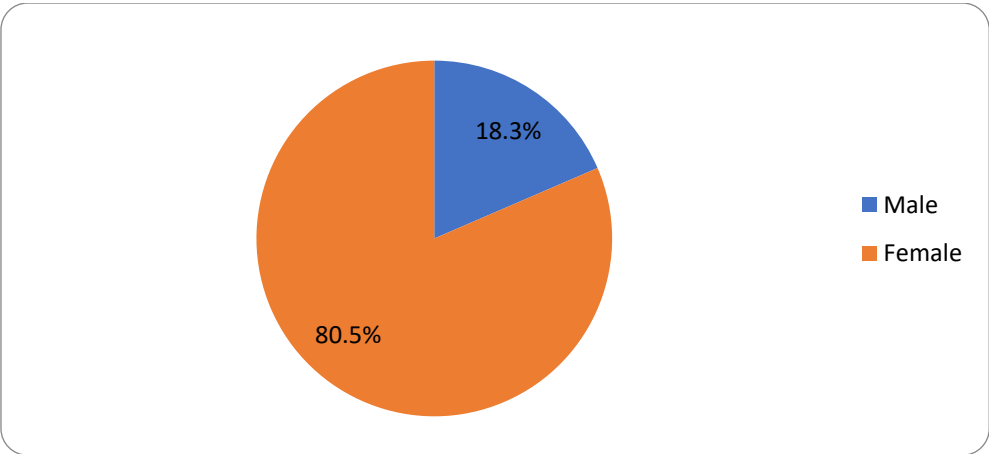


Comments on Emergency Plans



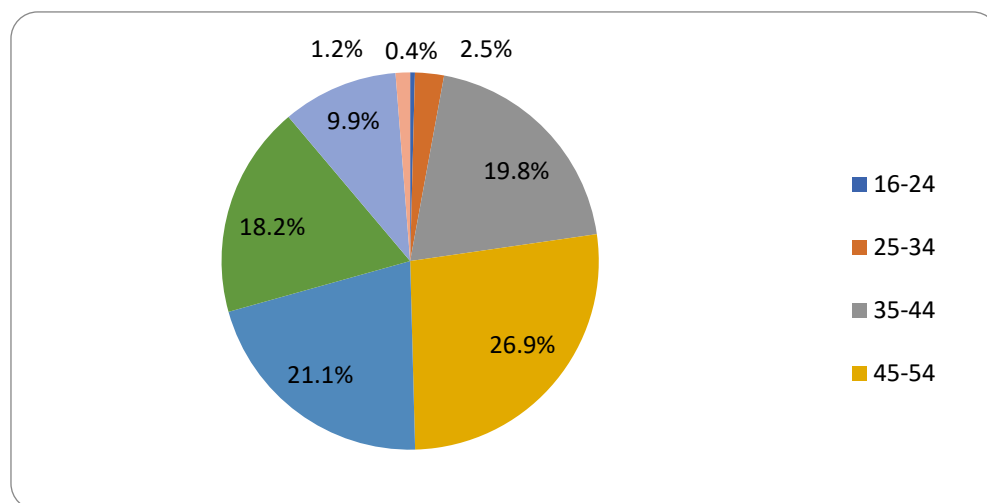
Demographics of respondents

18. What is your gender identity?

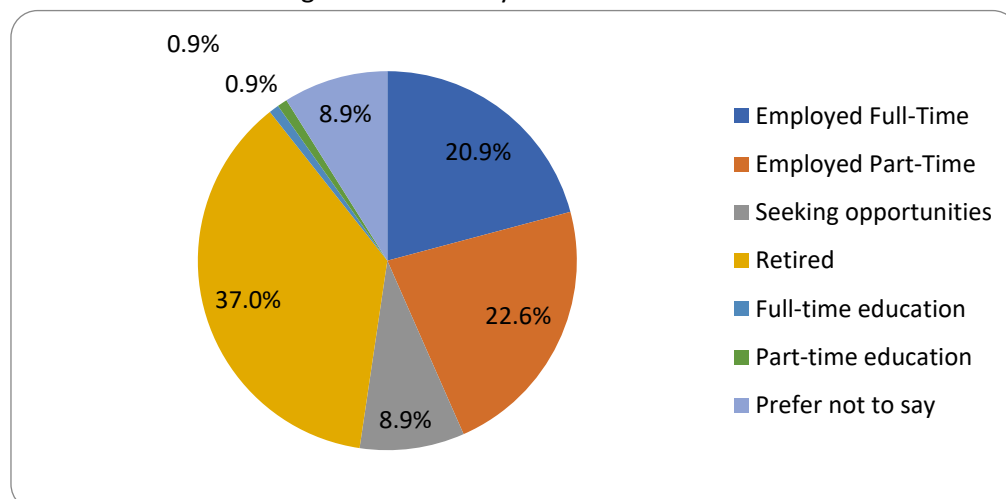


There were 3 comments noted under 'Prefer to self describe' but contents of these didn't relate to gender identity.

19. What age group do you belong to?

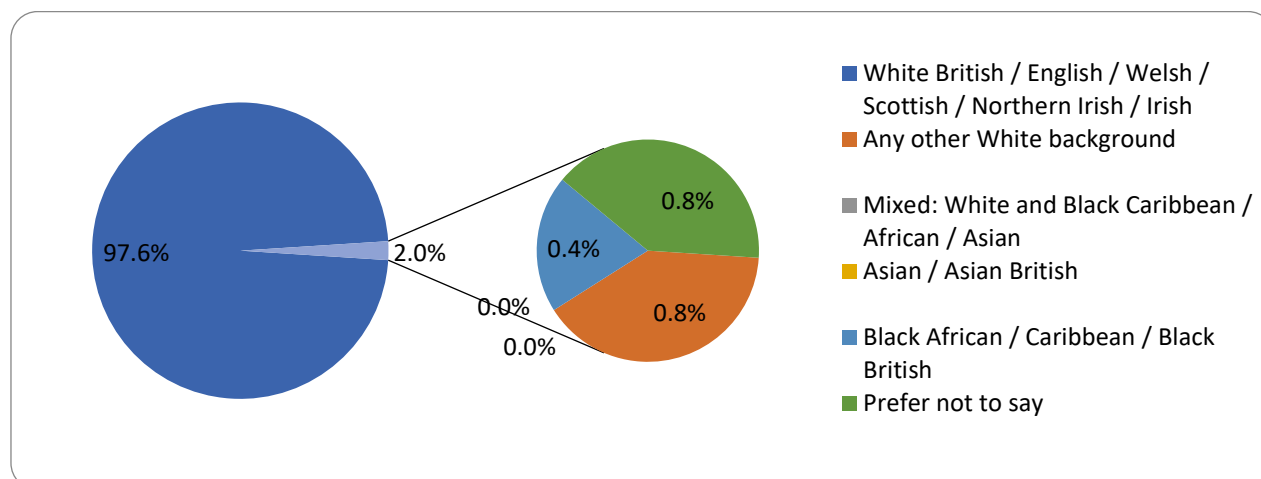


20. What of the following best describes your current status?



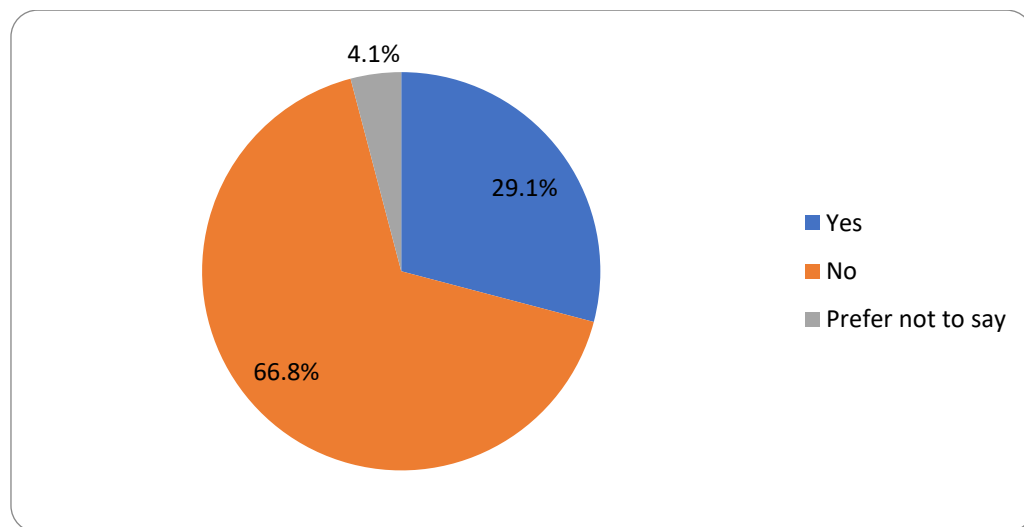
There were some comments that noted how 'carer' wasn't an option to select in this list.

21. What is your ethnic origin?





22. Are your day-to-day activities limited because of a health problem or disability which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months? This includes problems related to old age.



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*Working for a brighter future together*

## **Children and Families Committee**

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<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	6 October 2021
<b>Report Title:</b>	Update report on the 2021/2022 Action Plan to address the ILACS recommendations
<b>Report of:</b>	Ged Rowney, Director of Children's Services
<b>Report Reference No:</b>	CF/08/21-22
<b>Ward(s) Affected:</b>	All wards

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### **1. Executive Summary**

- 1.1.** This report will provide the Children and Families Committee with an update on progress against the recommendations from the Ofsted Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS) in November 2019. Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee were updated on progress in the interim period from the last inspection. This report will focus on the progress made since the action plan was updated in April 2021 under the leadership of the newly appointed Director of Children's Social Care.
- 1.2.** Ofsted ILACS inspections review the quality of our services and how well we protect and safeguard children and young people, and how well we support our cared for and care experienced children and young people. Therefore our work to continue to develop services in response to the recommendations from these inspections contributes to achieving our aim in the Council's Corporate Plan to:
  - Protect and support our communities and safeguard children, adults at risk, and families from abuse, neglect and exploitation.
  - Be the best Corporate Parenting to our children in care.

### **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1.** The Children and Families Committee is recommended to scrutinise the progress to date against the recommendations, and the impact for

children and young people, recognising the achievements and progress made, and to seek assurance around ongoing areas for further development.

### **3. Reasons for Recommendations**

- 3.1.** The Council, working with statutory partners, has legal duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children and young people in Cheshire East. It is important that Children and Families Committee have the opportunity to consider the achievements, progress to date, and the improvements planned ahead to ensure that the welfare of children and young people is prioritised.

### **4. Other Options Considered**

- 4.1.** Not applicable.

### **5. Background**

- 5.1.** All Children's Services are subject to regular inspection by the regulator body Ofsted. Cheshire East Council's last full inspection under the ILACS Framework was in November 2019. Cheshire East Children's Services were judged as "requires improvement to be good" in this inspection. The inspection recognised that significant progress had been made in a number of areas since the previous inspection in 2015.
- 5.2.** Inspections under the ILACS framework evaluate the effectiveness of Local Authority services and how we work together as a wider partnership to support children and young people, including:
- the help and protection of children.
  - the experiences and progress of children in care wherever they live, including those children who return home.
  - the arrangements for permanence for children who are cared for by the local authority, including adoption.
  - the experiences and progress of care leavers.
  - the effectiveness of leaders and managers
  - the impact we have on the lives of children and young people.
  - the quality of professional practice.
- 5.3.** The ILACS framework is a complex system of inspection; the aim is to create a proportionate inspection process based on their most recent inspection judgement and intelligence gathered throughout the year. There are three different types of inspections under the framework:
- **Standard inspection** – this inspection covers all the services above across the levels of need and takes place over three weeks, with one

week's notice and inspectors onsite for two weeks. At end of the inspection, a report is completed which gives a judgement on the quality of our services, either outstanding, good, requires improvement to be good, or inadequate. Authorities that are already judged to be good or outstanding have a shorter standard inspection which takes place over two weeks.

- **Focused Visit** - these inspections focus on one area in particular. We had a focused visit on cared for children and care leavers in October 2018. These inspections take place over two weeks and inspectors are onsite for two days. At end of the inspection, a letter is written which outlines strengths and areas for improvement; no overall judgement is given.
- **Joint Targeted Area Inspections (JTAI)** - these inspections are multi-agency inspections that are carried out by inspectors from multi-agency inspectorates (including Ofsted, CQC, HMICFRS and HMI Probation). These inspections look at a particular topic, which changes on a regular basis. These inspections take place over three weeks and inspectors are onsite for one week. At end of the inspection, a letter is written which outlines strengths and areas for improvement, no overall judgement is given.

**5.4.** We are expecting to receive an Ofsted focused visit this year. As part of a visit Ofsted will evaluate whether we have made progress against the recommendations from the last inspection.

**5.5. Progress against the Recommendations from the Ofsted ILACS Inspection 2019**

**5.6.** Following the inspection, Children's Services have implemented strategies to address the shortfalls identified and have continued to drive forward our ambition for children and young people in Cheshire East. The action plan to address the recommendations from the 2019 inspection, and the progress to date against the actions, is included within the Appendix. The action plan was updated in April 2021 under the leadership of the newly appointed Director of Children's Social Care.

**5.7.** The Covid-19 pandemic has impacted on the ability to progress some recommendations at the pace desired however as we move into recovery and 18 months into the pandemic there is evidence that the impact of the delay is being mitigated and the quality of practice is continuing to improve.

- 5.8.** The action plan identifies that progress has been made in relation to the quality of social work practice and management oversight however there is still more to do. The service has set strategic objectives for ourselves and with our statutory partners to reduce the impact of neglect for children living in Cheshire East. We have also been able to improve the relationships with our foster carers and our recruitment activity is producing more homes for children and young people to enable to remain connected and living in their communities.

## **6. Consultation and Engagement**

- 6.1.** Children's Social Care consult and engage with key stakeholders as part of service delivery. For the purposes of the period referenced, consultation has taken place specifically with foster carers, and cared for children and young people accessing emergency accommodation.

## **7. Implications**

### **7.1. Legal**

- 7.1.1.** Cheshire East has a statutory responsibility to safeguard children and young people within the borough. The service operates within a legal framework.

### **7.2. Finance**

- 7.2.1.** Financial plans are due to be reviewed to ensure that the service can continue to meet the needs of vulnerable children and young people in Cheshire East and will be reflected in the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

### **7.3. Policy**

- 7.3.1.** Cheshire East is ambitious and committed to ensuring that together, we will make Cheshire East a great place to be young. Our priorities for improving outcomes for children and young people are driven through the Council's Corporate Plan, the Children and Young People's Plan, and the Corporate Parenting Strategy.

### **7.4. Equality**

- 7.4.1.** Good quality practice with families ensures that all children and young people's needs are taken into account and supported.

### **7.5. Human Resources**

- 7.5.1.** Recruiting and retaining high quality social workers and managers is crucial in supporting us to achieve consistently good practice for children and young people.

**7.6. Risk Management**

- 7.6.1.** There are reputational and financial risks of not providing good Children's Services, as well as risks to individual children and young people. The Council must continue to ensure that these risks are minimised by ensuring effective plans are in place to improve where areas for development are identified.

**7.7. Rural Communities**

- 7.7.1.** Vulnerable children and young people are present in all communities in Cheshire East.

**7.8. Children and Young People/Cared for Children**

- 7.8.1.** Our plans intend to improve the experiences and outcomes for children and young people across the borough, in particular those that are most vulnerable. Cheshire East Council has a corporate parenting responsibility for the children in their care. Full Council made pledges to cared for children and young people in December 2018 in line with the Corporate Parenting Strategy.

**7.9. Public Health**

- 7.9.1.** There are no direct implications for public health.

**7.10. Climate Change**

- 7.10.1.** Children's Services continue to support the Council with Climate change objectives.

<b>Access to Information</b>	
Contact Officer:	Kerry Birtles Director Children's Social Care 07870 896895 <a href="mailto:Kerry.Birtles@cheshireeast.gov.uk">Kerry.Birtles@cheshireeast.gov.uk</a>
Appendices:	Action Plan to address the Ofsted ILACS Recommendations
Background Papers:	<a href="#">Cheshire East Ofsted Inspection Report November 2019</a>

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# Action Plan to address the ILACS Recommendations

April 2021 – 2022

Progress updates from August 2021



## Introduction

This is our action plan for 2021/22 to address the recommendations from the Ofsted Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS) in November 2019. It outlines our ambition for the 12 month period between April 2021 and April 2022, and what we will do to continue to improve the support we offer to children, young people, families and carers. It builds on the progress from our previous plans that we implemented following the inspection. The full inspection report which outlines the recommendations and findings of the inspection is available on the [Ofsted website](#).

The inspection found that significant progress had been made since our previous inspections in 2018 and 2015. Clear strengths were identified including our early help offer, a strengthened front door, our edge of care support, management of risk to children exposed to exploitation, the creativity of frontline practitioners in direct work with children and young people, and crucially **the voice of the child being at the centre of everything we do**.

However, overall, the quality of our practice was too variable, and required further improvement to be consistently good. Some vulnerable groups, such as children experiencing chronic long-term neglect, children who were privately fostered, and homeless 16 and 17 years olds, were not always receiving the right support.

We are committed to addressing the recommendations from the inspection to improve the support we offer to children, young people, families and carers. Our continued focus is on achieving excellent outcomes for children and young people through **establishing consistently good practice**.

## Progress so far

It's been over 18 months since the inspection, and in that time we have worked hard to continue to develop our services. We have brought our fostering recruitment service in house, launched our own fostering campaign, and developed our first Mockingbird constellation and well as leading on the coproduction of a Neglect strategy with statutory and third sector agencies. We've also been busy responding to the global Coronavirus pandemic, ensuring that we have continued to prioritise and meet children and young people's changing needs. We have brought in external advice and challenge from the LGA to ensure we could achieve improvements at pace, despite the pressures of the pandemic.


As leaders, we have developed a clear vision for children, young people, and care experienced adults in Cheshire East, **Together for Children and Young People**. We want to ensure that across the Council and the partnership, everyone is clear on our shared ambition for children and young people, and we work together to achieve the best outcomes.

To support children and young people, the Council has boosted investment in Children's Social Care Services by an additional £1.5m for 2021/22, and has protected our early help offer despite a challenging financial climate. To enhance our offer to families we have increased caseworkers, strengthened front door delivery, mainstreamed our edge of care support and improved risk tracking and planning for children exposed to exploitation.

The progress we have achieved against each of the recommendations is outlined in detail within our self-evaluation.

# Action Plan

Date of progress updates: August 2021

Recommendation		Improve the quality, consistency and analysis of assessments, and the child focus of plans.		
What inspectors found		<p>Inspectors found good quality practice, however overall, the quality of practice was not consistent, which meant some children and young people’s needs were not fully identified or effectively met:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Some assessments did not contain enough analysis.</li><li>• Assessments were not consistently updated when children and young people’s needs changed.</li><li>• Some plans were not SMART enough – they were not always clear about the outcome or timescales, and some were too focused on adult needs.</li></ul> <p>Recording on children’s files did not always capture the extent of the work that was taking place, including the rationale for decisions so children could understand why decisions were made for them. Sometimes there was not enough analysis of children and young people’s experiences and the impact on them (for example in recording home visits).</p>		
Baseline from 2020/21		Target for September 2021		Target for March 2022
45% audited cases were good or better quality in November 2020.		80% audited cases will be good or outstanding.		90% audited cases will be good or outstanding.
Position in August 2021 in relation to targets				Progress relative to targets
Quality assurance activity from July 2021 found that 50% audited cases were good and 50% required improvement. The next audit is due in September 2021.				 Below target
Ref	What we will do to achieve consistently good practice	Lead person	Complete by	Progress to date
1a	Continue to deliver our ‘doing the basics well’ training programme for practitioners to support consistently good practice across all services.	Sarah Flint, Principal Social Worker	March 2022	Additional masterclasses and practitioner clinics are being facilitated by our commissioned social work service and consultant social work practitioner focusing on CIN planning and direct work with children and young people.

1b	Commission additional capacity to ensure that assessments are routinely updated, children's needs responded to in a timely way, and social workers have capacity to deliver consistently good practice with a focus on analysis.	Kerry Birtles, Director of Children's Social Care	1 October 2021	The commissioned service began operation on the 12 July 2021 – 1 October 2021. An impact report will be produced now the project has been completed. The additional capacity has resulted in the completion of 160 Child and Family assessments, supported 90 families with a focus on SMART CIN planning, and 90 families around family networking.
1c	Refresh and implement the Neglect Operational Strategy as our partnership approach to addressing neglect. Evaluate the impact of the Strategy via the Safeguarding Children's Partnership Neglect Board on a quarterly basis.	Louise Hurst, Head of Service Child in Need and Child Protection	March 2022	The Neglect Strategy has been refreshed in consultation with all partners and children and young people. It was launched in July 2021. Outcome measures have been agreed across the partnership. The Neglect Board will review progress and impact on performance on a quarterly basis.
1d	Deliver high support and high challenge to teams through our lead practitioners, extending this from three to four lead practitioners from June 2021.	Sarah Flint, Principal Social Worker	March 2022	Four lead practitioners are in place and are delivering masterclasses, targeted support to newly qualified social workers, and direct work with children and families. Monthly impact reports on this support are produced which are reported to the Excellence in Social Work Practice Leadership Meeting.
1e	Launch the refreshed training offer for social workers so it is clear what training is available and required for each specialism.	Jo Rigg, Training Officer	June 2021	The <a href="#">training offer</a> was launched in July 2021 and was sent to the homes of all frontline practitioners and managers
1f	Independent consultant to complete a review of behaviour and practice when identifying homes for cared for children and young people. The review to identify how we can strengthen our work to ensure we	Kerry Birtles, Director of Children's Social Care	March 2022	The review was completed in July 2021. An action plan has been produced in response outlining changes to service delivery to improve our

	are achieving our vision for children and young people.			performance in this area, and shared with the Directorate Management Team (DMT).
1g	Review the forms on the child's record, starting with plans, to ensure they support best quality practice.	Sarah Flint, Principal Social Worker	September 2021	The form for children's plans has been rewritten in consultation with systems analysis and frontline practitioners. This plan has been piloted in frontline teams and final changes will be agreed in September with a go live date of November 2021.




Recommendation	Ensure consistent management oversight and supervision in the organisation to ensure that consistent, good-quality social work practice is in place.		
What inspectors found	<p>Management oversight and supervision did not provide sufficient challenge or reflection to enable practitioners to improve their practice.</p> <p><b>Management oversight:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Management oversight and challenge was not fully embedded in all areas - management oversight from both Team Managers and IROs did not always drive progressing plans within children's timescales.</li> <li>• Performance information was not always scrutinised sufficiently to provide critical challenge of all services.</li> <li>• Current checks and balances did not identify the areas of weaker practice found in the inspection.</li> </ul> <p><b>Audits:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Team manager audits were inconsistent in quality, and some audits were over-optimistic in their judgements. Some audits were more compliance focused so were less effective in supporting reflection and improved practice. Some parts of the audit forms were not completed.</li> <li>• Inspectors felt there was not enough moderation of audits from senior managers (14% audited cases were moderated) given the over-optimism of judgements in team manager audits.</li> </ul> <p><b>Supervision:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most social workers received regular supervision, however supervision was not always sufficiently analytical or reflective.</li> </ul>		
Baseline from 2020/21	Target for September 2021	Target for March 2022	
<p>In Q4 2021/22, 74% assessments were completed within 45 days.</p> <p>In April 2021, 65% children had an updated C&amp;F assessment within the last 12 months.</p> <p>In Q4 2021/22, the percentage of plans updated within timescales was:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 72% CIN</li> </ul>	<p>80% assessments will be completed within 45 days.</p> <p>80% children will have an updated C&amp;F assessment within the last 12 months.</p> <p>Over 80% of all plans will be updated within timescales.</p>	<p>90% assessments will be completed within 45 days.</p> <p>90% children will have an updated C&amp;F assessment within the last 12 months.</p> <p>Over 90% of all plans will be updated within timescales.</p>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>87% CP</li><li>95% Cared for</li></ul>		80% audited cases will have good management oversight.  80% judgements from internal auditors will be agreed as accurate by the external auditor.	90% audited cases will have good management oversight.  90% judgements from internal auditors will be agreed as accurate by the external auditor.	
Position in August 2021 in relation to targets			Progress relative to targets	
From April – August 2021, 70.2% assessments were completed within 45 days.			↔ On track to achieve target for September	
91% children have an updated C&F assessment within the last 12 months.			↑ Achieved above target for March 2022	
Percentage of plans updated within timescales: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Cared for plans - Crewe CINCP 85%, Macclesfield CINCP 74%, Cared for 97%, CWD 100%</li><li>CP plans – Crewe CINCP 82%, Macclesfield CINCP 67%, CWD 100%</li><li>CIN plans - Crewe CINCP 62%, Macclesfield CINCP 50%, CWD 68%</li></ul>			↑ Some teams are achieving above target ↓ and some are below target	
Audit activity between July and September 2021 is focusing on management oversight and will be reportable following audit headlines that are due in September.			■ Performance not yet available	
86% judgements from our internal audit activity was independently validated as accurate by our external auditor.			↑ Achieved above target for September	
Ref	What we will do to achieve consistently good practice	Lead person	Complete by	Progress to date
2a	Team Managers Leadership Programme to be refreshed for 2021 in line with current progress targets. To be delivered throughout the year to ensure all managers are leaders for best practice. Sessions will include good quality supervision, effective leadership, management of performance information, and expectations of good	Kerry Birtles, Director of Children’s Social Care	March 2022 with quarterly review through Excellence in Social Work Practice senior leadership meetings	Reflections on the Team Manager Leadership programme, following consultation with team managers, evidenced that a broader leadership integration programme was required. This is currently being coproduced with leaders and managers in Children’s Social Care.

	practice to support consistency in management oversight and audit judgements.			
2b	Continue to commission independent audits to support developments to practice and provide moderation of team manager audits. Independent audits are carried with team managers to support learning on carrying out audits and making judgements on quality of practice.	Kerry Birtles, Director of Children's Social Care	March 2022	Independent audits are continuing on a regular basis to provide external validation. In the latest independent audit in July 2021, the auditor agreed with the judgements on the majority of audits moderated which demonstrates that this support is increasing understanding and evaluation of the quality of practice across team managers.
2c	Develop a new process around senior manager moderation.	Phil Alcock, Audit Officer	July 2021	A new process has been developed and senior managers now audit three whole case files each month starting in August 2021.
2d	Annual supervision audit to be undertaken to ensure there is continued focus on impact on outcomes for children which drives improvement to practice, and there is a golden thread between senior leaders and frontline teams.	Kerry Birtles, Director of Children's Social Care	June 2021	The supervision audit was completed in August 2021. Analysis of the findings are currently being prepared to be presented to the senior leadership team and to agree next steps.
2e	Performance challenge and scrutiny sessions to be carried out at Directorate Management level and with the senior leadership team for Children's Social Care to ensure scrutiny of performance drives improved outcomes for children.	Ged Rowney, Interim Director of Children's Services	March 2022	Performance scrutiny has taken place to review Q4 20/21 and Q1 21/22 data demonstrating transparency and accountability of frontline practice to the DCS.
2f	Director of Children's Social Care to complete the Practice Leadership Development Programme.	Kerry Birtles, Director of Children's Social Care	May 2021	The Director of CSC has completed the course. Ongoing mentoring is in place from a DCS in a






				neighboring authority, and access to monthly practice leadership sessions.
2g	Two Heads of Service to apply for the Practice Leadership Development Programme as part of our continued development of our senior leadership team.	Kerry Birtles, Director of Children's Social Care	April 2021	One Head of Service was successful in securing a place on the course which began in July 2021.

<b>Recommendation</b>	Improve management oversight of cases in pre-proceedings, to avoid drift and delay for children.		
<b>What inspectors found</b>	<p>Pre-proceedings work to try to achieve positive change for children and to avoid the need for them to come into care was not consistently timely.</p> <p>Some children's cases were managed within public law outline processes for too long without sufficient management oversight and review to decide whether alternative action needed to be taken to protect them.</p> <p>No children were found to be at immediate risk, however a small number of children experienced neglectful situations for too long. Some children waited too long to enter care and experience a sense of permanence. For a few children, this meant that they entered care in an unplanned way.</p>		
<b>Baseline from 2020/21</b>		<b>Target for September 2021</b>	<b>Target for March 2022</b>
<p>Audits in February and March 2021 showed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Management oversight is improving. Team managers had improved their oversight of PLO casework in the majority of cases.</li> <li>• The 4 week review that was implemented in February 2020 is having a positive impact on identifying and preventing potential early drift in PLO.</li> <li>• There was evidence of consistent Service Manager oversight.</li> </ul>		Audit of cases within pre-proceedings will show that for 80% cases, management oversight is effectively ensuring that children do not experience drift or delay.	Audit of cases within pre-proceedings will show that for 90% cases, management oversight is effectively ensuring that children do not experience drift or delay.
<b>Position in August 2021 in relation to targets</b>			<b>Progress relative to targets</b>
<p>Management oversight of PLO has evidenced that service manager oversight is evidenced 100% of the time. The next step is to strengthen team manager oversight to further strengthen case progress in timescales that meet the needs of the child or young person.</p>			 On track to achieve target for September



Ref	What we will do to achieve consistently good practice	Lead person	Complete by	Progress to date
3a	Set up a Legal Board to hold everyone to account for timely outcomes for children.	Kerry Birtles, Director of Children's Social Care	Legal Board to be established by April 2021	The Legal Board was established in April 2021 and has met on two occasions to consider performance in pre-proceedings and care proceedings.
3b	Lead/ engage in the Local Family Justice Board and Public Law Working Group Publication to ensure compliance and practice is in line with external changes and challenge the delays that are created by Court capacity.	Kerry Birtles, Director of Children's Social Care	Throughout the year	Children's Social Care continue to engage with the Local Family Justice Board and have taken a proactive role in leading regional work around Public Law Working Group Publication which was announced in March 2021. This work will remain an ongoing focus.
3c	The service to be held to account for the effectiveness of social work practice in this area through regular reports and updates to the Achieving Outcomes for Children and Young People Senior Leadership Team Meeting.	Kerry Birtles, Director of Children's Social Care	Progress is monitored on a quarterly basis.	Reports are being received by the Achieving Outcomes for Children and Young People Senior Leadership Team Meeting. The last PLO audit was received on 15 March 2021 and the next one will be received on 30 September 2021.
3d	Regular audits to be completed on pre-proceedings and proceedings to ensure progress in this area continues to be monitored.	Louise Hurst, Head of Service for Child in Need and Child Protection	March 2022	Audits on the impact of Team Manager oversight within PLO are taking place bi-monthly. These audits are showing improvement in team manager oversight however there are still areas for development.  PLO cases within our Children with Disabilities Service have also been aligned to Macclesfield CINCP to support consistent oversight.

Recommendation	Improve the response to children in private fostering arrangements, children who are homeless aged 16 and 17 years old, and care leavers who need emergency accommodation.		
What inspectors found	<p><b>Private fostering</b> The response to children who were privately fostered was variable - the needs of some children were not thoroughly assessed, some did not always receive the right support, and the need for permanence was not always addressed promptly.</p> <p><b>Care leavers who need emergency accommodation</b> Some care leavers told inspectors that they did not always feel safe when they had been placed in emergency accommodation.</p> <p><b>Young people presenting as homeless</b> When young people presented as homeless, there was not a sufficiently robust response to ensure that their needs were fully identified, that they were fully supported, or that they were made aware of their right to become cared for. As a result, a small number of young people remained in situations of vulnerability.</p>		
Baseline from 2020/21		Target for September 2021	Target for March 2022
<p>We have recommissioned our emergency accommodation offer in light of the feedback from young people and inspectors.</p> <p>An audit of privately fostered cases in January 2021 found that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>10 out of 11 children’s arrangement met the criteria for private fostering</li><li>10 out of 11 arrangements were suitable for the child</li><li>7 out of 11 children had an updated assessment within the last 12 months.</li></ul>		<p>The bi-monthly ChECS audit will tell us that children and young people feel safe in their accommodation.</p> <p>80% privately fostered cases that are audited will be good or outstanding.</p> <p>80% audited cases for 16-17 year olds will show that support is good or outstanding quality.</p>	<p>The bi-monthly ChECS audit will tell us that children and young people feel safe in their accommodation.</p> <p>90% privately fostered cases that are audited will be good or outstanding.</p> <p>90% audited cases for 16-17 year olds will show that support is good or outstanding quality.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• However the audit also showed that there were areas which still needed further improvement.</li><li>• Going forward audits will be rated against the Ofsted criteria.</li></ul> <p>An audit of homeless 16-17 year olds in February 2021 found that :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 83% cases had a clear discussion on young people’s choice regarding section 17 and section 20.</li><li>• 100% had evidence of management oversight.</li><li>• Areas for improvement included advocacy, which was not consistently discussed with young people, and there were opportunities for improvements to practice identified in 2 cases.</li></ul>				
Position in August 2021 in relation to targets		Progress relative to targets		
A survey from Crewe YMCA with young people in March 2021 found that 100% young people felt safe in their accommodation.		 Achieved target		
60% audited privately fostered cases are achieving good or outstanding grades. This is predominantly due to the timeliness of the assessments not the quality of the assessment work or analysis. The audit findings are informing the training and development work being undertaken by the lead officers.		 On track to achieve target		
An audit of cases for 16-17 year olds is currently taking place.		 Performance not yet available.		
Ref	What we will do to achieve consistently good practice	Lead person	Complete by	Progress to date
4a	Provide additional capacity within the Fostering Service to lead on private fostering to:	Keith Martin, Head of Service for Children with Disabilities and Fostering	March 2021	The private fostering lead is in place; initial audit activity began in May 2021 and will continue on a monthly basis. The launch around private

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- raise awareness in a dedicated campaign from September 2021</li> <li>- audit cases so we can use the learning to focus on where we need to continue to improve practice</li> <li>- profile private fostering in the community.</li> </ul>			fostering is planned for September/ October 2021. Training has taken place with school admission as part of the identification of private fostering arrangements.
4b	Provide accommodation under the recommission of 16+ supported accommodation.	Dave Leadbetter, Head of Service Children's Commissioning	July 2021	The recommission of 16+ supported accommodation is complete and the contract has been awarded. Extensive remodelling has taken place with a complete rebuild of accommodation following consultation with young people. The build is due to be complete on the 24 September 2021.
4c	Implement the recommendations following external validation from Jill Boak, Ministry of Housing.	Annemarie Parker, Head of Service for Cared for Children and Care Leavers	June 2021	We have made significant progress against the action plan in response to the external validation from the Ministry of Housing. We met with Jill Boak from MHCLG and our Housing colleagues on 3 September 2021 to review progress against the action plan. The MHCLG were satisfied that we are continuing to work effectively as a partnership.
4d	Update the joint housing protocol with our ambition that no care leaver will access emergency accommodation.	Annemarie Parker, Head of Service for Cared for Children and Care Leavers	June 2021	The joint housing protocol has been updated and is currently being authorised jointly by Housing and Children's Social Care, with implementation planned for October 2021.
4e	Employ a housing officer in the front door to further strengthen the offer of prevention of 16/17 homelessness, and to support a robust response when this does happen.	Naomi Hollinshead, Service Manager for ChECS	June 2021	Recruitment to this post is currently underway and will support additional functions such as housing in the context of domestic abuse.

4f	Monthly multi-agency audits on 16-17 presenting as homeless to continue to take place in the front door to assess progress in this area.	Naomi Hollinshead, Service Manager for ChECS	March 2022	A reduction to bi-monthly audits was agreed in line with the positive progress made in this area. These will continue to ensure assurance is offered about meeting the needs of this potentially vulnerable group.
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Recommendation	Improve the quality and consistency of support and engagement with foster carers.		
What inspectors found	<p>Sufficiency of in-house foster carers was a known challenge - the number of approved fostering households had reduced and recent attempts to improve recruitment had not had the impact that we had hoped for.</p> <p>A significant group of foster carers had raised concerns about the support they received from the council. Inspectors found that foster carers were not always well supported, and that in some cases, working relationships were at risk of breaking down. Senior leaders were aware of the issues, and an independent review of the fostering service was planned prior to the inspection taking place.</p>		
Baseline from 2020/21	Target for September 2021	Target for March 2022	
<p>As at February 2021, our fostering recruitment campaign had resulted in</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>83 new foster care enquiries</li> <li>14 new foster carers in assessment.</li> </ul> <p>100% of our assessments of new foster carers were completed within the 8 months statutory timeframe. Our internal ambition is to complete these within 16 weeks.</p> <p>97% foster carer annual reviews were completed within timescales (held every 12 months).</p> <p>Feedback from foster carers demonstrates relationships have improved since the inspection.</p>	<p>We will gain an additional 30 in-house foster carers over the next 3 years (5 new carers by September).</p> <p>Over 50% assessments for new foster carers will be completed within 16 weeks.</p> <p>90% foster carer annual reviews will be completed within timescales (held every 12 months).</p> <p>Feedback from foster carers will continue to demonstrate improved relationships between foster carers and Cheshire East Council.</p>	<p>We will gain an additional 30 in-house foster carers over the next 3 years (5 additional new carers between September and March).</p> <p>Over 80% assessments for new foster carers will be completed within 16 weeks.</p> <p>99% foster carer annual reviews will be completed within timescales (held every 12 months).</p> <p>Feedback from foster carers will continue to demonstrate improved relationships between foster carers and Cheshire East Council.</p>	
Position in August 2021 in relation to targets		Progress relative to targets	
6 new foster carers have been recruited, creating an additional 10 homes for vulnerable children and young people.		 Achieved above target for September	
We are still short of routinely achieving 50% of our new foster carer assessments within 16 weeks. Of the 6 newly approved foster carers only 2 were achieved within 16 weeks. There are some mitigating		 Below target	



factors here including 2 groups of carers having building work completed to better enable them to foster and another who decided to go on holiday during the assessment period.				
97% of fostering reviews have been completed within timescales.				
Feedback from foster carers continues to demonstrate improved relationships. Direct feedback is sought from the Fostering IRO at every Foster Carer Review. Foster carers are also assisting in the delivery and design of frontline services such as foster carers delivering training to frontline colleagues and sitting as core members of the Virtual School Governing Body. The Foster Carer Survey has just been completed and the results are being analysed.				
Ref	What we will do to achieve consistently good practice	Lead person	Complete by	Progress to date
5a	<p>Continue to improve fostering recruitment and retention by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-continuing to develop our marketing and recruitment campaign</li> <li>-becoming a foster friendly employer</li> <li>-launching a foster carer charter so it is clear what foster carers can expect from the LA, and our expectations of carers</li> <li>-developing specialist salaried foster carers.</li> </ul>	Keith Martin, Head of Service for Children with Disabilities and Fostering	March 2022	<p>We are continuing to develop our marketing and recruitment campaign. Our current campaign has focused within mainline train stations across Cheshire East and our ongoing digital media presence.</p> <p>The fostering service have attended the Royal Cheshire Show and the Geronimo Festival which has generated 24 enquires. We will be attending further events across the County over the coming months.</p> <p>We have entered into a 12-month agreement with Silk FM to target recruitment across the northern parts of Cheshire East and neighbouring LA's.</p> <p>We have met with Engie following the Cheshire East Business Forum and are now developing a relationship with them. We are also looking to develop a relationship with the Cheshire Chamber of Commerce.</p>

				<p>We have a whole page advertisement going out to every household in Cheshire East as part of the Covid-19 and Winter Wellbeing mailer.</p> <p>We have ambitions to become a foster friendly employer and to launch a revised foster carers charter. We are developing a framework for salaried foster care to provide specialist care to our children and young people.</p>
5b	Redesign the fostering service to establish specialised teams to enable effective support to foster carers and young people.	Keith Martin, Head of Service for Children with Disabilities and Fostering	December 2022	<p>The consultation on the changes to the Fostering Service is underway. An additional delay has occurred to the formal restructure as consideration is now being given as to the functions of the current placement service being undertaken within the fostering service.</p> <p>The recruitment and marketing team has already been established and an acting team manager is in place through a service secondment.</p> <p>A service-wide online event has been completed and separate meetings are set up with the Fostering Support Workers as part of the consultation.</p>
5c	Develop and launch our second Mockingbird Hub.	Sarah Probert, Mockingbird Lead Practitioner	December 2021	<p>The timeline for the establishment of the second hub has been moved to October 2021. We have recruited the new hub home carers; however, they currently have children in placement (with plans for them to move on). This decision is supported by the Fostering Network and the DfE</p> <p>Satellite carers are currently being identified.</p> <p>Everything remains in place to support the successful launch of our second hub, which will cover Crewe, Sandbach and Middlewich.</p>

5d	Continue to update the fostering policies and procedures.	Cath Hogan, Service Manager Fostering	October 2021	We have updated over 50% of our policies and procedures, and remain on track to complete this work within this timeframe.
5e	Increase sufficiency in short break provision, including retendering our short break local offer for Disabled Children and their Families.	Keith Martin, Head of Service for Children with Disabilities and Fostering	July 2021	<p>Our Short Break Local Offer for Disabled Children and their families has been recommissioned and began operation on 1 June 2021.</p> <p>We have commissioned an overnight short break provision called Pinewood, who are currently recruiting to their staff team.</p> <p>We have also recruited two new Short Break Foster Carers which increases our overall number to five.</p>
5f	Continue to engage with foster carers through regular newsletters, foster carer workshops, and involving foster carers in service development through task and finish groups.	Keith Martin, Head of Service for Children with Disabilities and Fostering	March 2022	<p>We have recently completed our annual survey of foster carers and are currently analysing the responses.</p> <p>We have continued to publish regular newsletters.</p> <p>We have foster carer representation on all of our development groups and have just recruited a foster carer to the Virtual School Governing Body.</p>
5g	Develop and launch an information recording system which enables data input and data capture specifically through the fostering service (Fostering System Optimisation).	Keith Martin, Head of Service for Children with Disabilities and Fostering	March 2022	<p>7 workstreams have been established which are overseen by officers and service users. These are (with timeline dates):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Portals (21/22)</li> <li>2. Fostering Recruitment Workflow (21/22)</li> <li>3. Family and Friends Workflow (21/22)</li> <li>4. Special Guardianship Workflow (22)</li> <li>5. Private Fostering Workflow (22)</li> </ol>

				6. Staying Put Workflow (22/23) 7. Supported Accommodation / Lodgings Workflow (22/23)
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## **Children and Families Committee**

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<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	6 October 2021
<b>Report Title:</b>	Children and Families Performance Report Quarter 1 2021-22
<b>Report of:</b>	Ged Rowney, Interim Director of Children's Services
<b>Report Reference No:</b>	CF/11/21-22
<b>Ward(s) Affected:</b>	All wards

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### **1. Executive Summary**

- 1.1. This report sets out the impact of COVID-19 on performance, and the arrangements that have been in place during this time and gives an overview of performance across the Children and Families service for quarter 1 of 2020-21.

### **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1. The Children and Families Committee is asked to note the performance of Children's Services for quarter 1.

### **3. Reasons for Recommendations**

- 3.1. One of the key areas of focus for the Children and Families Committee is to review performance and scrutinise the effectiveness of services for children and young people.

### **4. Other Options Considered**

- 4.1. Not applicable.

### **5. Background**

- 5.1. This quarterly report provides the Committee with an overview of performance across Children's Services. This report relates to quarter 1 of 2021-22 (1 April 2021 – 30 June 2021).

- 5.2.** It also sets out the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on performance, which include:
- Contacts and referrals to the front door showing some unusual trends due to school closures which makes quarter on quarter analysis more complex. This has continued into quarter 1 as bubble arrangements and isolation guidelines have meant that many schools have had significant numbers of pupils not attending.
  - Delivery of frontline services, especially in terms of face to face visiting and routine reviews, have been adapted to reflect the various isolation requirements to protect both workers and the families we work with.
  - Attendance at Children's Centres and Youth Support, whilst initially impacted during the pandemic, are now being delivered within COVID safe guidelines and face to face services are being delivered with increased numbers attending.
  - Work around Education and Health Care Plans – especially when assessing children in their “school environment” and “routine” has been increasingly complex and difficult.
- 5.3.** Senior leaders and managers continue to remain sighted on service performance and impact on children and young people through the following:
- A core data set provided to CEMART which includes key measures for Children's Services.
  - A weekly social care and safeguarding data set from the beginning of February 2020 comparing core data sets with the same week in 2019/20. This is continuing for at least the first quarter of 2021/22 whilst we assess the impact of lockdown easing.
  - Weekly attendance at early years settings Department for Education (DfE) dashboard.
  - National local authority data set submitted to the DfE – originally on a fortnightly basis commencing in May 2020, but this reduced to monthly in Spring 2021.
  - Daily dashboard data around school attendance with weekly national comparator data and summary.
  - Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) Power BI reporting platform that enables the service to have timely information on assessment timescales and reviews due enabling the service to prioritise case loads and requirements.
  - A National SEND local authority data set submitted to the DfE on a monthly basis.
- 5.4.** This report contains the indicator set and summary commentary around any areas of concern together with highlighting any different provision/ support that has been put in place during this time.

## Children's Social Care

Measure	Year end 2020/21	Quarter 4 2020/21	Quarter 1 2021/22
Number of referrals	2273	467	601
Percentage of repeat referrals	16%	17%	18%
Percentage of assessments completed within 45 days	74%	74%	79%
Percentage of children with a second or subsequent child protection (CP) plan (rolling yr)	27.8%	28%	27%
Number of children in need	2082 (Cin census outturn)	1713	1739
Number of children with a child protection plan	236	244	220
% of children on CP plans reviewed within timescales	93.1%	93%	93%
Number of cared for children	518	517	527
% of cared for children reviewed within timescales	96%	99%	96%
% of cared for children in internal foster care (including friends and family placements)	35%	35%	35%
% of children living in external foster homes	28%	28%	22%
% of children living in residential homes	8%	8%	7%
% of cared for children placed over 20 miles from home address (Cheshire East and out of borough)	28%	28%	28%
% of care leavers who are not in education, employment or training (NEET)	48%	51%	47%
% of care leavers who are in suitable accommodation	98%	97%	97%
Total number of children with a court endorsed plan of adoption (snapshot figure)	30	30	30
Number of children adopted (YTD)	26	26	3
Average caseload of social workers	19	19	20

- 5.5.** Compared to quarter 4 (Q4) there has been a significant increase in referrals to social care, which is also higher than the numbers seen in Q1 of 2020/21 at 539. The main source of the increase is from schools as they are now seeing children in a classroom environment for longer and understanding the impact the COVID pandemic has had on health and wellbeing. Analysis shows that the rate of contact to referral increased in 20/21 suggesting that safeguarding risks were still being identified and referred appropriately and this is remaining in Q1.
- 5.6.** Although the re-referral rate increased slightly in Q1, it still remains at much more acceptable levels and lower than the latest published North West position of 22%. Re-referrals are regularly audited for any recurring themes.
- 5.7.** Q1 showed a continued improvement in the timeliness of assessments, ensuring that risks are being quickly identified and plans put in place for individuals in a timely fashion. This however needs to be viewed



alongside quality and management oversight indicates that where needed challenge is being put in place where required.

- 5.8.** The rate of repeat child protection plans continues to be a focus for audit and reflective learning, considering reasons for the need for repeat intervention and what interventions may lead to more permanent solutions for the future.
- 5.9.** There has been a small increase in the number of children in care from year end albeit numbers remain lower than at the same time last year where we had 544 individuals in the care of the local authority. Positively the numbers in external foster care are lower meaning that more individuals are being supported within a mix of family arrangements.
- 5.10.** Due to the increased number of referrals the average case loads for social workers has seen a small increase. This will continue to be monitored closely alongside local variations in specific team and area workloads.

## Education and Skills

Measure	Year end 2020/21	Quarter 4 2020/21	Quarter 1 2021/22
Percentage good or outstanding primary schools	92%	Not available	Not available
Percentage good or outstanding secondary schools	80%	Not available	Not available
Percentage good or outstanding special schools	80%	Not available	Not available
Percentage attendance for primary pupils year to date	96%	96%	97%
Percentage attendance for secondary pupils year to date	93%	93%	93%
Percentage attendance for special school pupils year to date	83%	83%	90%
Number of permanent exclusions from Cheshire East Schools (latest half term available)	5	5	6
Current Number of pupils educated at home	457	457	509
Current number of children missing from education.	62	62	58
Percentage of Good/ Outstanding PEPs	82%	82%	89%
Total number with an education, health and care plan (EHCP)	3013	3013	3142
% of requests for Educational Psychologists (EP) advice completed within 6 weeks	59%	87%	98%
Special Educational Needs – Education, Health and Care Plans completion within 20 weeks including exceptions (cumulative yr - NB Q4 represents new year - see comments at point 5.19)	37%	85%	86%
Average number of weeks for EHC Plans to be issued (snap shot at quarter end to which it relates)	19.0	19.0	19.4
% EHCP annual review completed in timescales	67%	67%	58%

- 5.11.** At the start of lockdown the DfE announced the cessation of all inspections and as such there is no updated data available. During quarter 1 Ofsted continued with monitoring visits to schools, and in the latest published Ofsted data Cheshire East had received 3 visits to schools. Letters outlining these visits have been published on the Ofsted



website and whilst no judgements are provided for these visits, all 3 state that leaders are taking effective action to improve. Current guidance is that full inspections will recommence in September 2021.

- 5.12.** Percentage attendance data sets are now available since return to school in March 2021. Daily information also remains available to the directorate monitoring COVID information and attendance by vulnerable groups. Q1 saw an improvement in the attendance at both primary schools and special schools. Additional support has been provided in schools to aid individuals in returning and settling back into the daily routine together with identified educational needs.
- 5.13.** The latest exclusions data reported relates to the term ending in July. All exclusions relate to secondary school exclusions. All schools considering a permanent exclusion liaise directly with education access officer to discuss exclusion and she explores alternatives with the school.
- 5.14.** There are a small number of schools that are unable to report currently to the DfE and the schools team remains in close contact with them to ensure that pupils are attending and any additional support required identified.
- 5.15.** We have experienced an increase in children being educated at home (electively home educated – EHE) however this has been seen across the whole of the North West with some LAs seeing a two fold increase. Reasons are varied with a range of COVID anxieties such as risk of infection and exposure risks for vulnerable family members being a consideration in a number of cases. We implemented a multi-agency pre-deregistration meeting in September 2020, requesting schools to invite the child, parents, professionals involved with the child, and Local Authority, to meet to discuss reasons for de-registration and set our Local Authority expectations, ensuring parents were making an informed choice to electively home educate.
- 5.16.** The number of individuals missing from education continues to reduce with ongoing work to resolve the remaining individuals' circumstances. The team is working closely with the families and schools concerned to establish where individuals have enrolled.
- 5.17.** The personal education plan (PEP) data represents the position at the end of the Spring term. Considerable work has been completed by the Virtual School in conjunction with the relevant schools attended to ensure that all our cared for children have comprehensive support to fulfill their potential.
- 5.18.** The last two quarters' performance demonstrate the success of the work that has been ongoing to increase the availability of Educational Psychologists (EPs). This ongoing partnership approach will continue to vastly improve outcomes for individuals with robust education plans in place much quicker.

- 5.19.** The year end timeliness for Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plans of 37% represents the outturn reported in January as part of the SEN2 statutory return to the DfE. Q1 performance of 86% therefore reflects the position from January – June 2021. The average time for completion also remains constant at around 19 weeks for new plans.
- 5.20.** Timely reviews of EHC plans remains a priority however the increasing numbers of plans together with new requests means that the service is under constant pressure to meet all requirements.

### Prevention and Early Help

Measure	Year end 2020/21	Quarter 4 2020/21	Quarter 1 2021/22
Current number of open Early Help Assessments/ plans	1237	1237	1243
% of all open Early Help Assessments led by Cheshire East Prevention service staff	61%	61%	58%
% 0-2 yrs engaged at children centres (most vulnerable i.e. CIN/CP/LAC that have attended 3 or more times in the last 12 months)	23%	21%	20%
% eligible children taking up 2 year old offer (termly figure only)	68%	68%	71%
% children taking up 3 and 4 year old offer (termly figure only)	94%	94%	93%
Number of Families meeting the Supporting People (previously family focus) criteria where outcomes have been successfully concluded (quarterly fig)	318 target achieved	74	87
Number of young people accessing the youth support service		872	1634
Number of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) individuals [yr. 12-13]	174	174	172
% of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) individuals [yr. 12-13]	2.3%	2.3%	2.3%

- 5.21.** Despite the difficulties services are facing, compared to the same point last year, we are supporting more families and young people with an early help assessment. This means that individuals are getting support as soon as possible and we can target help and equip individuals with tools and techniques before issues escalate. Longer term this will hopefully contribute to reduced numbers of individuals requiring specialist interventions and services.
- 5.22.** The number of early help assessments that are led by Cheshire East staff continues to reduce as partners are increasingly able to undertake the lead where they are the most appropriate agency. This is in part due to schools being fully opened together with other partner agencies opening more face to face services.

- 5.23.** The take up of the 2, 3 and 4 year old offer remains consistently high ensuring that children are receiving support at the earliest opportunity and crucially enabling their individual progress despite the COVID-19 restrictions. Enabling social interaction and group learning at a young age is crucial to development and ensuring that this being supported and provided by our teams and partners has remained a priority.
- 5.24.** The Supporting People Programme (formally Family Focus Programme) has continued following a further 12 month extension to the programme with a 2021/22 target of 332 payment by results. As at Q1, 87 families had been successfully supported indicating that should this continue we will achieve the target set.
- 5.25.** Q1 has seen a significant increase in the number of individuals receiving support from the Youth Service. This is primarily due to being able to open up more of the group sessions within the revised guidelines. Where virtual services have proved successful we will continue to offer a blended approach to maximise the support available.
- 5.26.** Although there are still some difficulties in identifying available employment opportunities, the number of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) remains low. Part of the local offer for care leavers includes support to apply for apprenticeships, training funding and a range of other opportunities.

## **6. Implications**

### **6.1. Legal**

- 6.1.1.** There are no direct legal implications.

### **6.2. Finance**

- 6.2.1.** Although there are no direct financial implications related to this report, performance measures may be used as an indicator of where more or less funding is needed at a service level.

### **6.3. Policy**

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

### **6.4. Equality**

- 6.4.1.** Members may want to use the information from the performance indicators to ensure that services are targeted at more vulnerable children and young people.

### **6.5. Human Resources**

- 6.5.1.** There are no direct human resource implications.

### **6.6. Risk Management**

- 6.6.1.** There are risks associated with some performance measures, e.g. increases in demand and timeliness of services.

**6.7. Rural Communities**

**6.7.1.** There are no direct implications for rural communities.

**6.8. Children and Young People/Cared for Children**

**6.8.1.** Performance reports enable members to identify areas of good performance and areas for improvement in relation to children and young people, including cared for children.

**6.9. Public Health**

**6.9.1.** There are no direct implications for public health.

**6.10. Climate Change**

**6.10.1.** This report does not impact on climate change.

<b>Access to Information</b>	
Contact Officer:	Bev Harding, Business Intelligence Manager <a href="mailto:Bev.Harding@cheshireeast.gov.uk">Bev.Harding@cheshireeast.gov.uk</a>
Appendices:	None
Background Papers:	None



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## **Children and Families Committee**

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<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	6 October 2021
<b>Report Title:</b>	School Organisation: Academisation of Schools: Middlewich High School
<b>Report of:</b>	Ged Rowney, Interim Director of Children's Services
<b>Report Reference No:</b>	CF/10/21-22
<b>Ward(s) Affected:</b>	Councillor Carol Bulman – Middlewich Councillor Mike Hunter - Middlewich Councillor Jonathan Parry – Middlewich

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### **1. Executive Summary**

- 1.1** At the Children and Families Committee meeting on 12 July 2021, approval was given to put in place a process by which academy conversions would be undertaken by Cheshire East Borough Council (the Council). A decision was taken to enable certain conversions to be progressed via Officer Decision Record subject to exemptions. Key to these were the arrangements relating to the land transfer, the commercial transfer agreement and the financial position of the school as the point of transfer.
- 1.2** It was resolved that the Committee:
- 1.2.1** Delegates to the Executive Director of Children's Services in consultation with Chief Finance Officer and Monitoring Officer authority to take all steps necessary to agree and execute the commercial transfer agreement, novation of third-party contracts, Shared Use Agreements/Facilities Access Agreements, staffing and information transfer.
  - 1.2.2** Delegates to the Executive Director of Place in consultation with Chief Finance Officer and Monitoring Officer to take all steps necessary to agree and execute any transactions in relation to land, facilities or shared use agreements.

**1.2.3** Notes that the Chief Finance Officer has authority to take all steps necessary to agree, transfer and adjust relevant budgets and allocate balances in accordance with Department for Education (DfE) Guidance.

**1.2.4** Notes that no delegation may be exercised to execute any agreement as per [recommendations 2.1, 2.2 or 2.3 of the report](#) where: a) the school has a deficit of £100k or there is any significant impact on the Medium Term Financial Strategy b) there are substantive third party land interests c) any public funds are to be reclaimed under section (land contributions) d) any current or proposed legal claim has been identified e) where an indemnity is sought against Cheshire East Council on any matter.

**1.3** This report relates to Middlewich High School which, due to the third-party interests in land which forms the school's site and the resulting land transactions, falls outside the officer delegations and requires a Committee decision.

## **2. Recommendations**

**2.1** That the Committee:

**2.2** Notes that Middlewich High School, King Edward Street, Middlewich CW10 9BU, will be converting to Academy status on or after 1 November 2021 as per the Department for Education (DfE) Academy Order (see Appendix 1).

**2.3** Notes that Middlewich High School will become part of the Multi Academy Trust (MAT), The Sir John Brunner Foundation.

**2.4** Authorises the completion of a Commercial Transfer Agreement to the Sir John Brunner Foundation relating to the transfer of all staff under the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006, and assets to the Foundation.

**2.5** Authorises the Executive Director of Children's Services in consultation with Chief Finance Officer and Monitoring Officer to take all steps necessary to agree and execute the Commercial Transfer Agreement.

**2.6** Authorises the grant and completion of all transactions in relation to land, facilities or shared use agreements as are necessary in order to facilitate the conversion, including (but not limited to) the grant and completion of a lease to the Sir John Brunner Foundation for 125 years substantially in the form of the model lease produced by DfE at a peppercorn rent. The school site is identifiable as shown on the accompanying redline plan (see Appendix 2).

**2.7** Authorise the Executive Director of Place and Chief Finance Officer to take the steps necessary to agree the required transactions in relation to land, facilities or shared use agreements to enable the Transfer, in line with the agreed heads of terms.

- 2.8** Notes that the Chief Finance Officer has authority to take all steps necessary to agree, transfer and adjust relevant budgets and allocate balances in accordance with Department for Education Guidance.

### **3. Reasons for Recommendation**

- 3.1** Middlewich High School is one of 4 secondary provisions in Cheshire East which has not already converted to an Academy. The school and Governing Board have, for some time, expressed a desire to join The Sir John Brunner Foundation and under the current Headteacher, this process has been accelerated.
- 3.2** One of the key reasons for wanting to join this Trust is that Middlewich High School does not have a 6<sup>th</sup> Form provision and therefore a high proportion of students will access their post 16 courses at Sir John Deane's 6<sup>th</sup> Form College which is already part of this Trust. This does not mean that there is any limitation on pupils on making decisions for post 16 courses.
- 3.3** The conversion of Middlewich High School to an academy and transfer of title in property to the The Sir John Brunner Foundation ("the Academy") is complex because of the interests of third parties in the school and in Middlewich Leisure Centre and falls outside the Officer delegations therefore a Committee Decision is required.

### **4. Other Options Considered**

- 4.1** The Council's consent is not required for the School to convert to an Academy. However, if the Council does not cooperate with the conversion process and negotiate and enter into lease arrangements and a Commercial Transfer Agreement, the Secretary of State has the power to make transfer schemes under the Academies Act 2010. This is in relation to property, land, rights and liabilities (including rights and liabilities in relation to staff) which would be binding on the Council.
- 4.2** An Academy Proprietor is entitled to expect the lease of all the premises and facilities which the school uses and which premises or matter for negotiation and if agreement cannot be reached then the Council should make application to the Office of the School's Adjudicator on or before the conversion date seeking resolution of the dispute.
- 4.3** It is therefore preferable for the Council to reach agreement with the Governing Body of the School and the Trust and enter into the lease arrangements and a CTA in respect of these matters, rather than be subject to transfer schemes which may be made by the Secretary of State. This agreement will be overseen and scrutinised by various specialist service teams including legal and property services.

### **5. Background Information**

- 5.1** The Academies Act 2010 empowered the Secretary of State for Education to create Academies through Academy Orders.



- 5.2** Middlewich High School (MHS) is a Community school at present, and an Academy Order for the school to convert has been granted (Appendix 1). The school is due to convert on 1 November 2021.
- 5.3** The land and assets used by the school are currently owned by the Council. The Council owns the freehold of Middlewich High School (including Middlewich Leisure Centre which is occupied and run by Everybody Sport & Recreation (ESAR)). There is an option on Council land which forms part of Middlewich High School site (the Option Land – shown edged in blue in Appendix 2) in favour of a third party.
- 5.4** The specific land interests at Middlewich High School are complex. The following information sets out the actions to be taken to ensure compliance in this conversion and to protect the Council's interests.

Property position pre-conversion:

- a. The Council holds the freehold of Middlewich High School; which encompasses Middlewich Leisure Centre which is in the same building as the school.
  - b. ESAR occupies Middlewich Leisure Centre and operates the leisure centre in accordance with the Leisure Agreement dated 2nd May 2014 between the Council and ESAR (as varied); which governs the operation of leisure centres on behalf of the Council.
  - c. ESAR shares the use of Middlewich Leisure Centre with Middlewich High School, the school uses the leisure centre during school hours and ESAR uses it outside school hours.
  - d. There is an Option to Grant a Lease to a third party (the Option Land). The Option expires in 2022.
- 5.5** To accomplish the conversion and protect the Council's interests, legal documentation will be put in place as follows:
- a. The Academy lease between the Council and School including Middlewich Leisure Centre for 125 years. The Academy insures and repairs Middlewich High School including Middlewich Leisure Centre under this lease.
  - b. On completion of the Academy lease there will be a Tenancy at Will of the Option Land between the Council and the Academy so that the Council can end the Tenancy at Will immediately if the Option is exercised.
  - c. On completion of the Academy lease there will be an Agreement for Lease between the Council and the Academy for the Option Land so that if the Option is not exercised the Council will grant a lease of the Option Land to the Academy and the lease is in similar form to the Academy



Lease for a term ending on the same day as the Academy Lease, Academy repairs and insures the Option Land under the lease.

- d. If the Option is not exercised then the Council will complete the Lease of the Option Land with the Academy.
- e. On completion of the Academy lease there will be an Underlease of Middlewich Leisure Centre between the Academy and the Council for a term of 5 years. The Council can break the lease on 6 months' notice after 18 months. The Academy repairs and insures Middlewich Leisure Centre in the Underlease (like in the Academy Lease). The Underlease refers to the Academy Lease as the superior lease.
- f. On completion of the Academy lease there will be a Subunderlease of Middlewich Leisure Centre between the Council and ESAR for a term of 5 years and the Council can break the lease on 6 months' notice after 18 months. ESAR covenants to perform the tenant's covenants in the superior lease (the Underlease of Middlewich Leisure Centre between the Academy and the Council). The leisure provider, ESAR, has been fully involved in the ongoing discussions and agreements relating to the leasing arrangements.

**5.6** The Council's standard Commercial Transfer Agreement (CTA) is being entered into by the Council, Governing Body and Academy Trust. As per guidance given by the Department for Education (DfE) the standard is closely based on the DfE template.

**5.7** A Facilities Access Agreement (FAA) is being entered into between the Council, the Academy Trust and ESAR. This sets out the day-to-day arrangements for the sharing of the leisure centre, including utility bills, as the leisure centre will be within the academy lease.

## **6. Consultation and Engagement**

**6.1** Appropriate consultation and engagement has taken place as required to support the conversion. Specific HR engagement is set out in section 7.5.

## **7. Implications of the Recommendations**

### **7.1 Legal**

**7.1.1.** The Council is obliged under the Academies Act 2010 to cease maintaining a school on the date it opens as an Academy. This report sets out the implications if the Council fails to cooperate and enter into a lease and CTA.

**7.1.2.** The CTA is negotiated and drafted by Legal Services and the Council's CTA is closely aligned to the DfE standard template. It transfers the

Council's non-land assets, including contracts, IT, and staff, to the Academy.

- 7.1.3.** There is shared use on the school site, therefore a Facilities Access Agreement has been drafted using the Council's standard agreement. It sets out the arrangements for the Academy sharing the leisure centre with ESAR.
- 7.1.4.** There is a pre-conversion capital expenditure which has been approved between the Local Authority and School to address SEN provisions. A standard Council grant agreement will be entered into to ensure the funds are used for their intended purpose and this grant agreement will be monitored by the Local Authority.
- 7.1.5.** The following documents will be put in place in order to protect the interests of the Council, create legal relationships with the Academy and ESAR in Middlewich High School:
  - 7.1.5.1.** An Academy Lease of Middlewich High School (including Middlewich Leisure Centre) between the Council and the Academy for a term of 125 years.
  - 7.1.5.2.** A Tenancy at Will between the Council and the Academy of the Option Land which can be terminated by either party at any time.
  - 7.1.5.3.** A conditional agreement for lease of the Option Land between the Council and the Academy for a lease of the Option Land for a term ending on the same date as the Academy Lease and the condition is that the Option itself is not exercised by the third party who has the benefit of the Option. If the Option is exercised, then the Agreement for Lease is terminated.
  - 7.1.5.4.** An Underlease of Middlewich Leisure Centre between the Academy and the Council for a term of five years with a break clause in favour of the Council.
  - 7.1.5.5.** A Subunderlease of Middlewich Leisure Centre between the Council and ESAR for a term of five years with a break clause in favour of the Council.
- 7.1.6** The interests of the Council are protected under the property documentation as:
  - 7.1.6.1** it is the Landlord under the Academy lease and has the benefits of the covenants given by the Academy,
  - 7.1.6.2** it is the Landlord under the Tenancy at Will and of the Lease of the Option Land and has the benefits of the covenants of the Academy.

**7.1.6.3** The Council is the tenant of the Underlease of Middlewich Leisure Centre. There could not be a lease between the Academy and ESAR because then the Council would lose control of the occupation of Middlewich Leisure Centre by ESAR. The underlease regularises ESAR's occupation of the site and steps will need to be taken to reflect this in the Operating Agreement between the Council and ESAR.

**7.1.6.4** The Council has the benefit of the covenants of ESAR in the Subunderlease of Middlewich Leisure Centre including covenants by ESAR to perform the covenants in the superior lease (the Underlease between the Academy and the Council).

## **7.2. Finance**

**7.2.1** The Academy will be responsible for all outgoings related to the land to include public liability and premises insurances or participation in the DfE Risk Protection Arrangement, and repairs / maintenance.

**7.2.2** The Council will retain a landlord role, but the leases will contain provisions for recovering costs for approvals required under the terms of the leases e.g., for alterations.

**7.2.3** The Trust will receive its funding direct from the DfE. Government funding for Cheshire East maintained schools will be reduced proportionately.

**7.2.4** The CTA includes standardised text that confirms the Council remains liable for any pre conversion costs and the academy is responsible for post conversion costs. It must be noted that any cash balance or local bank account balance remains the property of the Council (excluding any local school funds).

**7.2.5** The Finance Service has to complete a "final balance" calculation for each conversion to ensure all costs and funding are correctly allocated. This can be complex and it must be agreed with the school within four months of conversion.

**7.2.6** Based on the three-year financial plan submitted by Middlewich High School in June 2021 the school is forecasting a surplus carry forward of c.£0.5m for 2021/22. It is forecast to stay at that level for the next two financial years to March 2024.

**7.2.7** The schools have six printer / copiers on a lease that will need to be transferred.

**7.2.8** A grant of up to £182,000 has been approved by the Council for agreed capital works relating to the school's SEN Resource provisions. This grant was awarded to the school as a maintained school prior to conversion and

these works will not be completed by the date of conversion. Therefore, a standard Council grant agreement will be entered into to ensure the funds are used for their intended purpose and this grant agreement will be monitored by the Local Authority.

### **7.3 Policy**

**7.3.1** The implementation of academy conversion is undertaken in accordance with national legislation as per the various Education Acts as referred to earlier in this report.

### **7.4 Equality**

**7.4.1** The Academies Conversion programme is a Central Government Policy. The school will become their own admissions authority but will continue to work with the local authority to ensure they are code compliant. Strong relationships will remain with the school and Headteacher on a wide variety of educational themes post conversion.

### **7.5 Human Resources**

**7.5.1** The Council employees in respect of the School will transfer from the Council to the Academy under TUPE regulations. The school uses the dedicated Local Authority HR service for Schools who will advise on human resource implications with the Council keeping a watching brief to ensure all statutory requirements are met and often responds where Union concerns are raised.

**7.5.2** In addition, members of staff at the school that are currently employed by the Council are to transfer under the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 to the Trust as well as the assets of the school under a Commercial Transfer Agreement (CTA).

**7.5.3** The statutory TUPE consultation has been completed being managed and co-ordinated by the HR Team. There was on-going consultation for MHS which took place with staff and formal TUPE consultation meetings with the unions on 3 February 2021, 24 February 2021, 2 July 2021, and 11 July 2021.

### **7.6 Risk Management**

**7.6.1** The management of risk is governed by the structured legislative process which is followed; this ensures due diligence is undertaken at all stages. The Council is required to take all reasonable steps to facilitate the conversion and then “Cease to Maintain” the school.

**7.6.2** All parties are kept regularly informed of progress to ensure any concerns are picked up and resolved at the earliest opportunity to keep the conversation on track (which has remained in spite of Covid restrictions) and given the complex land transactions additional meetings have been put in place with the school and its advisors to work through the complexities.

**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 direct implications for climate change.

<b>Access &amp; Authorisation of Information</b>	
Contact Officer:	Mark Bayley Head of Service – Infrastructure and Outcomes <a href="mailto:mark.bayley@cheshireeast.gov.uk">mark.bayley@cheshireeast.gov.uk</a>
Legal Approvals	Julie Gregory: Acting Legal Team Manager
Finance Approvals	Steve Reading: Schools Finance lead
Place Approvals	Paul Bayley: Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services
HR Approvals	Nuala Hadden: Schools HR.
Appendices:	Appendix 1: Academy Order for Middlewich High School Appendix 2: Middlewich Leisure Centre Lease Plan
Background Papers:	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/convert-to-an-academy-documents-for-schools">https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/convert-to-an-academy-documents-for-schools</a>



APPENDIX 1



Department  
for Education

Regional Schools Commissioner for the  
West Midlands Regional Delivery  
Directorate  
Department for Education  
Cheylesmore House  
Quinton Road  
Coventry  
CV1 2WT

Mr Ged Rowney  
Interim Director of Children's Services  
Cheshire East Council  
Westfields  
Middlewich Road  
Sandbach  
CW11 1HZ

25 February 2021

**ACADEMY ORDER FOR MIDDLEWICH HIGH SCHOOL**

Following the recent application of the governing body of Middlewich High School to become an academy, I am delighted to confirm that I am agreeable to the conversion of this school to an academy.

I enclose a copy of an Academy Order, which will enable the school to convert to an academy. For conversion to take place, I will need to agree, with the Academy Trust that will run the academy, a Funding Agreement and the Articles of Association of the Academy Trust. The Funding Agreement will record the date on which the school will convert into an academy.

Formal TUPE consultations with staff, unions, and the employer should start as soon as possible. For schools where the governing body is the employer of staff, the governors will lead on the TUPE process, but they may require your support to do so. In all cases, you should please ensure that any personnel files which you hold for the schools are fully up-to-date, and that you have an accurate record of the staff employed at the schools and the terms and conditions of their employment.

It will be necessary for the land and buildings occupied by the school to be transferred to the Academy Trust so that they are available for use by the academy from the conversion date. The exact arrangements for achieving this will depend on whether the school is a community, foundation or trust school, or a voluntary school, and whether the land used by the school is public land, private land or a combination of the two.

In cases where you own the land and buildings currently occupied by the schools, I am asking you to agree to lease these to the Academy Trust through a 125-year lease similar to that used for existing academies. As a first step, you should please start to gather land ownership and land registration documentation and information if you have not already done so. My officials will also discuss with you the implications of any schools proposing to convert to academies that are involved in an existing PFI contract or BSF scheme. Model lease documents for Academy Trusts and local authorities to use as the basis for negotiations are available on the Department's website at <http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/leadership/typesofschools/academies>

I am writing to the chair of governors, copied to the head teacher, to give my agreement to the conversion.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andrew Warren', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Andrew Warren,

Regional Schools Commissioner, West Midlands





**Rt Hon Gavin Williamson CBE MP**  
Secretary of State

Sanctuary Buildings Great Smith Street Westminster London SW1P 3BT  
tel: 0370 000 2288 [www.education.gov.uk/help/contactus](http://www.education.gov.uk/help/contactus)

**To: The Chair of Governors of Middlewich High School**

**Cheshire East Council**

### **ACADEMY ORDER**

1. This is an Academy Order made further to section 4 of the Academies Act 2010.
2. I hereby order that on the conversion date Middlewich High School shall be converted into an Academy.
3. The conversion date shall be the date that the school opens as an Academy further to and as provided for in Academy arrangements made further to section 1 of the Academies Act 2010.
4. On the conversion date Cheshire East Council shall cease to maintain Middlewich High School.
5. The independent school standards (as defined in section 157(2) of the Education Act 2002) are to be treated as met in relation to the Academy on the conversion date.

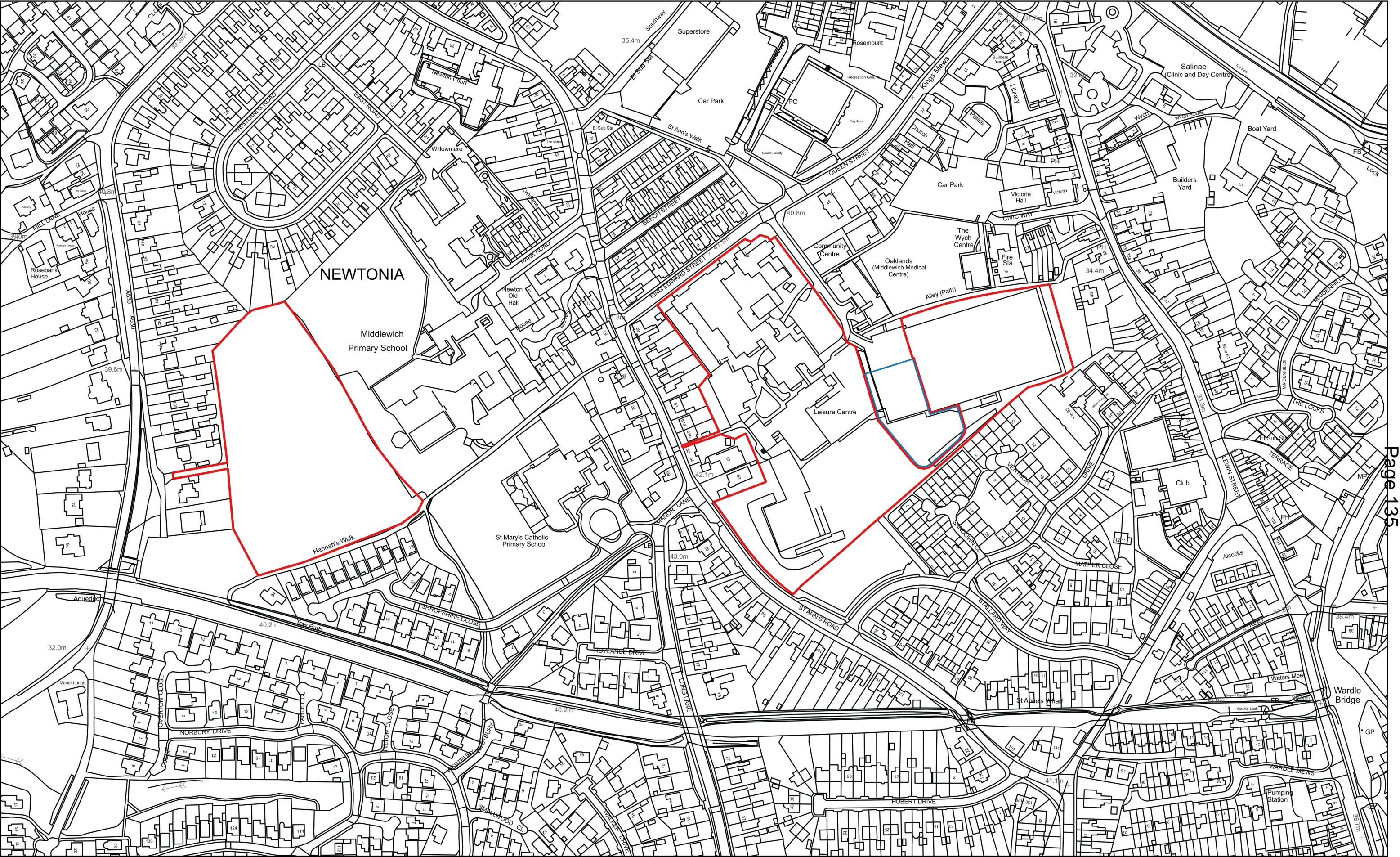
Signed on behalf of the Secretary of State for Education by:

Signed:..... Date:25 February 2021

**Andrew Warren,**  
**Regional Schools Commissioner**

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## **Children and Families Committee**

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<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	6 October 2021
<b>Report Title:</b>	School Organisation: Academisation of Schools: Forward Plan
<b>Report of:</b>	Ged Rowney, Interim Director of Children's Services
<b>Report Reference No:</b>	CF/10/21-22
<b>Ward(s) Affected:</b>	All

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### **1. Executive Summary**

- 1.1. At the Children and Families Committee meeting on 12 July 2021, a decision was taken to enable identified school academy conversions to be progressed via Officer Decision Record subject to specific exemptions. Where these exemptions were required, papers would be presented to Committee on specific schools for their consideration.
- 1.2. A summary report (Appendix1) will be presented to Committee on a regular basis to summarise recently converted schools and those in process so that Committee Members are kept aware of all school academy conversions.

### **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1. That the Committee receives and notes the summary table (Appendix 1) showing the status of academy conversions across Cheshire East Schools.

### **3. Reasons for Recommendations**

- 3.1. The Committee has asked to receive information regarding school academy conversions and this table (Appendix 1) ensures Committee Members are fully briefed on the status of ongoing conversions.

### **4. Other Options Considered**

- 4.1. School Governing Boards will decide to progress with an Academy process; the alternative is to remain a maintained school. There is no requirement for a

school to convert to an academy unless directed to do so through an inadequate Ofsted inspection.

## **5. Background**

- 5.1. A detailed Committee paper was presented and agreed at the July Committee meeting where a series of recommendations were approved relating to ensuring that school academy conversions are fully compliant and meet the requirements of the Council particularly in relation to three key areas, these being: land transfer, commercial trading (CTA) and financial status.
- 5.2. Full details of this paper can be found at [this link on the Cheshire East website](#).

## **6. Implications**

### **6.1. Legal**

- 6.1.1. All legal requirements are undertaken and approved ahead of any Academy conversion.

### **6.2. Finance**

- 6.2.1. All financial requirements are undertaken and approved ahead of any Academy conversion.

### **6.3. Policy**

- 6.3.1. The implementation of Academy conversion is undertaken in accordance with national legislation as per the various Education Acts as referred to in the previous paper to Committee on 12 July (see section 5.2 for the link to the report).

### **6.4. Equality**

- 6.4.1. Not applicable for this report summary.

### **6.5. Human Resources**

- 6.5.1. Not applicable for this report summary.

### **6.6. Risk Management**

- 6.6.1. Not applicable for this report summary.

### **6.7. Rural Communities**

- 6.7.1. Not applicable for this report summary.

### **6.8. Children and Young People/Cared for Children**

- 6.8.1. There are no direct implications for children and young people.

### **6.9. Public Health**

- 6.9.1. There are no direct implications for public health.

**6.10. Climate Change**

**6.10.1.** There are no direct implications for climate change.

<b>Access to Information</b>	
Contact Officer:	Mark Bayley Head of Service – Infrastructure and Outcomes <a href="mailto:Mark.bayley@cheshireeast.gov.uk">Mark.bayley@cheshireeast.gov.uk</a>
Appendices:	Appendix 1: Forward Plan for academisation
Background Papers:	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/convert-to-an-academy-documents-for-schools">https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/convert-to-an-academy-documents-for-schools</a>

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**APPENDIX 1:****C&F Committee: School Academisation – Forward Plan****Date of Meeting : 6<sup>th</sup> October 2021**

The following table will be updated ahead of each Committee meeting as required to provide the latest position on current/forthcoming school Academy Conversions. Conversions included within the table are from the date of the commencement of the Council Committee system commenced in July 2021.

Green – completed.

Amber – in progress

Yellow – initial discussions taking place

School	Phase	Proposed Conversion Date	Commentary
Bosley CofE	Primary	1 <sup>st</sup> September 2021	Converted on time following approval at July C&F Committee.
Audlem St James'	Primary	1 <sup>st</sup> November 2021	Delayed due to land issue involving onsite nursery.
Middlewich High	Secondary	1 <sup>st</sup> November 2021	Paper at C&F Committee: 6 <sup>th</sup> October
Christ the King	Primary	1 <sup>st</sup> November 2021	ODR currently being prepared for approval using delegated authority to approve.
Oakfield lodge	Pupil Referral Unit	Not yet agreed	Discussions taking place with school.
Weaver	Primary	Not yet agreed	Discussions taking place with school
Wilmslow Group of schools	1x Secondary 4 x Primary	Not yet agreed	Discussions taking place with schools

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## **Children and Families Committee**

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<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	6 October 2021
<b>Report Title:</b>	Corporate Parenting Committee Annual Report 2020-21
<b>Report of:</b>	Ged Rowney, Director of Children's Services
<b>Report Reference No:</b>	CF/14/21-22
<b>Ward(s) Affected:</b>	All

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### **1. Executive Summary**

- 1.1. The Corporate Parenting Committee Annual Report details the progress and achievements over 2020-21 against the five pledges the Council has made to cared for children and care leavers in the Corporate Parenting Strategy. It also sets out the Terms of Reference for the Corporate Parenting Committee and the priorities for 2021-22.

### **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1. The Children and Families Committee is recommended to:
- Endorse the Corporate Parenting Committee Annual Report 2020-21 as set out at Appendix 1.

### **3. Reasons for Recommendations**

- 3.1. As an advisory committee to the Children and Families Committee, one of the roles of the Corporate Parenting Committee is to act as advocate for cared for children and care leavers, ensuring that their needs are addressed through key plans, policies and strategies throughout the Council and its commissioned services.
- 3.2. The Terms of Reference for the Corporate Parenting Committee included within the Constitution set out a requirement for the Corporate Parenting Committee to report to the Children and Families Committee on at least an annual basis.

#### **4. Other Options Considered**

- 4.1. It could be decided that the Corporate Parenting Committee no longer needs to produce an annual report, but the Annual Report provides an opportunity for the Children and Families Committee to review the effectiveness of this advisory Committee and the impact on outcomes for cared for children and care leavers.

#### **5. Background**

- 5.1. The Corporate Parenting Committee, established in May 2016, is a cross-party advisory committee. During 2020-21 there were 11 members with 1 vacancy. Members were appointed on a politically proportionate basis and nominated by the political groups.
- 5.2. The purpose of the Corporate Parenting Committee as an advisory committee to the Children and Families Committee is to ensure that the Council effectively discharges its role as Corporate Parent for all children and young people in care and care leavers from 0-25 years of age, and to hold partners to account for the discharge of their responsibilities.
- 5.3. The Corporate Parenting Committee Annual Report 2020-21 at Appendix 1 sets out the work of the Committee and progress against the Corporate Parenting Strategy over the past year.
- 5.4. The report also references the impact of Covid-19 on service delivery, the challenges faced and how these have been overcome to ensure our cared for children and young people and care leavers have continued to be supported throughout the pandemic.

#### **6. Consultation and Engagement**

- 6.1. Key stakeholders, including cared for children and young people and care leavers, are regularly consulted on the work of the Corporate Parenting Committee and Council and partner services. The five pledges within the Corporate Parenting Strategy are based on what young people told us matters most to them.

#### **7. Implications**

##### **7.1. Legal**

- 7.1.1. There is a range of legislation and statutory guidance that sets out the role of the local authority in respect of cared for children and care leavers. There are statutory obligations and guidance in relation to the Local Authority's role as Corporate Parent in the Children Acts 1989 and 2004; the Children and Young People Act 2008; the Children and Families Act 2014; and the Children and Social Work Act 2017.

- 7.1.2. In particular, the Children and Social Work Act 2017 defines, for the first time in law, the role of corporate parents, in addition to expanding and extending support for care leavers.

## **7.2. Finance**

- 7.2.1. Bringing children into the care of the local authority represents a significant cost for the Council and growth in the base budget has been approved in recent years based on the increasing levels of demand and complexity of need as well as the priority of achieving appropriate outcomes.

## **7.3. Policy**

- 7.3.1. As a corporate parent, all Council policies should consider the impact on cared for children and care leavers.

## **7.4. Equality**

- 7.4.1. All children and young people have a right to be treated equally and have their disability, gender, ethnic, cultural, religious, and linguistic needs met. As corporate parents for children and young people in care and care leavers, it is essential that the Council is able to demonstrate that it considers equality implications in all decisions made in relation to cared for children and care leavers. Cared for children and care leavers can be a vulnerable group because of their experiences so we need to ensure they are supported to achieve the same outcomes as their peers as they can experience disadvantages and are at risk of poorer outcomes.

## **7.5. Human Resources**

- 7.5.1. The number of children in care and care leavers has implications for staffing, both within Children's Social Care and enabling services.

## **7.6. Risk Management**

- 7.6.1. Cared for children and care leavers are a vulnerable group for whom there are a number of risks, including poor outcomes in education and training, health, safeguarding and transition into adulthood. The Corporate Parenting Strategy outlines plans to mitigate these risks.

## **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. The Corporate Parenting Annual Report, aligned to the Corporate Parenting Strategy, sets out implications for cared for children and young people and priorities for 2020-21.

**7.9. Public Health**

- 7.9.1. Cared for children and care leavers are more at risk of poor health outcomes. Health services need to be targeted to ensure that they meet the needs of this group of children and young people.

**7.10. Climate Change**

- 7.10.1. There are no climate change implications.

<b>Access to Information</b>	
Contact Officer:	Kerry Birtles <a href="mailto:Kerry.Birtles@cheshireeast.gov.uk">Kerry.Birtles@cheshireeast.gov.uk</a> Director of Children's Social Care
Appendices:	Appendix 1 – Corporate Parenting Committee Annual Report 2020-21
Background Papers:	The Corporate Parenting Strategy 2018-20 and pledges can be found on the following link: <a href="https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/livewell/care-and-support-for-children/services-from-childrens-social-care/cared-for-children/cared-for-children.aspx">https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/livewell/care-and-support-for-children/services-from-childrens-social-care/cared-for-children/cared-for-children.aspx</a>





# Corporate Parenting Committee Annual Report 2020-21

## Foreword

As Corporate Parents we made pledges as a council in December 2018 to be truly ambitious in supporting and guiding our cared for children and young people and our care experienced adults to strive to reach their full potential. We committed to ensuring that our children and young people had permanent homes that met their individual needs locally so that they could stay connected to their families and communities. We pledged that they would have the very best educational experiences, be healthy, be safe and prepared for their onward journey to adulthood.

The Corporate Parenting Committee have continued to support, challenge and scrutinise the outcomes for our children and young people in line with the pledges that we made. This year we have focused on supporting children and young people through the Covid-19 pandemic. We have ensured that children and young people have continued to receive the support they need despite the challenges the pandemic has brought. Children and young people have continued to receive face to face visits from their social worker. We have also prioritised and invested in the emotional support available to our children and young people, recognising that they needed some additional support through the pandemic.

Children and young people have continued to be at the heart of everything we do, and our Shadow Committee, My Voice, has continued to meet throughout the year albeit virtually when this was necessary. My Voice has subsequently returned to face to face meetings. Children and young people continue to raise awareness of pertinent issues that we as a Council have within our gift to influence. As ever my thanks are given to our children and young people in their efforts in bringing this perspective and challenge to the forefront.

Despite the pandemic, the participation team have offered children and young people a range of virtual activity days and this summer they have a wide range of activities planned to keep children and young people active during the school holidays.

Following the ILACS Ofsted Inspection in November 2019 there has been a focussed effort in addressing areas which required further improvement. We have particularly worked to strengthen our offer of accommodation to care leavers as well as working to ensure that all children and young people receive the very best support we can offer. The findings from the inspection have informed our onward journey in improving outcomes for children and young people in Cheshire East. We have subsequently developed an action plan we are using to improve the support we offer to children, young people, families and carers. Our continued focus is on achieving excellent outcomes for children and young people through establishing consistently good practice.

We have developed a clear vision for children, young people, and care experienced adults in Cheshire East, **Together for Children and Young People**. We want to ensure that across the Council and the partnership, everyone is clear on our shared ambition for children and young people, and we work together to achieve the best outcomes.

I am pleased to present the Corporate Parenting Annual Report 2020-21. This report highlights the successes achieved in delivering positive outcomes for children and young people and more crucially, the next steps in our journey to success.



*Cllr Kathryn Flavell – Lead Member for Children and Families*



## The Corporate Parenting Committee

We know that having the right values, beliefs and culture around prioritising and championing the needs of cared for children and young care experienced adults is essential to achieving excellent outcomes for children and young people. Our Corporate Parenting responsibility is a shared one that requires a high level of commitment from the leadership of the Council, as well as the support and ambition of all council employees and partners.

The Corporate Parenting Committee is comprised of eleven cross-party members with Council Officers in attendance to support agenda items, as required. The Committee is administered by Officers from Democratic Services.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Committee has met virtually, via Microsoft Teams, on five occasions in 2020-21:

- 14<sup>th</sup> July 2020
- 29<sup>th</sup> September 2020
- 17<sup>th</sup> November 2020
- 19<sup>th</sup> January 2021
- 30<sup>th</sup> March 2021.

In preparation for the discussion and challenge at Committee, our Shadow Committee of young people meets in advance with the Chair of the Committee and the Head of Service for Cared for Children and Care Leavers to comment on the matters that are to be presented to Committee. They share their lived experience of how services are designed and delivered and ultimately what it feels like to be a cared for child or care experienced adult in Cheshire East.

Officers and partners present information to the Committee. This can be themed in relation to key areas for children and young people, is responsive to changing times, or provides feedback from external scrutiny, so that members can scrutinise and challenge the service that is being delivered to ensure we are effectively meeting children and young people's needs.

The function of the Committee is to oversee the effective delivery of our Corporate Parenting responsibilities and the pledges that we made in December 2018. The Committee ensures that the statutory duties placed upon Cheshire East Council are met.

Officers support members in ensuring that they have the most up to date information available to them about local and national legislative changes. Induction training is also offered to new Members.

The Corporate Parenting Committee has reviewed its Terms of Reference for 2020-21 which is attached at Appendix 1.



## Corporate Parenting Strategy and Pledges

The Corporate Parenting Strategy 2018-20 sets out a number of pledges we are making to our cared for children and young people and those who are care experienced. These are based on what these children and young people have told us will make the most difference to their lives:

### Pledge One

**We will be a good corporate parent**

### Pledge Two

**We will improve education, training and employment outcomes**

### Pledge Three

**We will work to achieve permanence and keep children safe**

### Pledge Four

**We will improve health and wellbeing outcomes**

### Pledge Five

**We will prepare young people for adulthood**

Each Committee meeting receives a report on progress against the Pledges from the Strategy. Performance reporting and impact is scrutinised by the Committee, along with issues and risks.

**Four Workstream Groups**, aligned to the five pledge areas, are in place to ensure that this strategy is delivered effectively. Previously five workstreams were in place, and in January 2020 workstreams one and three agreed to merge to strengthen the shared focus.



## Service Delivery during Covid-19

Services for cared for children and care leavers embraced new ways of working in the initial stages of the pandemic, reports to Committee over the last 12 months have outlined any existing variations to our statutory service delivery and also highlighted the progress in planning for children and young people.

In response to the initial stages of pandemic, the government introduced the Adoption and Children (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations 2020 for Children's Social Care services. These regulations provided guidance for Local Authorities and Social Care providers in the alternative options for service delivery and were introduced to provide flexibility in the statutory obligations of local government relating to Cared for Children, Adoption and Fostering. These regulations were reviewed by Parliament on 25 September 2020 and the majority of the variations to service delivery were removed.

This ultimately meant that frontline services have a statutory obligation to operate within 'a mainly business as usual' model. There remains a small number of regulations in place to assist social care services in responsibly managing their statutory safeguarding responsibilities to children and young people whilst managing the risks of the virus to frontline workers. Established weekly reporting systems are in place, which identify how and where we are applying the amended regulations, in the main in relation to some Covid-specific virtual visits. Quality assurance activity is regularly undertaken which provides reassurance around the appropriate use of the regulations. The temporary regulations were due to expire on

the 31 March 2021, although following a public consultation have been agreed to be extended.

Frontline services, in line with the priorities set out in the Corporate Parenting Strategy, continue to deliver our statutory duties. Almost eighteen months into the pandemic we continue to see evidence of permanence for children within the Court arena, including an increasing number of children achieving adoption than in the previous year. 26 babies and children (twice as many last year) have been matched and permanently placed (as of April 2021). The tremendous efforts of our frontline colleagues, partners and children and young people themselves is testament to the resilience that exists within the services that we deliver and the children and families that we serve.

The service continues to use individual risk assessments to support safe service delivery for children, young people, their parents/carers and family members, and also our frontline colleagues. These risk assessments include physical risk management and also the emotional impact of the prolonged period of alternative ways of working where there are many avenues available including mindfulness, the employee assistance programme and home-based risk assessment. The corporate response to promoting diversity, equality and inclusion throughout the pandemic for the families who access our services and the frontline colleagues who deliver the service has been well received.

## Corporate Parenting Strategy Progress

### Pledge One

#### We will be a good corporate parent

Staff and elected members will understand their roles and responsibilities and be **ambitious corporate parents, who advocate and champion** the needs of cared for children and care leavers in everything they do.

We will **know ourselves and the needs of our children and young people well** and design and deliver services that meet these needs.

**Decisions** about children and young people's lives, and the services that support them, **will be made with them and for them**. We will always value their views.

### What the data tells us

- At the end of March 2021 there were 517 children and young people being cared for by Cheshire East. This is a decrease of 16 children and young people from March 2020.
- This equates to 67 cared for children per 10,000 of the child population within Cheshire East, which is slightly lower than last year.

### What have we done? (Committee and Officers)

- We have continued to monitor and scrutinise the progress and impact of the Corporate Parenting Strategy.
- We have received quarterly updates on our cared for children and care leavers through the Corporate Parenting Scorecard.
- We have had regular updates from the Participation Team.
- The Chair of the Committee and the Head of Service for Cared for Children and Care Leavers have attended 'My Voice' to develop a direct relationship with some of our cared for children and young people. Additionally, every Personal Advisor and Social Worker is on a rota to attend regularly to promote participation from our children and young people.
- Unfortunately, this year's annual Star Awards celebration event needed to be cancelled due to the Covid-19 pandemic. However, the teams did encourage our children and young people across the whole service in designing their own picture to be printed on a Tote Bag based on the theme of "Over the Rainbow". The bags were then filled with books and activities and sent to our children and young people to represent just how well they have managed during this challenging time. We continue to celebrate the achievements of our children and young people and ask everyone to ensure they highlight special achievements



no matter how big or unique so that we can look at ways to keep recognising these.

- My Voice has continued throughout the pandemic through virtual sessions and has now reverted back to face-to-face meetings.
- During the school holidays since February 2021, Activity Days have taken place virtually led by Sophie Cliffe, our Participation Worker.

**Merging of Workstream Groups 1 and 3** – The new workstream will focus on the following areas:

- Training, support and direct work tools to be developed around **placement stability, matching of placements and strengthening sibling assessments**.
- Embedding understanding of warning signs of **placement instability** to aid professionals in recognising signs of risk of placement instability, to prevent instability. In addition, support to prevent adoption breakdown and collaborative working with adoption counts and the front door.
- Continuation of the use of trajectories with an aim of all **children placed at home** having a Signs of Safety trajectory and safety plan in place to aid discharge of the care order.
- Strengthening **Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire** resources to triangulate views and to develop a holistic picture of emotional health.

- Development of **life story work** and use of **words and pictures** to help children and young people understand their journey through care.
- **Corporate Parenting Induction Training** will be established with a rolling pattern of focussed thematic training through the year.
- **Corporate Parenting Update Training** will be established for all elected members.
- Developing resources for cared for children and for staff supporting around **LGBTQ+** and **understanding transgender needs**.





### Wellbeing of Our Cared For Children and Care Leavers

- The wellbeing of our Cared For Children And Care Leavers has been an absolute priority for officers throughout this pandemic, particularly where we know they are likely to have experienced the pandemic in a detrimental way. Some of these known areas are in relation to access to employment, education and training, mental health services and where they are experiencing social isolation. Officers and partners are focused on how we offer services creatively across the Council to ensure that these young people are prioritised as we move through the pandemic.
- We have ensured that, wherever a child or young person has been living, that we have remained in regular contact and offered support where needed. We have seen our parents, foster carers and residential children's homes providers support our children and young people tremendously well with a real reduction in placement instability.

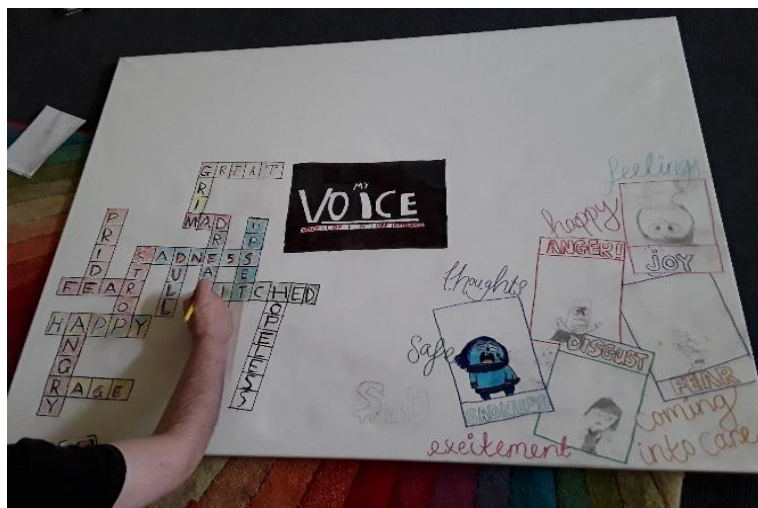


- In the early stages of the pandemic, virtual visits were undertaken to our cared for children and care leavers where this was assessed to be safe, however we very quickly returned to our statutory obligations. During this period all children and young people's needs were assessed individually, as were the risks to our frontline practitioners.
- In recognition of the impact of Covid and the wellbeing needs of our young people we have extended funding to Pure Insight to ensure that no young person was waiting for a service.
- An additional service was offered to young people through RAGE Fitness; Five Steps to Wellbeing, a structured programme focusing on wellbeing and mental health.
- Monthly meetings have also taken place with partners focusing on the emotional wellbeing and planning for any gaps in resources and identifying ways to work together to support the emotional wellbeing of our children and young people.

### My Voice and Participation Lead

My Voice are an established group of cared for children who support the service and the Committee to understand the lived experience of children and young people in Cheshire East. The support to My Voice was previously delivered via the Youth Service which is situated within Early Help and Prevention.

The decision was made to move the resource into the Cared for Children and Care Leavers Teams, and from early November 2020 a part-time Participation Lead has been working within the service. This is a fantastic opportunity to strengthen the voice of children and young people as we continue to drive improvements forward and we will see further developments in shaping services using the feedback that young people provide.



We are keen to truly understand the lived experience of our children and young people and like no other time before we must ensure that their views, wishes and feelings are captured and shape the way forward in how we continue to prioritise their needs. The participation and engagement survey was rolled out in early January 2021 with the intention of truly understanding the lived experiences of the broadest audience of children and young people. We also plan to subsequently shape our

participation and engagement offer as we take the very best bits of the pandemic and where alternative ways of working have been helpful for children and young people into new ways of working with our children, young people and care leavers, being led by My Voice.

### Engagement with Corporate Parenting Members

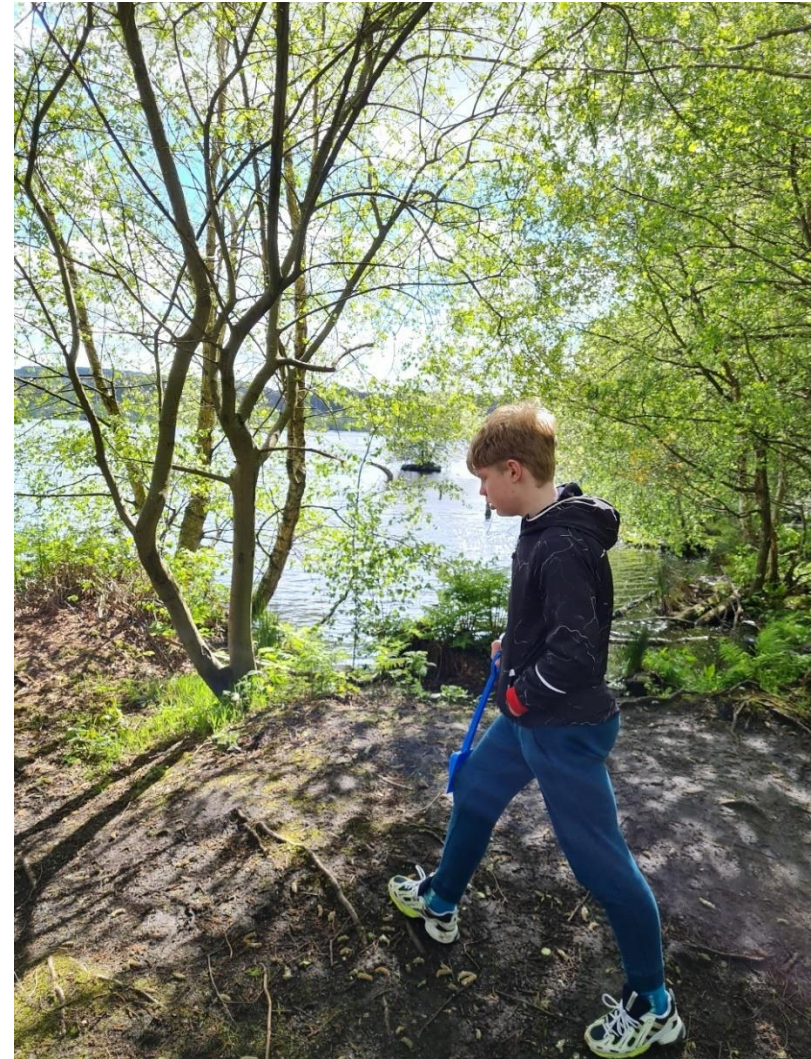
Officers and members are keen to re-establish plans for frontline visits to take place across the service and the menu of options to support in the delivery of the Corporate Parenting Strategy was presented to Members at committee in September 2020. These opportunities include attendance at our Corporate Parenting workstream groups, participating in the Fostering Panel and virtual visits to our commissioned children's homes. This has been impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic and is a key part of current action planning. These observations and interactions will enable Members to gain an understanding of frontline service delivery and collectively, with officers, continue to influence the way that Cheshire East Council prioritises our cared for children and young people and care leavers, particularly during this challenging time. Feedback from interactions has already demonstrated impact as members are reporting having a better understanding of the pressures faced by frontlines colleagues as well as a greater understanding of the complexity of need presented across the service. This feedback will continue to be used to develop participation and services.

## What impact has it made?

- Whilst we have not been able to facilitate a celebration day due to Covid restrictions, the continuation of participation activities has ensured a regular forum for young people to share experiences of care, an opportunity to meet with peers and to support service development.
- There has been a continued and increased offer to ensure that the impact of Covid-19 on emotional well-being and loneliness has been mitigated or reduced.

## Next steps

- To ensure the participation lead meets each child or young person when they enter care to provide key information regarding their status and services available.
- To increase attendance and engagement with My Voice.
- To consider areas of further need such as specific support for cared for children who are LGBTQ+ and more specifically those who are transgender and have issues of trauma and attachment.





## Pledge Two

### We will improve education, employment and training outcomes

We will have **high aspirations** for every child and young person and will **help them to achieve their ambitions**, using opportunities in the 'family business' and our contacts so that they can be **happy and successful** in their education, training and employment.

Every child and young person will have an **education plan that is targeted to enable them to reach their full potential**.

We will strive to that ensure that every child and young person will have **access to consistent, high quality, well matched, full time opportunities**.

### What the data tells us

- At the end of the 2019/20 academic year there were 546 cared for children on the Cheshire East Virtual School roll, this was an increase from 496 recorded for the same time in 2018/19, of these 407 were of school age.
- 72% of cared for children are in 'Good' or 'Outstanding' schools.
- From September 2020 to February half-term 2021, attendance had increased compared to last year with the average Primary attendance increasing from 90% to 93%

and the average Secondary attendance increasing from 90% to 94%.

- In addition to the 10 care leavers currently at university, a further four had places secured for September 2020.
- The completion rate of Personal Education Plans (PEPs) was over 85% as was the percentage completed to a good or better standard. This is due to the robust quality assurance process that is in place within the Virtual School Team and training offered to schools through the Designated Lead teachers network events which allows staff in all schools to access practical working sessions to look at outstanding PEPs, to allow self-evaluation and development of their own systems at the start of each year. However, the percentage was then impacted due to Covid-19 where we had requested that children within the transition cohort must be prioritised.
- All data with regards to attainment is based on Teacher Assessments as no formal baseline assessments, SATs or GCSEs were undertaken due to Covid-19. Full details regarding this can be found in the [Virtual School Head Teacher's Annual Report 2019/20](#).

### What have we done? (Committee and Officers)

- The **Post 16 Education Subgroup** is focusing on achieving apprenticeships for cared for children and care leavers in and out of the council. This is a measurable target within our Corporate Parenting Strategy and local offer. One of the key

focuses of this year is to develop council apprenticeships and further increase our offer for post 16 young people.

- The **School Age Children Subgroup** is also focusing on raising attainment for our cared for children and improving their outcomes. Cared for children can experience unplanned changes to their education when they come into care or during their time in care and therefore there is a greater challenge to ensure that they are supported above and beyond so that they achieve their potential. Areas to be addressed by this group have been identified as improving attendance, minimising the time between school moves, reducing exclusions and the development of PEPs content and quality.



- The Virtual School now has three full time learning mentors who were newly appointed in March 2020 and we are in the process of recruiting one more. The main aim is to work with school aged children to support social, emotional mental health and transition, when children have had a placement or school change or where children have high levels of anxiety. The learning mentors work alongside Designated Teachers and other agencies to support cared for children to overcome barriers to learning. This year we have one of our learning mentors specifically for supporting post 16 young people with a focus on increasing support for our NEET young people.
- During this year the Virtual School Team have had to adapt to new ways of working due to the national pandemic. Throughout this period, we have continued to develop new ways of working and we are continuing to deliver a good level of support to all of our children and schools.
- During lockdown, we contacted all the carers of our 2-4-year-old children at least once each month providing advice, guidance and support on learning activities and useful websites. We made sure that all children transferring to school had school places and had a handover of cases. We supported 2-year olds to access a nursery place when eligible.

- The educational and employment experiences of our cared for children and care leavers was significantly disrupted from March 2020 to the end of the school term in July 2020. Cheshire East Council took the approach to prioritise the reintegration of cared for children back into school where this was deemed necessary. This resulted in many children returning to school and having a positive experience, crucially preparing them for a more permanent return to school in September 2020.
- We have established and robust safeguarding measures in place to track and review vulnerable pupils not in education. Support is made available to children and families in this situation. We have established a partnership planning meeting to look at any such children and young people and worked closely between the school, Virtual School, and parents/foster carers to ensure education is being provided.
- The Virtual School and frontline teams continue to focus on frequency of Personal Education Plan (PEP) completion and quality related to targeted support to ensure that we continue to have high aspirations for our children and young people.
- The service and the broader Council continue to be focused on not in education, employment or training (NEET) for our 16-18-year-old cared for children and our care experienced adults. Our NEET figure for 16-18 years olds remains steady at around 4-6% on average. More targeted support is being put into supporting and prioritising our care experienced

adults and where opportunities for creative ways of furthering their skills and employment opportunities exist, that we action this for them.

- The service has participated in a Council-wide NEET summit to give the best opportunity for care leavers to have a strategic priority as we move forward and tackle the unemployment challenges resulting from Covid-19. Within the Care Leavers service, we have a dedicated NEET Lead who has coordinated for the second year a NEET programme which began in November 2020. This ran as two groups of four young people to reintroduce them to the world of education, training and employment. Young people choose a community initiative that not only re-establishes their aspiration for their own path to EET but also gives back to the community. Last year the programme focused on homelessness and had a significant social value impact for the young people attending the course and the broader community.
- The service is also targeting our most vulnerable young adults through the Journey First Programme, where keyworker capacity has increased to work with our most vulnerable care leavers in being creative in re-engaging them in education, training and employment. The funding will be available over a three-year period which will offer consistency in relationships, a key driver for care leavers.

- The Virtual School Governing Body was launched in February 2021. The Director of Children's Social Care is the Chair of Governors. Core members include representatives from across all partners including schools and carers. This governing body will allow the Virtual School to have the same level of support, scrutiny and challenge that would exist within mainstream and specialist provision and will provide an additional avenue to challenge our statutory responsibilities and outcomes for children and young people, as well as also monitor and support the longer term consequences of the pandemic.

### What impact has it made?

- Throughout the pandemic the Virtual School Advisors monitored and tracked each child/young person to ensure clear communication and support was in place. Children and young people were supported regarding the return to school, in particular those from transition year groups and those moving to new schools.
- Pupil Premium Funding has been used to support the purchase of ICT equipment to ensure that all children and young people were able to access remote learning. Funding is also in place for individual children to ensure they have had access to extra tuition and for carers to support continued access to education/activities whilst at home.
- There has been clear and robust planning for Education Recovery; the Virtual School Headteacher has worked closely with the Director of Education and the Heads of Service across both Education and Children's Social Care.
- Virtual training/network sessions for designated lead teachers focused on sharing good practice and how to further support children/young people's return to school. Resource guides for carers and children and young people have subsequently been created across all age groups (early years to post 16), these include advice and links to a wide variety of education, mental health and wellbeing resources.
- Support from the Post 16 Learning Mentor and Advisor has meant that no Year 11 pupils moving into post 16 have been unable to access the courses they identified. There has been a reduction in the number of young people aged 16-18 who are not in Education, Employment or Training at the start of the new academic year, and the Autumn term programme for post 16 young people identified as NEET was successfully implemented.
- Early Years support has ensured all the carers of our 2-4-year-old children have received advice, guidance and support on learning activities and useful websites. All children transferring to school have had school places and carers of 2-year olds have been supported to access nursery places when eligible.
- During March – July during the lockdown period we requested that there was a specific focus on transition year groups to ensure that clear plans were in place to support our children/young people who would be having school/placement changes. We developed a one-minute guide to support schools and social care to have clear process/procedures of how to undertake PEPs virtually. The team were able to attend more PEPs than usual while completing them online as they don't have any travel time

restricting them and they are able to coordinate their diaries to attend more, which has been of significant benefit. The feedback from all parties including Children's Social Care has been positive and they agree that this could be a way we can be flexible with completing PEPs in the future, in particular for those living/educated out of borough.

### Next steps

- Continue to work with the new Governing Body for the Virtual School to ensure governance and scrutiny including core members from across key partners and stakeholders.
- Work with council leaders to ensure development of apprenticeship opportunities for our cared for children and care leavers.
- Development of a pupil voice to ensure our children and young people are fully involved with key developments across the service.
- Continue to work alongside Council Members as part of the Corporate Parenting Strategy to develop access to front line services including the Virtual School Governing Body, Priority 2 Workstream, and direct work with children and young people to improve access to education.
- Continue to provide support and interventions for schools and children to improve outcomes (narrow the gap and lost learning) and attendance, evaluating the impact of the intervention and use of Pupil Premium.
- Identify and implement changes resulting from the Social Care Act 2017 which includes the Virtual School Head Teacher to have responsibilities for previously cared for

children as well as currently cared for and to promote mental health and attachment awareness in schools.

- Monitor the impact of commissioned and front-line services through engagement, progress and outcomes.
- Implement the self-assessment tool for use with and by schools to improve their practice and support for cared for children.
- Continue to improve the completion rate and quality of PEPS and continue to develop to extend to Early Years and Post 16.





## Pledge Three

### We will work to achieve permanence and keep children safe

We will strive to ensure that every child and young person will have the **opportunity to live in a good, safe home locally**, either with their family or in another permanent home. All decisions will be made and reviewed with them without delay.

We will **respect those people who are important to our children and young people** and make sure that these safe relationships are sustained.

We will **keep children and young people safe**.

### What the data tells us

- 96% for cared for children reviews took place within statutory timescales, with 98% of children participating in their reviews.
- 272 cared for children live with foster families, 55 live with family and friend carers, 59 live with their parents, 11 children are placed for adoption and 41 live within residential care.
- 107 children are living in permanently matched homes with their foster carers and a further 20 have remained in 'staying put' arrangements with their foster carers after they became 18.

- Of the children who ceased to be cared for during the past year, 13 became subject to Special Guardianship Orders, 26 children were adopted, 6 Child Arrangement Orders were made, 11 Supervision Orders and 7 Care Orders were discharged.

### What have we done? (Committee and Officers)

- We considered the Annual Independent Review Officers Report and how the outcomes for our cared for children and care leavers are quality assured.
- We considered the Cheshire East Safeguarding Children's Partnership Annual Report.
- Permanency for children and young people is potentially the most significant thing that we can achieve in their lives once they become cared for and so we have remained focused during this period of continuing to achieve this for children wherever practicably possible.
- Committee has been made aware of the impact of Covid-19 in achieving permanence in permanence in a timely way and that the initial stages of the pandemic created a significant challenge. We are now seeing those delays reduce, with children achieving their permanent plans by way of adoption, special guardianship and discharges of care orders. We are faced with a smaller but still significant challenge of the cumulative backlog of Court progression work and continue to work closely with the Local Family Justice Board to progress this.
- We have been successful in funding a legal executive to work closely with team managers to address delays and

promote permanency for our children and young people and support rapid work with revocations on orders of care for children placed at home.

- Despite the delays in Court and the impact of the pandemic, the frontline service has continued to drive our priorities forward and three children have been discharged from care as they no longer require that level of safeguarding. Cheshire East Council are identified as an outlier in relation to the number of children living at home and subject to Care Orders, however, there is now clear evidence that the work that the service have been doing to make this cohort of children a priority is becoming evident and is fundamentally achieving positive outcomes for children and young people.
- Throughout the pandemic, our commissioned service to children who go missing from care has continued to operate and has been successful in maintaining an offer to children and young people that can respond in a timely way and disrupt this risky behaviour.
- Our children who are living out of borough or 'at a distance' represent around 40% of our cared for population and include children living with Cheshire East foster carers, children placed for adoption, with parents and family members, and also children in independent residential and foster care. Our last inspection offered reassurance that our children who live outside of Cheshire East are at no detriment and our statutory services delivered throughout the pandemic have continued to ensure that our children are seen and plans progress. We have undertaken random dip sampling to assure ourselves of consistent practice and service, irrespective of where our children live.

- Our vision for children and young people is focused on children living in the borough where we believe their needs will be best met and we continue to develop a range of sufficiency options including our Bespoke children's homes. Our first Mockingbird constellation was launched in November 2020, this continues to make great progress and has impact with the children and carers directly involved.



### Bespoke Children's Homes

We developed 'Bespoke' and mobilised our new Children's Homes. Bespoke is a hub-based model similar to the North Yorkshire 'No Wrong Door' model which has received national recognition. This will provide wrap around support to children and young people who are in care or on the edge of care.

We have a variety of services linked to Bespoke such as Speech and Language Therapists, mental health services and

the Virtual School who are all supporting ambitious outcomes for the children in our care.

### **Fostering**

Cheshire East Council commissioned an independent review of the Fostering Service which made recommendations about how an alternative delivery structure may assist with recruitment and retention of foster carers, a key objective within our Action Plan to address the recommendations from the Ofsted Inspection in 2019. A decision was reached to depart from our collaborative relationship with Foster4, which took place in September 2020 and to engage on our own recruitment and assessment processes to recruit new foster carers to Cheshire East. We have developed our own marketing and recruitment capability in-house to maximise our local foster carers and with commitment from the Corporate Communications Team, a designated officer works with the service on our marketing, recruitment and communication. At the end of December 2020, figures showed our enquires have increased significantly and our expressions of interest have doubled compared with the same period last year under Foster4.

### **Foster Care Fortnight**

Foster Care Fortnight in May 2020 was a success in sharing our vision for Cheshire East children to live in Cheshire East. We were able to prepare and record our own fostering advert for a local radio station with lots of presence on social media. Foster Care Fortnight is not only about generating enquiries to become Cheshire East foster carers but in the time of a national

pandemic, was an opportunity to pay credit to all the hard work our foster carers do for our children on a daily basis.

### **Family Time**

During the initial lockdown restrictions, one of the most significantly affected areas was that of family time between cared for children and their parents, siblings and friends, however, we worked hard to enable virtual arrangements to happen, and by mid-May we were planning for recovery and offering many families safe face-to-face family time. By the second week of June, all cared for children had the opportunity for a face-to-face family time session with significant people in their lives.

A Family Time coordinator is now in post. She is currently reviewing all family time arrangements to ensure that they remain appropriate and to ensure that the service runs efficiently and that children are supported to see their family at an appropriate level and with the right level of support/supervision.

### **Adoption Counts**

Cheshire East have been in regional arrangements with Adoption Counts since 2017 where success in the partnerships is evident in children achieving permanence via adoption and the timeliness of achieving these plans. Officers have been working in partnership with Adoption Counts and are seeking an 'in principle' decision to move to permanent arrangements



within the year, subject to TUPE consultation and agreement of the Integrated Service Agreement.

### Resource and Accommodation Panel

Achieving permanence for cared for children and care leavers is one of our service priorities and we have a clear plan to ensure that the children who do require local authority care receive this in a timely way; that the care they receive is excellent; and, for children who no longer need to be in care, that their plans are progressed without delay. The service has reviewed how we strategically link our priorities to the operational delivery of services and from the October 2020 we launched a new 'Resource And Permanence Panel' (RAPP) where Heads of Service are setting expectations about the timeliness of plans and the resource allocation across the service.

### What impact has it made?

- There is a greater understanding of the needs of our children. The Fostering Service and Commissioning are working together to ensure we have high quality placements to meet our children's needs.
- In addition, the redevelopment of RAPP and the creation of 'step down panel' has ensured that there is clear strategic oversight of placement quality, care planning, and cost. There is a renewed determination to ensure that children have the opportunity of living within a family and that fewer children live in residential placements.

- There is a robust system in place to ensure children who go missing are supported on a multi-agency basis and that safety planning to reduce risk occurs.
- There is a greater understanding of the development areas for social work practice and the workstream will enable practice tools and guidance to be developed.

### Next steps

- To continue to develop practice guidance and resources to ensure we achieve consistently good social work practice.
- To develop support around placement stability – particularly support targeted to adoption breakdowns and 16-17 year old's presenting as homeless.
- To continue to develop our offer of support around healthy relationships through commissioned services
- To continue to develop the Fostering Service to ensure placement stability and choice of placement options to meet children's individual needs.
- To ensure children that can be supported to step down from residential care and have the opportunity of living within a family.



## Pledge Four

### We will improve health and wellbeing outcomes

We are committed to **understanding the health needs** of our children and young people **as early as possible** and to ensure they are **given the highest priority** in every service.

We will **equip** our children and young people to have **high aspirations for their own health**.

### What the data tells us

- 85% of cared for children in Cheshire East had an up to date review health assessment.
- 94% of immunisations were completed.
- For children 5 and under 100% of developmental checks were completed.
- 38% of dental checks were completed in timescales.
- 100% of care leavers received a summary of their health at the time of their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.

### What have we done? (Committee and Officers)

- We have considered the Annual Health Report for Cared for Children and Care Leavers.
- Following the **'Help me to be healthy' group**, the Cared for Children Specialist Nurses are now regularly attending service meetings to provide an update for social workers

around the health processes for cared for children. This includes discussion around the requirements for making a request for an initial health assessment, the role of the nurse specialists, and how the health needs of cared for children are identified and met, with the intention of impacting on timeliness for requests for health assessments.

- Timeliness and completion of our initial health assessments (IHAs) for our cared for children can be a challenge. We have a specific focus on this in the Help me to be Healthy corporate parenting workstream.
- Our cared for children and young people and care leavers have not received a 'lesser' or reduced IHA service as a result of Covid-19. Initial health assessments were prioritised throughout Covid-19 and continued to be delivered face to face by a consultant paediatrician throughout the pandemic, ensuring health needs were identified promptly.
- Review health assessments have been undertaken virtually where appropriate and currently assessment clinics are now operating face-to-face once again. The partnership is exploring how we can offer a varied service going forward as for some young people, having options about how we assess and meet their health needs has been of benefit to them.
- 85% of our cared for children had an up-to-date review health assessment where any health needs are identified within statutory timeframes and services put in place to respond to these needs. The Social Care service and the

Health service continue to work in partnership to understand the complexities for children and young people in accessing health screening and assessment.

- Overall, performance in relation to requests for initial health assessments, completion of initial health assessments and annual review health assessments, continues to deliver robust health assessments for children and young people, and this continues to be a priority for the help me be healthy workstream.
- The emotional wellbeing and mental health needs of our cared for children and care leavers has been an issue raised throughout the pandemic and is a current focus for our Designated Nurse for Cared for Children and Care Leavers. We seek to make the offer to children and young people much more visible to them as we continue in our recovery phase and challenge providers to ensure that cared for children and care leavers are prioritised in the delivery of their service.
- Accessing annual dental checks is a statutory requirement for all our children and young people and there have been challenges in relation to access to routine checks during the pandemic. This is due to the impact of enforced surgery closure and emergency care prioritisation during Covid-19.
- After raising concerns regarding the statutory Dental requirements with NHS England on behalf of our young people NHS Cheshire CCG were selected to take part in a dental access pilot which commenced late March and will continue into the next year.

- The objective of the pilot is to ensure cared for children have access to a dental check and any subsequent treatment which is identified. Dental practices across Cheshire have been identified to provide this service and a referral can be made via the Designated Nurse. NHS England are also providing support to access dental care at practices the children are already registered with wherever possible.



- A launch event was held and attended by the Designated Nurse for Safeguarding Children. The Cared for Children teams in Cheshire East have started to complete referrals. The pilot will be evaluated with a view to rolling this out across the NHS system, and the Designated Nurse will be tracking referrals and outcomes.

## What impact has it made?

- Cared for children new into care have had the opportunity to have a face to face comprehensive health assessment with a consultant paediatrician. This has ensured that health needs are identified in a timely way and an appropriate health plan is put in place.
- Positive feedback has been received from children in care regarding the use of technology to facilitate review health assessments. Young people have reported that they are not taken out of school, do not have to spend time in clinics and have felt more at ease and less intrusive. This blended approach will continue in response to individual needs.



## Next steps

- The main priority for the next year will be continuing to ensure that cared for children have access to appropriate healthcare as the Covid-19 restrictions ease. This includes the continued delivery of face to face services wherever possible, supported by platforms such as Attend Anywhere and Chat Health.
- We will continue to work with partners to support cared for children and care leavers who are living in semi-independent hostel residences who have been finding the restrictions of lockdown difficult. This will include liaison with mental health and substance misuse services.
- An audit of effectiveness will be completed to ensure that the help me to be healthy workstream is continuing to have a positive impact on children in care and care leavers' health and wellbeing.

## Pledge Five

### We will prepare young people for adulthood

We will **support young people early with the skills needed** to prepare for their future through access to a range of good quality services.

We will be a **consistent guide** for our young people. We will **celebrate their successes** and **support them when things don't go well**.

We will **respect our care leavers as young adults** and adapt our relationships to their needs.

### What the data tells us

- As of the end of March 2021, there were 291 care leavers eligible for services.
- 89% of Pathways Plans were completed within timescales.
- Pathway Plans are reviewed by an Independent Reviewing Officer, 97% of children and young people have been involved in their reviews.
- As of the end of March 2021, there were nine 16-18-year-old care leavers not in education, employment or training (NEET) and 51% of 19-21-year-old care leavers.

### What have we done? (Committee and Officers)

- In March, we met with some of our care leavers, Councillors, local employers and a whole range of

organisations who are in a position to offer advice, guidance and practical help to review our Local Offer. The event was a great success and focused on mental well-being and the impact of the pandemic, education, employment and training opportunities, money matters and housing. Our [updated Local Offer is available on our website](#).

- Care leavers have been provided with additional support in many ways such as agreeing extended staying put arrangements to enable them to remain in their family homes post 21 so that there were no unnecessary moves during the pandemic. Care leavers have also been provided with additional financial support on a weekly basis, and with access to technology and data so that they can stay connected.
- We are ambitious corporate parents to our children and young people and care experienced adults and made the commitment in 2017 to embrace the covenant and new statutory duties and the responsibility upon local authorities to extend their support to care experienced adults to 25. The Care Leavers Service 'reach out' to our care experienced adults who have chosen not to continue to access a service, and pre-Covid we saw a relatively low response to our extended offer of support. We have seen however an increase in care experienced adults accepting the support offered during the pandemic and this has seen additional support provided in relation to emotional



wellbeing, finances and support with employment. We have written to all care leavers to ensure they understand that support, help and advice is available to them. This is evidence of our corporate parenting commitment. We are now considering what the prolonged period of additional demand could mean for capacity with the service as well as potential recovery from the pandemic.

- Our care experienced adults are one of the cohorts of young people who have experienced the pandemic most severely because of social isolation and subsequent emotional wellbeing challenges. Frontline staff have worked hard to continue to keep in contact with young adults and we have seen positive examples of where this has worked well, for example two care leavers who were previously of no fixed abode sought support and accessed emergency housing and are now safer as a result of this.
- There have been challenges corporately around housing for care experienced adults being able to transition into social housing, the spontaneous arrivals of UASC young people, and the restrictions of lockdown for young people in supported accommodation. However we have had a clear sufficiency plan in place from the point at which we went into lockdown and identified ring fenced offers for care leavers within our current supported accommodation offer to ensure that they were not placed at any greater risk during this period and essentially had a home if they needed it in a crisis.



- The care leavers service continues to be focused on supporting the needs of our care experienced adults in relation to accommodation, NEET, social isolation, emotional wellbeing and relationships.
- The sustainability of dedicated emotional wellbeing support has been explored with the CCG, provided by Pure Insight, as we continue to explore with the CCG psychological support to Adoption Services. The fitness and wellbeing provision (RAGE fitness) for care experienced young adults is now launched and we actively continue to engage young people with referrals to participate in this programme, offering therapy, advice, support; an offer that has been well received in different local authorities.



### Recommission of 16+ Accommodation

The accommodation needs of our care leavers also remain a priority. The service has worked closely with care leavers to coproduce a tender for the 16+ supported accommodation offer for cared for children aged 16-18 years old, including emergency accommodation. The tendering process has been successful, and we have identified two providers to deliver excellent support and accommodation services to our young people at a crucial part in their journey. The service is now in the mobilisation phase of the contract and has a very strong offer in place to support our young people. The recommission has embraced the feedback from the Ofsted inspection in the need to tailor the delivery model when young adults are accessing emergency accommodation.

### Care Leavers Service

The Care Leavers Service has in recent years experienced a higher demand as a result of the changes in legislation to support care-experienced adults from 21-25 years old. A service redesign has taken place and resulted in an internal restructure and Service Manager Steve Nevitt being appointed as the leader of the service. Steve and the team intend to reignite the Corporate Parenting challenge in Cheshire East and have plans to continue to drive the service forward, tackling some of the known challenges for care leavers such as NEET, and also reviewing the Local Offer for Care Leavers.

### What impact has it made?

- We are in touch with the vast majority of our Care Leavers, barring a couple of individuals who have specifically requested that we do not provide them with a service. Our care leavers know that we have been 'open for business' throughout the pandemic and who they can turn to when they need help, guidance and practical support.
- Our use of emergency accommodation has been at an all-time low in the past year and in only one case has a young person had to remain in this sort of temporary provision for any amount of time.
- Our NEET figures continue to fall as a consequence of the team's efforts in developing and delivering the NEET Programme, our engagement with employers and

education providers and the work of our new Journey First worker.

- Financial support to Care leavers has been responsive and proactive, particularly for those young people who have experienced difficult times or personal crises during the pandemic.
- Similarly, our 21+ Offer has provided an invaluable safety net for young adults in the early twenties who may not qualify for assistance from Adult Services but who nevertheless require some additional support from time to time.

### Next steps

- We believe that we have the foundations in place to deliver a genuinely outstanding service to our care leavers; we want to ensure that their voice is heard in everything we do and that there is a regular feedback loop into service development.
- We are particularly keen to increase the number of our care leavers who take up apprenticeships and have just advertised a 12-month coordinator post to particularly focus on this exciting development.
- We will also be working closely with colleagues in the Domestic Abuse Service and will be seconding one of our Personal Advisors to particularly focus on working with care

leavers who experience housing problems as a result of abusive relationships

- We will be taking part in the revised National Transfer Scheme for unaccompanied migrant young people and will be developing a project with the 'I Love Music Trust' to build cohesion and integration for our UASC Care Leavers.
- The Service will once again be focusing on their successful Social Activity program now that restrictions have lifted. This includes care leaver holidays, parent and child trips, mental health walks and our weekly football engagement programme.





## Priorities for 2021-22

- To improve and develop participation between cared for children, care experienced adults and children's services with the aim of using children and young people's views to inform service development.
- To ensure there is a robust placement offer, sufficiency, and stability for cared for children, through the restructure of the Fostering Service, further development of Mockingbird and the Care at Home Strategy. This involves using a range of commissioned providers to support children to remain at home.
- To further extend the Stability Practice Lead post to support homeless 16-17-year olds to ensure they can remain at home or return home through family networking.
- To further extend the Stability Practice Lead post to support families at risk of adoption breakdown and prevent them returning to care.
- To consider and develop stronger links and resources to meet the emotional wellbeing needs of our cared for children and young people through Pure Insight and development of services for LGBTQ+.
- Creation and development of a dedicated Court Team within the Cared for Service – to ensure that children are provided permanence at the earliest opportunity. To develop good working relationships with the local Court, so that they are confident in the Local Authority's assessments and planning for children.
- Development of an Apprenticeship Coordinator for Care Leavers. The post holder will provide support for care leavers who are undertaking an apprenticeship and will also develop opportunities for further apprenticeships within the Council and with local businesses.



## **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

### **Cheshire East Corporate Parenting Committee**

#### **Membership: 12 Councillors**

Additionally, the Committee is informed by representative young people from My Voice (Cheshire East's Children in Care Council) to advise the Committee.

The Chair is the Lead Member for Children and Families.

#### ***Functions***

1. The purpose of the Corporate Parenting Committee in its role as an advisory committee to the Children and Families Committee is to ensure that the Council effectively discharges its role as Corporate Parent for all children and young people in care and care leavers from 0- 25 years of age and holds partners to account for the discharge of their responsibilities.
2. The Committee's responsibilities include:
  - 2.1. acting as advocate for cared for children and care leavers, ensuring that their needs are addressed through key plans, policies and strategies throughout the Council and its commissioned services;
  - 2.2. ensuring key strategic plans relating to children in care and care leavers are in place and are delivered including the Corporate Parenting Strategy, Sufficiency Statement and Children and Young People's Plan;
  - 2.3. overseeing the implementation of Cheshire East's Corporate Parenting Strategy and action plan and monitoring the quality and effectiveness of services to ensure that they fulfil the Council's responsibilities;
  - 2.4. monitoring the quality of care delivered by Cheshire East's residential children's homes through visits and reports, including summary reports of Ofsted inspections;
  - 2.5. reviewing the performance of the Council in relation to outcomes for children and young people in care via the scrutiny of both quarterly performance reports and annual reports including the Health of Cared for Children and Care Leavers, the Virtual School, Fostering and the Independent Reviewing Service;
  - 2.6. establishing an environment whereby Councillors and young people work together to address the needs and aspirations of Cheshire East's children

- and young people in care and empower children and young people to participate in decision making with adults;
- 2.7. overseeing with the Children and Families Committee the implementation of best practice principles in all aspects of service delivery, with the aim of producing positive outcomes for children and young people in care;
- 2.8. supporting the work of foster carers and adopters in making a difference to the care and support they provide;
- 2.9. making sure that staff and partners commit to follow the pledges to cared for children and young people and care leavers set out in the Corporate Parenting Strategy.

## **Governance**

- 3. The Committee will:
  - 3.1. meet bi-monthly;
  - 3.2. report to the Children and Families Committee on at least an annual basis; and
  - 3.3. review its terms of reference annually.
- 4. The Committee will be serviced by Democratic Services.
- 5. Minutes and agendas will be distributed and published no later than 5 clear working days prior to the meeting.

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## Work Programme – Children and Families 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
CF/13/21-22	8 Nov 2021	All Age Sensory Strategy	To approve the new all age Sensory Strategy.	Director of Commissioning	TBC	Yes	No	A council which empowers and cares about people	
CF/12/21-22	8 Nov 2021	Care at Home Recommission	To approve the arrangements to recommission Care at Home services.	Interim Director of Children's Services	TBC	Yes	No	A council which empowers and cares about people	
CF/06/21-22	8 Nov 2021	Crewe Youth Zone	To agree the proposed site for the Youth Zone and arrangements for funding.	Director of Early Help and Prevention	TBC	Yes	No	A council which empowers and cares about people	
CF/18/21-22	8 Nov 2021	High Needs Management Plan	To receive an update and monitor delivery of the high needs management plan.	Director of Education and 14-19 Skills	N/A	N/A	No	A council which empowers and cares about people	
CF/17/21-22	8 Nov 2021	Home to School Transport	To receive an update on arrangements in relation to home to school transport.	Director of Education and 14-19 Skills	N/A	N/A	No	A council which empowers and cares about people	
CF/38/21-22	8 Nov 2021	Market Position Statement	To approve the Market Position Statement.	Director of Commissioning		Yes	Yes	A council which empowers and cares about people	
CF/20/21-22	8 Nov 2021	Mid Year Review	To receive an update on the financial position for 2021-22 and to note or approve virements and supplementary estimates as required.	Director of Finance and Customer Services (s151 Officer)	No	No	No	An open and enabling organisation	

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
CF/19/21-22	8 Nov 2021	School Capital/Organisation - New School/ Expansions	To consider and approve proposals around school capital/organisation.	Director of Education and 14-19 Skills	TBC	TBC	Yes	A council which empowers and cares about people	
CF/09/21-22	8 Nov 2021	SEND Strategy	To receive the operational strategy.	Director of Education and 14-19 Skills	TBC	N/A	No	A council which empowers and cares about people	
CF/34/21-22	10 Jan 2022	Cheshire East Safeguarding Children Partnership Annual Report	To receive the annual report of the Safeguarding Children Partnership.	Director of Children's Social Care	N/A	N/A	No	A council which empowers and cares about people	
CF/22/21-22	10 Jan 2022	Children and Families Scorecard Q2	To consider key performance measures.	Interim Director of Children's Services	N/A	N/A	No	A council which empowers and cares about people	
CF/35/21-22	10 Jan 2022	Finance Third Quarter Review	To receive an update on the financial position for 2021/22. To note or approve virements and supplementary estimates as required.	Director of Finance and Customer Services (s151 Officer)	N/A	N/A	No	An open and enabling organisation	
CF/36/21-22	10 Jan 2022	Medium Term Financial Strategy	Respond to budget consultation for Children and Families Services.	Director of Finance and Customer Services (s151 Officer)	Yes	Yes	Yes	An open and enabling organisation	
CF/21/21-22	10 Jan 2022	School Capital/ Organisation - New School/ Expansions	To consider and approve proposals around school capital/ organisation.	Director of Education and 14-19 Skills	TBC	TBC	Yes	A council which empowers and cares about people	
CF/23/21-22	10 Jan 2022	Self-Evaluation of Children's Services	To receive the self-evaluation of services which shows the quality and impact of services.	Interim Director of Children's Services	N/A	N/A	No	A council which empowers and cares about people	
CF/15/21-22	14 Feb 2022	Mental Health Spotlight Review - 12 Month Review of Progress	To receive an update on progress against the Mental Health Spotlight review completed by Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee.	Director of Early Help and Prevention	N/A	N/A	No	A council which empowers and cares about people	

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
CF/24/21-22	14 Feb 2022	Schools Funding Formula and Early Years Funding Formula	To approve the schools funding formula and early years funding formula.	Director of Education and 14-19 Skills	TBC	TBC	No	A council which empowers and cares about people	
CF/30/21-22	24 Mar 2022	12 Month Report on Member Frontline Visits to Safeguarding Teams	To receive an update on the findings from member frontline visits carried out over the last 12 months.	Director of Children's Social Care	N/A	N/A	N/A	A council which empowers and cares about people	
CF/28/21-22	24 Mar 2022	Annual report on SEND Recovery Plan	To receive an update on the impact of work over the last 6 months in regards to SEND.	Director of Education and 14-19 Skills	N/A	N/A	No	A council which empowers and cares about people	
CF/26/21-22	24 Mar 2022	Children and Families Scorecard Q3	To consider key performance measures.	Interim Director of Children's Services	N/A	N/A	No	A council which empowers and cares about people	
CF/29/21-22	24 Mar 2022	High Needs Management Plan	To receive an update and monitor delivery of the high needs management plan.	Director of Education and 14-19 Skills	N/A	N/A	No	A council which empowers and cares about people	
CF/27/21-22	24 Mar 2022	Home to School Transport Policy	To approve the operational home to school transport policy.	Director of Education and 14-19 Skills	TBC	TBC	No	A council which empowers and cares about people	
CF/25/21-22	24 Mar 2022	School Capital/Organisation - New School/Expansions	To consider and approve proposals around school capital/ organisation.	Director of Education and 14-19 Skills	TBC	TBC	Yes	A council which empowers and cares about people	

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