

# Children and Families Committee

## Agenda

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**Date:** Friday, 23rd September, 2022  
**Time:** 1.00 pm  
**Venue:** Committee Suite 1,2 & 3, Westfields, Middlewich Road,  
Sandbach CW11 1HZ

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

It should be noted that Part 1 items of Cheshire East Council decision making meetings are audio recorded and the recordings will be 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 and non-pecuniary interests in any item on the agenda.

3. **Minutes of Previous Meeting** (Pages 5 - 10)

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the previous meeting held on 11 July 2022.

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For requests for further information

**Contact:** Josie Lloyd

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**E-Mail:** [josie.lloyd@cheshireeast.gov.uk](mailto:josie.lloyd@cheshireeast.gov.uk) with any apologies

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. **Dedicated Schools Grant Management Plan 2022/23 to 2026/27** (Pages 11 - 44)

To approve the DSG Management Plan for 2022/23 to 2026/27.

6. **School Organisation: Update on the proposal for a primary school, Basford East, Shavington, following consultation** (Pages 45 - 58)

To receive an update on the proposal for a new primary school, Basford East, and agree the progression of the prescribed free school process.

7. **Holiday Activity Fund Grant – Open Procurement 2022-2025** (Pages 59 - 64)

To approve the Holiday Activity Fund grant to providers to be delivered via the open procedure from the winter programme in 2022 to 2025.

8. **Children and Families Q4 Scorecard 2021/22** (Pages 65 - 74)

To note the performance of Children's Services for quarter 4.

9. **Corporate Parenting Committee Annual Report 2021-22** (Pages 75 - 98)

To note the Corporate Parenting Committee annual report 2021-22.

10. **School Organisation: Academisation of Schools: Forward Plan** (Pages 99 - 104)

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

11. **Work Programme** (Pages 105 - 108)

To consider the work programme and determine any required amendments.

12. **Minutes of Sub Committees** (Pages 109 - 120)

To note the minutes of the following sub committee meetings:

Local Authority School Governor Nomination Sub Committee 30 March 2022  
Corporate Parenting Committee 15 March 2022  
Corporate Parenting Committee 28 June 2022

### 13. **Reporting of Officer Delegated Decisions**

To note the following officer decision record:

Macclesfield Academy Resource Provision

<https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/pdf/council-and-democracy/officer-decisions/officer-decisions-july-2022/people-directorate-childrens-services-july-2022.pdf>

**Membership:** Councillors M Addison, L Anderson, M Beanland, J Buckley, C Bulman (Vice-Chair), K Flavell (Chair), A Gregory, S Handley, G Hayes, I Macfarlane, J Saunders, L Smetham and L Smith

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**CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL**

Minutes of a meeting of the **Children and Families Committee**  
held on Monday, 11th July, 2022 in the Committee Suite 1,2 & 3, Westfields, Middlewich  
Road, Sandbach CW11 1HZ

**PRESENT**

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

Councillors L Anderson, M Beanland, J Buckley, D Edwardes, S Handley,  
I Macfarlane, L Smetham, L Smith, R Bailey, S Edgar and S Holland

**OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE**

Deborah Woodcock, Executive Director of Children's Services  
Jacky Forster, Director of Education and 14-19 Skills  
Claire Williamson, Interim Director of Early Help and Prevention  
Deborah Nickson, Legal Team Manager (People) and Deputy Monitoring  
Officer  
Steve Reading, Principal Accountant  
Josie Lloyd, Democratic Services Officer

**18 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Addison, Cllr Hayes and Cllr Saunders.  
Cllr Bailey, Cllr Edgar and Cllr Holland attended as substitute members.

**19 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllr Bailey declared under item 10, Schools Catering Service External Review, that  
she is in a farming partnership although does not supply Cheshire East directly and is  
not aware of any supply to Cheshire East remotely.

**20 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING****RESOLVED:**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 23 May 2022 be approved as a correct record.

**21 PUBLIC SPEAKING/OPEN SESSION**

There were no public speakers.

## **22 ALLOCATION OF ADDITIONAL HIGH NEEDS DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT FUNDING**

The committee received the report which sought approval for the use of £1.8 million additional High Needs Grant provided by the Department for Education.

There was extensive debate and concerns were raised by some members, particularly regarding using the funding to offset overspend and the proposed percentage increase to Park Lane Special School and Springfield Special School which was felt by some to be too low.

Assurances were given that the recommendations in the report were in line with the government guidance and had support from the Schools Forum.

A motion was moved and seconded which sought to amend the permanent increase to the high needs top up rate from 2% to 3% for two of the lowest funded special schools, Park Lane Special School and Springfield Special School. The motion was declared lost.

### **RESOLVED (by majority):**

That the Children and Families Committee approve the allocation of the additional high needs funding as set out below:

1. Allocate £237,056 to maintained special schools, academy special schools, free special schools and the pupil referral unit (PRU).
2. Increase the budget for top up funding for education placements in independent special schools, non-maintained special schools, further education colleges and other local authority special schools by £176,270.
3. £670,000 to be used for additional support and invest to save proposals.
4. £755,249 to contribute to the current cost pressures of educational placements for our young people, both new and historic placements.

## **23 'OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL: STRONG SCHOOLS WITH GREAT TEACHERS FOR YOUR CHILD' THE EDUCATION WHITE PAPER AND DEVELOPMENT OF LOCAL AUTHORITY-INITIATED TRUSTS**

The committee received the report which set out the key aspects of the recent White Paper 'Opportunity for All: Strong schools with great teachers for your child'.

### **RESOLVED (by majority):**

That the Children and Families Committee:

1. Notes the new policies in the white paper and in particular the implications for councils.
2. Provides support to explore the option of local authority-initiated trusts as outlined in the white paper through discussions with the Regional Schools

Commissioner and our maintained schools to shape the possible delivery model.

3. Agrees to submitting a 'Registration of Interest' to establish a new trust(s) which needs to be submitted by 31 July 2022. Proposals developed on the delivery model of local authority-initiated trusts will be brought back to a future committee for approval.

## **24 DEVELOPMENT OF FAMILY HUBS IN CHESHIRE EAST**

The committee received the report regarding the proposal to develop family hubs across Cheshire East.

The committee thanked the team who had worked on the bid.

### **RESOLVED (unanimously):**

That the Children and Families Committee:

1. Note the approval of Cheshire East's Family Hubs Transformation Fund bid and the intention to provide an implementation plan update to a future meeting of the committee.
2. Approve a supplementary estimate for £985,289 and delegate authority to the Executive Director of Children's Services to incur expenditure in line with the conditions of the Family Hubs Transformation Fund.

## **25 CARED FOR CHILDREN AND CARE LEAVERS STRATEGY 2022-26**

The committee received the report which set out the proposed new Cared for Children and Care Leavers Strategy 2022-26, previously known as the Corporate Parenting Strategy, to improve outcomes for cared for children and care leavers.

A query was raised regarding a reference to young people on apprenticeship programmes within the Council on page 66 of the agenda and whether this referred to all young people or was specific to cared for children and care leavers. As the Director of Children's Social Care was not present at the meeting, a written response would be provided.

### **RESOLVED (by majority):**

That the committee:

1. Endorse the Cared for Children and Care Leavers Strategy 2022-26.
2. Endorse the decision to take the pledges in the strategy to full Council on 19 October 2022, where members can pledge their commitments to cared for children and care leavers.
3. Endorse the decision to change the name of our Corporate Parenting Committee, further recommendations regarding the change of name will be brought to a future committee following consultation with children and young people.

**26 CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S PLAN 2022-26**

The committee received the report which outlined the new Children and Young People's Plan for Cheshire East which set out the ambition of the partnerships to improve outcomes for all children and young people.

**RESOLVED (unanimously):**

That the Children and Families Committee endorse the Children and Young People's Plan 2022-26.

**27 SCHOOLS CATERING SERVICE: EXTERNAL REVIEW**

The committee received the report which outlined a commissioned review into the Cheshire East schools catering service.

Members put forward a number of comments they wished to be considered, including:

- The importance of using local producers
- Ensuring good quality food in schools, particularly due to the cost of living crisis
- Ensuring the availability of free drinking water
- Offering separate vegetarian and vegan options instead of providing only vegan as a 'catch all'

**RESOLVED:**

That the committee:

1. Notes the external commissioning of a review of the schools catering service through APSE which will take place during the autumn term 2022.
2. Notes that the outcomes of this external review are shared with committee in January for consideration of the future delivery model for the schools catering service.

**28 SCHOOL ORGANISATION: ACADEMISATION OF SCHOOLS: FORWARD PLAN**

The committee received the report which provided information on planned schools across the borough which were seeking to move to academy status and join a multi academy trust.

It was noted that this was a standing item brought to each committee meeting and that there had been no changes to the report since the previous meeting.

**RESOLVED:**

That the committee receives and notes the summary table (Appendix 1) showing the status of academy conversions across Cheshire East schools.



**29 WORK PROGRAMME**

A query was raised regarding information on the progress of new schools in the borough and it was noted that briefing sessions would be run in the autumn. These briefings would also be open to all members who may wish to attend if relevant to their ward.

**RESOLVED:**

That the work programme be noted.

The meeting commenced at 14.00 and concluded at 17.00

Councillor K Flavell (Chair)

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## **Children and Families Committee**

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<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	19 September 2022
<b>Report Title:</b>	Dedicated Schools Grant Management Plan 2022/23 to 2026/27
<b>Report of:</b>	Deborah Woodcock, Director of Children's Services
<b>Report Reference No:</b>	CF/17/22- 23
<b>Ward(s) Affected:</b>	All wards

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### **1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1.** To request approval of the updated Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Management Plan for the period 2022/23 to 2026/27 by Children and Families Committee.

### **2. Executive Summary**

- 2.1.** This report provides Children and Families Committee with an updated DSG Management Plan covering the five year period 2022/23 to 2026/27 and requests approval of the plan.
- 2.2.** The plan will continue to be updated on an annual basis for a rolling period of 5 years, therefore Children & Families Committee will be updated annually.
- 2.3.** There are four key messages in this report:
- As a result of a national high needs funding shortfall, where funding has not matched demand, the council's DSG reserve deficit will be 90% of the annual allocation at the end of 2022/23. This deficit is forecast to significantly increase in value over the medium term and it is not recoverable under current forecasts.

- The council is implementing a series of mitigations that are within current capacity levels to reduce the impact on the deficit as much as possible.
- The position is not sustainable and the deficit is being managed through a temporary accounting override (see para 6.23). The arrangements beyond March 2023 are not yet confirmed by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC).
- There are no current national arrangements for this deficit to be addressed, and use of local funding is not viable. The Council's General Reserves, to cover financial risks across all service areas, stood at only £12.5m at 31 March 2022.

**2.4.** The management plan concept was introduced by the DfE in 2020 as a mechanism to help councils present their DSG pressures. The first version of the plan was approved by Cheshire East Cabinet on 9 March 2021.

**2.5.** The overall strategy remains the same; to continue to increase local provision and enhance special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) support services to ensure needs are met in the most effective way.

**2.6.** The management plan is based on a series of assumptions relating to growth in demand, expected costs and the impact of mitigations. This allows medium term forecast expenditure and income level to be compared to establish the overall funding deficit. The plan assumes the deficit is carried forward each year into the next financial year and adds to the pressure.

**2.7.** For Cheshire East the DSG reserve deficit as of 31 March 2022 is £25.7m. The forecasts in this report demonstrate that, even with a significant amount of achievable mitigation factored in, the expected increase in demand and resulting costs is forecast to exceed the funding provided by the DfE. This is illustrated in the table below:

<b>While mitigations make a significant difference, the DSG Deficit Reserve increases over the medium term and is not recoverable</b>					
	<b>2022/23</b>	<b>2023/24</b>	<b>2024/25</b>	<b>2025/26</b>	<b>2026/27</b>
	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>
Un-mitigated DSG Deficit	53.0	90.3	138.9	199.6	272.8
Mitigated DSG Deficit	43.9	63.6	87.3	114.6	145.7
Difference	(9.1)	(26.6)	(51.6)	(85.0)	(127.0)

**2.8.** As shown the Cheshire East DSG reserve deficit will be at £145.7m by 31 March 2027 even with a realistic level of mitigations being achieved.

- 2.9.** The latest plan is set in the context of the SEND and AP Green Paper (2022) which outlines future changes to key processes and also the council joining the DfE's Delivering Better Value (DBV) programme in 2022. This is an assistance programme being rolled out to 55 local authorities with significant DSG reserve deficits. It aims to undertake a diagnostic phase leading to an agreed action plan. An approved management plan will provide a baseline for the outcomes of the DBV programme.
- 2.10.** The report considers some of the issues concerning sensitivity around the key assumptions and what else could be done to achieve a balanced budget.

### **3. Recommendations**

- 3.1.** That Children and Families Committee:
- 3.1.1.** Approve the DSG Management Plan for 2022/23 to 2026/27.
- 3.1.2.** Note the need to pursue external capital funding and review the capital programme to identify additional projects within the DSG management plan as determined by the sufficiency statement.
- (The council will be updating its SEN sufficiency statement in autumn 2022. This will set out the additional provision needed over the next five years to further mitigate the overspend and require significant capital investment to deliver).
- 3.1.3.** To note that engagement has begun with the DfE's Delivering Better Value (DBV) programme.

### **4. Reasons for Recommendations**

- 4.1.** In line with the issues being seen nationally, expenditure on pupils with SEND is increasing significantly as a result of higher demand and complexity.
- 4.2.** This increase exceeds the DfE's funding allocations and has led to the council's DSG reserve being in a deficit position of £25.7m as of 31 March 2022. The expectation is that the deficit will continue to increase and cannot be recovered in the medium term under current expenditure and income forecasts.
- 4.3.** The DfE management plan guidance advises that:
- "The DSG: conditions of grant 2022 to 2023 paragraph 5.2, requires that any local authority with an overall deficit on its DSG account at the end of the 2021 to 2022 financial year, or whose DSG surplus has substantially reduced during the year, must be able to present a plan to DfE for

managing their future DSG spend. There will be a requirement for local authorities to share this information with their stakeholders, such as schools forums, parent and carer forum, local headteacher boards or groups. We already share information through various forums and associations so we have good practice on which we can build.

To help local authorities meet this requirement we have provided a DSG management plan template. This template will help local authorities:

- comply with paragraph 5.2 of the DSG: conditions of grant 2022 to 2023,
- monitor how DSG funding is being spent,
- highlight areas where local authorities may wish to review spending,
- form evidence-based and strategic future plans for the provision of children and young people with SEND,
- present complex funding information simply to schools forums and other external stakeholders,
- provide a consistent reporting format to help local authorities share best practice and initiatives.”

**4.4.** Therefore, the council has to produce a DSG Management Plan that has been formally approved and can be used for discussions with the DfE and engagement with stakeholders to ensure they are aware of the issues and the actions required.

**4.5.** As per the Children and Families 23 May 2022 committee the council has opted to join the DfE’s DBV programme from mid-2022 and having an approved plan will form a point to measure any benefit resulting from that review.

**4.6.** The pressures on the DSG addressed through this management plan will also reduce the risk of future overspend on base budget of the SEND team, the Education Psychologists team and on school transport.

## **5. Other Options Considered**

**5.1.** A local version of the DfE management plan template based on the DfE model. This has been done to reflect local methods of collating financial data and to allow a range of summary information to be held and presented in a single document.

**5.2.** While the DfE template has been updated in 2021 it continues to limit the options for customisation and therefore a local model has been retained for this version.

**5.3.** The table below sets out the issues:

<b>Option</b>	<b>Impact</b>	<b>Risk</b>
Do nothing (not produce a DSG Management Plan)	This is not acceptable as the DfE has made completion of a DSG	The council would not be demonstrating commitment to

Option	Impact	Risk
	management plan compulsory under certain criteria which the council has met.	managing the issues, pro-actively introducing mitigations and joining the DBV programme.
Use the DfE template	The DfE template remains optional and to date has not proved flexible enough to manage all the high needs funding issues.	The council may be required to use the standard template at some point and would work with the DfE to address the issues.
Subsidise DSG from other local funding sources	This may help to reduce the DSG deficit but increase pressure on other areas which were not intended to fund high needs. This is unlikely to address the extent of the budget pressure.	The true high needs funding gap is not recognised and there are pressures on other budgets or the council's general reserves.
Not develop mitigations	The council would be leaving itself in an unacceptable position in terms of overall reserves and not demonstrating a commitment to manage the DSG reserve deficit.	The council would be reliant on the DfE meeting the full costs of the DSG Deficit which is unlikely to happen.
Update the plan to include mitigations to balance to the funding available.	This is considered later in the report. The council is not able to achieve this without reducing costs per EHCP or reducing the number of EHCPs.	Neither of these options are realistic at present.

## 6. Background

### Introduction

- 6.1. The increase in numbers and complexity of need for children with EHCPs that have their needs met through the council's DSG high needs grant has significantly exceeded the funding received for that purpose.

- 6.2.** This situation has occurred over the last six years with several factors contributing to it locally including a lack of provision, high rates of needs assessments, parental expectations and more generally the high needs funding allocation which is not linked to EHCP numbers.
- 6.3.** This is a national issue and as a result the majority of councils are now facing significant deficits on their DSG reserve as recurring overspends are transferred to it each year.
- 6.4.** This has prompted the DFE to take a number of actions:
- 6.4.1.** They released a DSG Management Plan template in 2020 to help councils set out their forecast spending pressures, income levels and DSG reserve deficit. In 2022 any council with a deficit DSG reserve (or a significant decrease in their reserve) has to produce a management plan.
- 6.4.2.** They have also introduced two support schemes for councils:
- Delivering Better Value – for councils with significant DSG deficits. This is starting from July 2022.
  - The Safety Value - for councils with very high DSG deficits. This started in 2021 but no conclusions are available yet.

#### **DSG Management Plan Update**

- 6.5.** The council produced its first DSG Management Plan for 2021/22 to 2024/25 and that was agreed by Cabinet on 9 March 2021. This allowed the plan to be taken forward. Cabinet requested that members were kept up to date on the plan and the DfE also require regular updates.
- 6.6.** The forecasts of demand, costs and mitigating actions have been refined through ongoing review and the council has produced an updated DSG Management Plan covering the period 2022/23 to 2026/27 for approval by Children and Families Committee.
- 6.7.** The council has opted to retain a local model for the flexibility it provides. While the DFE template has been updated in 2021 it continues to limit the options for customisation.
- 6.8.** While the plan has been subject to refinement the key messages over significant funding deficits remains the same. Unless funding levels, demand and capacity to deliver mitigations (such as new special schools) significantly change it will not be possible to recover the deficit position. The council is continuing to discuss this issue with the DFE and discuss ideas with other local authorities on what else can be done.
- 6.9.** The new plan forecasts an unmitigated DSG Reserve deficit of £273m by 31 March 2027 and a mitigated deficit of £146m by 31 March 2027.
- 6.10.** The plan will form the basis for ongoing engagement with interested parties including the Schools Forum over the coming months.



### Key Updates to the Plan

- 6.11. Several key updates have been made since the Cabinet version and these are outlined below.

Issue	Cabinet – March 2021	Children and Families Committee – Sept 2022
Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) data	The original plan was based on in year data in late 2020.	The plans are now based on the latest statutory January SEN2 return.
EHCP forecasts	This used percentage increases for each age group.	Changed to a fixed increase each year to reflect trends.  A figure of 600 net new plans per annum has been used.
Outturn information	Latest information was 2019/20.	Latest information is 2021/22.
Budget information	Latest information was 2021/22.	Latest information is 2022/23.
Average cost information	Based on information during 2020/21.	Based on information for 2021/22.
Annual increases in high needs funding	Local estimates based on indications in DfE documents – and different assumptions for mitigated / unmitigated.	This has been set by the DfE as 5% in 2023/24 followed by 3% per annum after that.
High Needs income adjustments	High needs funding has been adjusted for the increased number of special school places, as they form part of the high needs national funding formula, <b>in addition</b> to a percentage increase.	Same approach taken. This approach will be confirmed with the DfE.

- 6.12. Further details on the management plan are shown in **Appendix 1** to this report.

### **The Cheshire East Strategy**

- 6.13.** The overall strategy adopted by the council remains the same as per the initial plan. The two main aims are to increase local provision and enhance SEND support services to reduce the rate of growth of EHCPs to ensure needs are met in the most effective way.
- 6.14.** These form the basis for the mitigating actions in the plan. Increasing local provision is an invest to save measure with additional costs from local provision being offset by reductions on expenditure with independent providers.

### **The Mitigations**

- 6.15.** The plan contains a series of mitigations which are designed to achieve the strategy through managing needs at the necessary level and where necessary ensuring cost effective provision is available. There is a particular emphasis on reducing the rate of growth of EHCPs or escalation of support levels where they are not required and ceasing plans where needs can be met without an EHCP.
- 6.16.** The mitigations can be broken down into a number of categories as set out below:

<b>Mitigation</b>	<b>Description</b>
Improvements to SEND support in schools specifically around autism and education psychology.	This provides a focus on SEND Support in schools to be further developed with training for staff in schools to deliver better services. This will lead to enhanced delivery in schools with needs of children being met without the need for an EHCP, therefore reduce the rate of increase for requests for EHCPs.
Redesign of the Needs Assessments Triage process	Refine our current process in order to appropriately reduce the number of needs assessments. EP and SEND team to develop process and criteria.
Transition Funding	The introduction of targeted funding to support phase transfer so that children with more complex SEND, but without EHCPs, are able to experience a successful and sustained transition between provisions.

Mitigation	Description
Enhanced Mainstream Provision (EMP)	<p>This mitigation provides two different targeted models of support.</p> <p>Type 1: aimed to help manage any escalation to an EHCP – to provide additional support to pupils who may be classed as SEN support pupils or on the cusp of requiring an EHCP.</p> <p>Type 2: to help manage any need for a change of placement to a higher level of provision for a pupil with an EHCP and for them to continue in mainstream.</p>
Resource Provision	<p>This is through a mix of ensuring all existing places are occupied, expanding existing provision and new provision.</p>
Special Schools	<p>Increase number of places within existing and potentially 2 x new special schools by 252 places in total over the 5 year period.</p>
Special School - Capital	<p>The report sets out the plans for capital schemes to grow local provision.</p>
Special School Mitigation – Supported Internships	<p>A supported internship is one type of study programme specifically aimed at young people aged 16 to 24 who have an EHCP, who want to move into employment and need extra support to do so.</p>
Non-Maintained & Independent Special Schools	<p>The intention remains to grow local provision and make less use of external placements. To reduce the number of EHCPs in Independent / NMSS by increasing our own provision in special schools, RPs, EMPS and SIs – forecast reflects reduction of 500 placements by 2026/27.</p> <p>In addition to reducing overall numbers, a further mitigation focuses on fee challenge.</p>

Mitigation	Description
Non-Maintained and Independent Special Schools – Supported Internships	As above.
Further Education - Supported Internships	<p>This is a programme to provide a pathway to employment and therefore reduce the pressure on Further Education.</p> <p>This has a better outcome for the individual and positively impacts on Adults Social Care. The costs are picked up as part of the Special School or Further Education costs.</p>

### Progress Update

**6.17.** The ongoing review of the plan has highlighted the progress and improvements achieved since the first version was produced. These include:

- 6.17.1. The creation of six additional enhanced mainstream provisions.
- 6.17.2. The creation of 24 additional resource provision places.
- 6.17.3. An additional 225 special school places are either in use or in progress.
- 6.17.4. The creation of 80 supported internships across the 2021/22 and 2022/23 academic years.

**6.18.** In terms of forecasting, inevitably the roll out of new provision and new mitigations does take time and the EHCP growth was much higher than expected in 2021/22. As a result the 2021/22 outturn deficit position was £0.9m below the unmitigated forecast. That was still an improvement but also a reason that the forecasting basis has been reviewed.

**6.19.** The other key areas that have progressed include:

- 6.19.1. The development of a single data document – based on SEN2 and data gathered from schools re their prediction of needs assessments.
- 6.19.2. Enhanced support from the autism team etc:
  - Autism schools project pilot.
  - AET training delivered to schools and RPs and special – Making Sense of Autism, Good Autism Practice.
  - EP training offer for schools. Emotional Literacy support assistants.
  - IQT support - in-depth school SEND reviews in 10 schools.

- Fee Challenge - letter re fee increases sent to all independents + on-going fee challenge.
- 6.19.3. The service has developed further mitigation measures on an invest to save basis including:
- The implementation of revised criteria when triaging requests for a needs assessment to ensure needs cannot be met at SEN support.
  - Use of transition grants to reduce needs assessment requests at points of transition until the new setting has been able to assess needs and determine if needs can be met at SEN support.
  - Increased challenge around request for change of placement.

### **Comparative Data on DSG Reserve Deficits**

- 6.20.** In April 2022 the Society of County Treasurers (SCT) completed a survey of council DSG deficits. At this stage it is only possible to quote headline information.
- 6.21.** They published an analysis of the response on 4 July 2022. The initial headlines are set out below.
- 6.21.1. The response rate was 54%
- 6.21.2. The high needs deficits as of 31 March 2022 for responders was £1.35bn and forecast to reach £2.6bn by 31 March 2025. with the potential for this to be a £3.6bn shortfall nationally.
- 6.21.3. Over half of the £1.35bn relates to nine councils which are all SCT members.
- 6.21.4. The trend for this to grow each year is the situation for most responders.
- 6.21.5. It is too soon to comment on the helpfulness of the arrangements of the Safety Valve programme. The key points drawn from LAs in the Safety Valve programme are shown below
- Too many EHCPs are issued by some LAs. This can become a cultural issue as overwhelmed assessment teams focus on throughput and schools (and other stakeholders) can see the EHCP as a way to obtain additional resources.
  - Too many children are placed in out of authority provision, often due to full special schools and insufficient inclusion in mainstream schools (sometimes due to loss of parental faith in mainstream provision).
  - Some LAs have set budgets expecting significant additional government funding.
  - Working with schools and Schools Forums to build capacity in mainstream schools can significantly improve High Needs financial positions.

- 6.21.6. EHCP numbers have increased nationally by 33.7% from January 2019 to January 2022. However, funding has not responded.
- 6.21.7. Data from the responders saw a population increase of between 0.6% and 0.7% per annum, although EHCP numbers have increased by an average of 12% per annum between 2018-19 to 2021-22.
- 6.21.8. Although there is some work being done to help limit the increase in EHCPs (where they are not the best course of action for the child), it is important to note that (anecdotally) many LAs simply lack capacity to address this. Some LAs have also expressed that EHCPs are often more common in areas with families who have the money to legally challenge decisions.
- 6.21.9. There is no correlation between proportional growth in number of EHCPs and deprivation.
- 6.22. Further analysis of this survey will be undertaken to see how Cheshire East compares to other councils in terms of the DSG deficit.

**Accounting Override ~ Dedicated Schools Grant adjustment account (England)**

- 6.23. From the 2020/21 financial year the accounting arrangements for the deficit on the DSG grant were changed.
- 6.24. The council holds usable and unusable reserves on the balance sheet. Usable reserves are cash backed whereas unusable reserves are not. Examples of unusable reserves are pensions and the revaluation of land and buildings.
- 6.25. In April 2020 Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) introduced new legislation to switch the DSG deficit reserve from a usable to an unusable reserve and allowed the creation of an adjustment account on the balance sheet.
- 6.26. When MHCLG set up the accounting override it prevented local authorities from funding a DSG deficit from General Funds without the permission of the Secretary of State. It was made clear to council treasurers that this override was in place to allow time to find suitable arrangements to address the issue.
- 6.27. The current override will end on 31 March 2023 and an update is awaited. Without the override the size of the negative reserve for council expected as of 31 March 2023 (£44m per the plan) would present a financial stability issue for the 2023/24 financial year. Further legislation will be required for 2023 onwards if the override is to continue.

- 6.28. Depending on national progress on this issue and the impact of the support programmes the council may have to fund some high needs costs from other sources. However, this would not be acceptable given the scale of the issue.
- 6.29. The size of the deficit is making it both challenging or potentially impossible to recover and represents a significant cashflow issue, and an unmitigated funding risk for the council.

### **Options to Reduce Expenditure and Improve the Deficit Position**

- 6.30. As with the initial version, the latest plan has not achieved a balanced position based on the forecasts. Demand levels remain too high and funding is insufficient. However, the involvement from the DBV programme and collaboration with various stakeholders will enable us to explore other mitigations to address this.
- 6.31. The 2022/23 data reflects confirmed high needs funding of £50.7m. This will be used to provide services to a forecast of 3,828 Cheshire East children with an EHCP (estimated January 2023 SEN2 return).
- 6.32. This would give an average expected cost of £13,200 per child with an EHCP in 2022/23. This amount is significantly lower than the current expenditure levels. For example, special schools in Cheshire East receive a minimum of £22,000 per child. Schools would not be able to deliver provision which meets the needs of children if we funded at £13,200.
- 6.33. Typical expenditure for a pupil whose needs cannot be met in mainstream starts with resource provision costing £20,500 in place and pupil funding. After resource provision the costs per child increase with more complex provision exceeding £55,000 per child. There are also costs of support functions such as the autism service to consider.
- 6.34. The local data shows that while 9% of EHCPs (330) are in independent special schools and non-maintained special schools they account for 28% (£19m) of the mitigated expenditure forecast in 2022/2023.
- 6.35. One option to reduce expenditure is if all pupils attending independent special schools or non-maintained special schools, moved to local provision, costs would reduce by £19m but would incur an additional cost of approx. £4m relating to local special school costs, resulting in a net reduction of costs of £15m. This would still not be sufficient to balance the budget in 2022/23.
- 6.36. The second option is to reduce the numbers of EHCPs however, the number would have to fall by more than half to make the funding work. The council would not be legally compliant in accordance with the SEND code and would result in parents challenging these decisions through tribunal.

- 6.37.** The third option would be to consider the necessary increases in high needs funding to balance. From 2023/24 to 2026/27 the annual increase would need to be over 15% to reach a point by March 2027 where in year expenditure commitments were funded. That would still leave a £77m carry forward deficit to cover.
- 6.38.** To cover in year commitments and the deficit high needs funding would need to increase by 25.4% per annum to achieve balance including the deficit by March 2027. Once the deficit is cleared the funding needs to match spend.
- 6.39.** This is a challenge we need to consider further. More work will be done to consider all options detailed above.

### **Sensitivity Analysis**

- 6.40.** As stated the latest management plan is based on the forecast that EHCPs grow by 600 net new plans per annum.
- 6.41.** If that turns out to be more or less then it will change the financial outcomes. The impact of 575 plans per annum and 650 plans per annum have been modelled. The impact is different for mitigated and unmitigated and over the years as percentage assumptions around mitigations come in.
- 6.42.** The results can be summarised as:
- 6.42.1.** 575 pupils: the impact is a reduction in the 2022/23 mitigated deficit by £472,000 rising to a £7m reduction in the mitigated deficit by March 2027.
- 6.42.2.** 650 pupils: the impact is an increase in the 2022/23 mitigated deficit by £892,000 rising to a £13.1m increase in the mitigated deficit by March 2027.

### **Where Next**

- 6.43.** The council has opted to join the DfE's DBV programme from 2022 and this is expected to bring external support and review from external SEND and Finance professionals leading to the production of an action plan. At this stage it is not certain of the outcome of that process.
- 6.44.** The DfE also has a Safety Valve programme for councils with very high deficits. That programme is compulsory, and the council may be asked to join it in due course.



- 6.45.** It is expected that key benefits will be learning from other councils on successful strategies to manage demand and expenditure, and from the support of independent experts with some external funding to drive change..

#### **DSG Budget Requirement Issues**

- 6.46.** One of the mitigations in the plan is to review the DSG Budget Requirement on an annual basis. This is to ensure the maximum amount is available for placements. As part of that review there is a recommendation that high needs funding currently provided to part fund direct payments totalling £383,000 per annum is removed.
- 6.47.** This funding is being spent so to remove it would place a pressure on base budget that needs to be funded. Therefore, this would need to form a growth bid in the MTFS for 2023/24.

#### **Base Budget Pressures**

- 6.48.** The impact of the significant growth in pupils with an EHCP will also be experienced in base budget funded services including the SEN Assessment and Monitoring Team, the Education Psychologists Team, specialist services (such as SALT) and the home to school and SEN transport team.
- 6.49.** Activity and staffing levels in those teams will be regularly reviewed and growth requirements would create pressure, and a potential need for alternative savings, within the MTFS which is otherwise balanced.

#### **Feedback to the DfE etc**

- 6.50.** The council has continued to discuss the high needs shortfall directly with the DfE at a series of follow up meetings on the first version of the plan, both through meetings held to take part in the DBV programme and indirectly through discussions over the costing override issue with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC).
- 6.51.** In addition, the council is also part of a number of special interest groups including: the Society of County Treasures; the Society of Unitary Treasurers, the north west schools accountants group, the north west SEND leads group and the F40 Group (the 40 lowest funded education authorities). All these groups are making regular representations and conducting surveys on the issues.

## **Impact on Adults Social Care**

- 6.52.** Members are also asked to consider the medium to longer term impact of the significant rise in children with an EHCP on the Adults Social Care Service.
- 6.53.** The potential for additional services to these young adults with associated costs is likely to form a pressure on the council's base budget.
- 6.54.** This is also likely to be a national issue which may need to be raised in due course with central government but noting that resolving the current high needs funding shortfall is the initial priority.

## **7. Consultation and Engagement**

- 7.1.** The previous version of the report was approved by Cabinet on 9 March 2021. That version was shared with the Schools Forum on 10 June 2021.
- 7.2.** A copy of that plan was shared with the DfE on 26 April 2021 and discussed with the DfE on 9 October 2020, 26 March 2021 and 21 May 2021.
- 7.3.** We have continued to update Schools Forum on progress and that will continue as part of ongoing refinement.
- 7.4.** The SEND Partnership will ensure partners are aware of the issues and part of the design of any solutions.
- 7.5.** SEND Management team will be part of our internal monitoring process.
- 7.6.** These meet the requirements of the DfE template.
- 7.7.** DfE consultation on the reform of SEND and Alternative Provision closed in July 2022. The SEND Partnership submitted an extensive response to the proposals.

## **8. Implications**

### **8.1. Legal**

- 8.1.1.** The Local Authority has a statutory duty under s.42 of the Children and Families Act 2014 to secure the special educational needs provision described in a young person's Education, Health and Care plan, including commissioning the required provision to meet those needs.
- 8.1.2.** The Secretary of State has power to provide 'financial assistance ' for educational purposes under sections 14-18 of the Education Act 2002 and the standard means of funding is by the Designated Schools Grant.

The relevant regulations are The School and Early Finance (England) Regulations 2021.

**8.2. Finance**

- 8.2.1. This is a joint Education and Skills and Finance report. All the Financial implications are contained within the report itself.

**8.3. Policy**

- 8.3.1. The SEND Code of Practice (January 2015) provides statutory guidance on duties, policies and procedures relating to Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014 and associated regulations and applies to England.
- 8.3.2. The DfE have issued the “SEND Review: Right support, right place, right time” - a SEND and AP green paper which is a consultation on the future of SEND services. The SEND Partnership response is in support of the proposals and promptly making those legal requirements will support the council in delivery of the necessary changes.

**8.4. Equality**

- 8.4.1. The SEND Code of Practice looks to ensure the assessed additional needs of children with special education needs are provided for to enable them to reach agreed outcomes.
- 8.4.2. The Code of Practice is likely to be changed as a result of the SEND and AP Green paper consultation.

**8.5. Human Resources**

- 8.5.1. Due to the increased demand for needs assessments the workloads of staff in the SEND Assessment and Monitoring Team and associated support services remain high. This is making the ability to meet legal and statutory requirements remain a challenge. EHCP volumes increased by 18% in 2019 and are forecast to increase by more than 25% in 2020.
- 8.5.2. As a result the Director of Education will be identifying further base budget growth through the Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2023/24 onwards. Members are asked to note this issue.

**8.6. Risk Management**

- 8.6.1. The key risks are:
- 8.6.2. An impact on the council's base budget (council tax, national non-domestic rates and general grants) as a contribution may be required to manage the high needs pressures or DSG deficit reserve balance.

- 8.6.3. There is insufficient capital resources and / or capacity to deliver the additional changes needed to provide more places in the borough. This is a particular challenge if trying to bring the mitigations forward.
- 8.6.4. Service levels reduce as funding is not sufficient and future Ofsted inspections raise issues which damage reputation and result in the council being required to produce a “written statement of action” to remedy failings.
- 8.6.5. The council continues to make payments to settings but it is not able to fund them from the overall resources it has available. This is a key issue to discuss with the DfE.
- 8.6.6. The DSG Management Plan is based on a series of assumptions over EHCP numbers and average costs. These are subject to change and this risk will be mitigated through regular reviews of the plan.

## **8.7. Rural Communities**

- 8.7.1. There are no direct implications for rural communities.

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

- 8.8.1. It is essential that the council makes best use of resources to ensure that children and young people receive the services they need and those services must be provided.
- 8.8.2. The council has approved its Children’s Vision which contains a priority around children with additional needs.
- 8.8.3. The SEND Partnership Strategy sets out the Partnership vision for meeting the needs of children and young people with SEND.

## **8.9. Public Health**

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

## **8.10. Climate Change**

- 8.10.1. Many pupils are educated out of borough at high costs and with long travel journeys. The SEND Provision plan is generating additional in borough school places, but this is unable to match the increased level of demand. We do however have a high proportion of SEND pupils in our mainstream schools compared to other authorities.
- 8.10.2. All expansions take account of environmental factors for new schools.
- 8.10.3. Where possible systems that save on energy consumption will be considered, particularly for electricity.

- 8.10.4. The internal works required to update the building to make it fit for purpose will include a comprehensive review of the impact on climate factors.
- 8.10.5. Significant changes will take place which will require full compliance with the latest building regulations relating to such factors as insulation/heat loss and energy efficiencies. Such factors will be key considerations as the scheme is developed through to full handover.

Access to Information	
Contact Officers:	<p>Jacky Forster, Director of Education and Skills  <a href="mailto:jacky.forster@cheshireeast.gov.uk">jacky.forster@cheshireeast.gov.uk</a>  01606 271504</p> <p>Alex Thompson, Director of Finance &amp; Customer Services  <a href="mailto:alex.thompson@cheshireeast.gov.uk">alex.thompson@cheshireeast.gov.uk</a>  01270 685876</p>
Appendices:	<p>There is one Appendix to this report:</p> <p>Appendix 1 – Summary of the DSG Management Plan.</p>
Background Papers:	<p>The draft DSG Management Plan for 2021/22 to 2024/25 was reported to Cheshire East Cabinet on the 9<sup>th</sup> March 2021.  <a href="#">(Public Pack)Agenda Document for Cabinet, 09/03/2021 13:00 (cheshireeast.gov.uk)</a></p> <p>The document was shared with Schools Forum on June 2021.  <a href="#">Cheshire East Forum</a></p> <p>The DfE have issued guidance and a template for the Management Plan on their website.  <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dedicated-schools-grant-dsg-deficit-management-plan/dsg-deficit-management-plan-template-guidance-for-local-authorities-2022-to-2023">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dedicated-schools-grant-dsg-deficit-management-plan/dsg-deficit-management-plan-template-guidance-for-local-authorities-2022-to-2023</a></p> <p>The DfE have issued the SEND and AP Green Paper on their website.  <a href="https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1063620/SEND_review_right_support_right_place_right_time_accessible.pdf">https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1063620/SEND_review_right_support_right_place_right_time_accessible.pdf</a></p>

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## **Appendix 1**

### **Summary of Cheshire East Council DSG Management Plan 2022/23 to 2026/27**

#### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1. This **Appendix** provides a summary of the council's Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Management Plan for the period 2022/23 to 2026/27, which has been updated based on the January 2022 education, health and care plan (EHCP) numbers from the SEN2 statutory return and the latest forecasts for the mitigations.
- 1.2. The DSG Management Plan is based on a very detailed spreadsheet template issued by the DfE. This Appendix outlines the basis for the calculations and provides a summary of the results.
- 1.3. Where changes to provision are identified they remain subject to necessary consultations, sufficient capital funding where applicable and local approval.

#### **2. Key Assumptions in the DSG Management Plan**

##### **Average Cost Assumptions**

- 2.1. The Management Plan is based on average costs for the placement of additional pupils. This has to be used for modelling as the destination of each new child and their needs cannot be determined at this stage.
- 2.2. The average costs of provision increases from £7,000 for a pupil supported in mainstream to £25,000 for a special school to over £60,000 for post 16 independent provision.

##### **Forecasting Children with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP)**

- 2.3. The council has to submit a SEN 2 return in January each year setting out the latest information on EHCP numbers. This return is used as the basis for the DSG management plan. The data from the January 2022 SEN2 return is the basis for forecasting in this plan.
- 2.4. The unmitigated forecast is now based on 600 (net: new less ceased) more plans each and every year. This is a change from the original management plan where a year on year percentage increase was used. This change reflects local experience of the annual change and a review of needs assessments.
- 2.5. The 600 net new plans represents an overall increase of 17.5% in 2022/23. The plan assumes that service and placement spend rises accordingly, that new places are filled and other mitigations apply to the increased number.
- 2.6. The growth in EHCPs is forecast to reduce from 88% to 40% after mitigations are applied equating to 4,779 EHCPs by 2026/27. This is set out in the table below.

Number of EHCPs	2022 Actual	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	% change
Unmitigated	3,412	4,012	4,612	5,212	5,812	6,412	87.9%
Mitigated	3,412	3,828	4,089	4,319	4,549	4,779	40.1%
Impact of mitigations	-	(184)	(523)	(893)	(1,263)	(1,633)	

### 3. Overall Financial Summary of the DSG Management Plan

#### Starting Point and Income Forecasts

- 3.1. The DSG reserve deficit balance is -£25.7m as of 31 March 2022 (this includes £10m DSG deficit carried forward from the previous year). This is based on high needs funding for 2021/22 of £44.5m and EHCPs of 3,412.
- 3.2. The high needs funding for 2022/23 is £50.7m which includes the additional supplementary funding of £1.8m.
- 3.3. The high needs funding has been forecast using DfE guidance as 5% growth in 2023/24 and 3% thereafter. The high needs growth of 5% has now been confirmed by the DfE on 19 July 2022. The high needs supplement has also been included in the baseline.

#### Overall Financial Summary

- 3.4. The tables below summarises the financial results in the DSG Management Plan in terms of the unmitigated position, the mitigated position and the difference between the two. .

#### Overall Financial Summary - Unmitigated Position

Provision Type	2022/23 £m	2023/24 £m	2024/25 £m	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m
Mainstream	20.6	23.3	26.1	28.8	31.6
Resource Provision	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0
Special Schools	17.0	17.0	17.0	17.0	17.0
NMSS & Independent Special Schools	28.1	36.8	46.1	55.8	66.2
FE Colleges	5.0	5.8	6.6	7.5	8.3
Alternative Provision	3.0	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1
Sensory & SALT	1.7	1.8	2.0	2.2	2.5
Social Care	-	-	-	-	-
Pay & Pensions	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>78.0</b>	<b>90.4</b>	<b>103.5</b>	<b>117.0</b>	<b>131.3</b>
<b>Total DSG Income</b>	<b>(50.7)</b>	<b>(53.2)</b>	<b>(54.8)</b>	<b>(56.4)</b>	<b>(58.1)</b>
<b>In Year Surplus -/ Deficit +</b>	<b>27.3</b>	<b>37.2</b>	<b>48.7</b>	<b>60.6</b>	<b>73.2</b>
<b>Surplus / Deficit Brought Forward</b>	<b>25.7</b>	<b>53.0</b>	<b>90.3</b>	<b>138.9</b>	<b>199.6</b>
<b>Total Deficit Reserve Balance</b>	<b>53.0</b>	<b>90.2</b>	<b>139.0</b>	<b>199.5</b>	<b>272.8</b>



**Overall Financial Summary - Mitigated Position**

<b>Provision Type</b>	<b>2022/23 £m</b>	<b>2023/24 £m</b>	<b>2024/25 £m</b>	<b>2025/26 £m</b>	<b>2026/27 £m</b>
Mainstream	18.4	19.8	20.4	20.9	21.5
Resource Provision	3.3	3.2	3.5	3.5	3.5
Special Schools	17.7	18.4	19.3	20.2	21.0
NMSS & Independent Special Schools	19.5	20.8	24.0	27.2	30.9
FE Colleges	4.7	5.2	5.8	6.3	6.8
Alternative Provision	3.0	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1
Sensory & SALT	1.7	1.8	1.9	1.9	1.9
Social Care	-	-	-	-	-
Pay & Pensions	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>68.9</b>	<b>72.9</b>	<b>78.6</b>	<b>83.7</b>	<b>89.3</b>
<b>Total DSG Income</b>	<b>(50.7)</b>	<b>(53.2)</b>	<b>(54.8)</b>	<b>(56.4)</b>	<b>(58.1)</b>
<b>In Year Surplus -/ Deficit +</b>	<b>18.2</b>	<b>19.7</b>	<b>23.8</b>	<b>27.3</b>	<b>31.2</b>
<b>Surplus / Deficit Brought Forward</b>	<b>25.7</b>	<b>43.9</b>	<b>63.6</b>	<b>87.3</b>	<b>114.6</b>
<b>Total Deficit Reserve Balance</b>	<b>43.9</b>	<b>63.6</b>	<b>87.4</b>	<b>114.6</b>	<b>145.8</b>

**Overall Financial Summary - Variance/Cost Avoidance**

<b>Provision Type</b>	<b>2022/23 £m</b>	<b>2023/24 £m</b>	<b>2024/25 £m</b>	<b>2025/26 £m</b>	<b>2026/27 £m</b>
Mainstream	(2.2)	(3.5)	(5.7)	(7.9)	(10.1)
Resource Provision	1.3	1.2	1.6	1.5	1.5
Special Schools	0.7	1.4	2.3	3.2	4.0
NMSS & Independent Special Schools	(8.6)	(16.0)	(22.1)	(28.6)	(35.4)
FE Colleges	(0.3)	(0.6)	(0.9)	(1.2)	(1.5)
Alternative Provision	-	-	-	-	-
Sensory & SALT	-	-	(0.2)	(0.4)	(0.6)
Social Care	-	-	-	-	-
Pay & Pensions	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>(9.1)</b>	<b>(17.5)</b>	<b>(25.0)</b>	<b>(33.4)</b>	<b>(42.0)</b>
<b>Total DSG Income</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>In Year Surplus -/ Deficit +</b>	<b>(9.1)</b>	<b>(17.5)</b>	<b>(25.0)</b>	<b>(33.4)</b>	<b>(42.0)</b>
<b>Surplus / Deficit Brought Forward</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(9.1)</b>	<b>(26.6)</b>	<b>(51.6)</b>	<b>(85.0)</b>
<b>Total Deficit Reserve Balance</b>	<b>(9.1)</b>	<b>(26.6)</b>	<b>(51.6)</b>	<b>(85.0)</b>	<b>(127.0)</b>

- 3.5. Without mitigations the funding gap is forecast to be £273m by March 2027. This reduces to -£146m by March 2027 after the mitigations are applied.
- 3.6. These figures form the deficit balance on the council's DSG reserve that would be carried into 2027/28.
- 3.7. To manage that level of expenditure the council is working to introduce a number of mitigations, which are detailed below.

## 4. The Mitigations

### A. Mainstream Provision

- 4.1. In 2021, the council successfully supported 1,830 children with an EHCP in mainstream settings. It is recognised as a cost effective method of managing needs but it is challenging in terms of limited schools budget levels and lack of available funding to increase “top-up” allocations within the high needs block.
- 4.2. The use of mainstream is considered to be the best outcome for the children with EHCPs and children on SEND Support in the majority of cases.
- 4.3. The mainstream mitigations are described below:

#### **Mitigation - Improvements to SEND support in schools for autism and education psychology**

Description	The aim is to further develop and improve SEND support in schools through staff training. This will lead to enhanced delivery and the needs of children being met without the need for an EHCP. The intention is to reduce the rate of increase in requests for EHCPs.
Cost of implementing	From 2022/23, an extra £110,000 invest to save funding has been allocated to this area from the high needs supplementary funding. The autism team and EP service are able to support more children using the same resources but operating differently.
Outcomes / Impact	<p>The target is to reduce the growth in EHCPs / needs assessments by 10% per annum in 2022/23. This increases to 15% from 2023/24 onwards as a result of the additional investment.</p> <p>The expectation is that this could lead to a reduction of 280 plans over a 5 year period. This figure could increase if the support provided proves more successful than is forecast. However, a prudent assumption has been adopted.</p>
Progress of mitigation	The overall numbers of pupils with EHCPs in mainstream are in line with the forecast position, which suggests that the mitigations are working. However, there are a number of mitigations being applied in mainstream which make it difficult to isolate the effect of this one in isolation.

#### **Mitigation – Redesign of the Needs Assessments Triage process**

Description	<p>The aim is to make our current process more robust in order to reduce the number of needs assessments while remaining code compliant. The EP and SEND teams will develop process and criteria to be followed.</p> <p>The intention is to bring our “decision not to assess” in line with national levels of 22%. The current local level is 12.7% at January 2022.</p>
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Cost of implementing	There are no additional cost implications identified currently. SEND team capacity may need to be reviewed as the process develops.
Outcomes / impact	The forecast assumes a reduction of 60 EHCPs per year (being 10% of the EHCP growth forecast), resulting in 262 by 2026/27.
Progress of mitigation	This is a new mitigation from 2022/23. The impact will be monitored and progress compared with the national average in 2023.

### Mitigation - Transition Funding

Description	<p>This is the development and implementation of a system for funding pupils with high needs in mainstream schools. The aim is to involve headteachers and SENCos and work without the requirement for EHCPs.</p> <p>This includes the introduction of targeted funding to support phase transfer so that children with more complex SEND, but without EHCPs, are able to remain on SEN support and experience a successful and sustained transition.</p>
Cost of implementing	<p>From 2022/23 an extra £500,000 invest to save has been allocated to this area from the high needs supplementary funding. The investment will be used to initiate a pilot.</p> <p>The reduction in EHCPs is not expected until 2023/24.</p>
Outcomes / impact	The plan forecasts a reduction of 700 EHCPs by 2026/27. This is phased across the four years from 2023/24 and split 100 EHCPs in the first year then 200 EHCPs in each of the following years.
Progress of mitigation	This is a new mitigation from 2023/24. Children will be identified and funded accordingly. A review of the children will be carried out the following year.

### Mitigation - Enhanced Mainstream Provision (EMP)

Description	<p>The EMP initiative feature two types of provision where a cohort of pupils is provided with additional support. The expected outcomes are:</p> <p><b>Type 1:</b> to help manage escalation to an EHCP through provision of additional support to pupils who are classed as on SEN support or near to requiring an EHCP.</p> <p><b>Type 2:</b> to help manage the need for a change of placement to a higher level of provision for pupils with an EHCP. The aim is for them to continue in mainstream.</p>
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Cost of implementing	The aim is to increase EMPs at mainstream schools in the borough. The annual cost of an EMP is £50,732, which is intended to provide the school with funding to implement and run the provision.
Outcomes / impact	<p><b>Type 1:</b> The cost incurred will be recovered if at least 8 pupils do not escalate to requiring an EHCP. If it is more than 8 pupils, further savings would be achieved. This is not a cumulative total as the enhanced mainstream provision will be supporting the pupils during their time at school.</p> <p>In addition to reducing the need for an EHCP, this model can support on average 40 pupils across the school, which in turn will improve attendance and permanent exclusion support.</p> <p><b>Type 2:</b> This model does not create any savings from EHCPs in mainstream settings. However, it does increase the costs of funding an EMP with the benefit of significantly reducing the costs incurred in Independent / NMSS (see section below). This saving covers the cost of running of an enhanced mainstream provision.</p>
Progress of Mitigation	<p>We are currently supporting 13 EMPs (5 x Type 1 and 8 x Type 2). Reviews of the EMPs were carried out in 2021/22 and identified that 16 needs assessments and 46 change of placement requests have been avoided.</p> <p>The opening of new EMPs has been affected by covid and other staffing issues in 2020/21 and 2021/22 which has impacted on the success of the mitigation.</p> <p>The mitigation still anticipates 24 EMPs in total, however the phasing across the 5 years has changed and remains subject to review.</p>

## B. Resource Provision

- 4.4. Resource provisions help to support the “right to mainstream” as stated in the SEND Code of practice. Children remain in a mainstream setting with their peers but have the benefit of attending a resource provision as part of their schooling day. In some cases, RPs reduce the need for children to attend a special school as mainstream settings are able to meet their needs through such provisions.
- 4.5. This current version of the plan includes 82 additional places.
- 4.6. The key mitigations are to increase overall number of RP places and to fully occupy all places, resulting in an additional cost of operating RPs by £1.5m in 2026/27, but resulting in cost avoidance within Independent / NMSS of £2.7m and a further £240,000 within mainstream.
- 4.7. By increasing the number of places fully occupying all resource provisions we aim to have doubled the capacity of RPs, from 134 places to 204 places by 2026/27.

This mitigation shows an increase in expenditure under the RP settings as the savings are reflected within mainstream and Independent / NMSS.

### Mitigation - additional RP places and places fully occupied

Description	<p>Increase the number of RP places by 82* new places to bring the total number of RP places to 204. The mitigation also assumes full capacity / occupancy in all RPs.</p> <p>This will provide placements for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Pupils currently being managed in mainstream – so their top up funding would cease – replaced by RP funding.</li> <li>- Pupils who would otherwise be placed in independent special provision (as CEC special schools are full) – so the cost of independent provision would reduce.</li> </ul> <p>(* new places = 82, however hearing impairment RPs are under review which is forecast to lead to a reduction in places due to lack of demand, therefore the net increase is 70 more RP places).</p>
Cost of implementing	<p>The 82 additional RP places would cost £1.35m in a full year (place and top up funding).</p> <p>The additional top up cost of filling all unoccupied places would be £441,000 (42 x £10,500).</p> <p>The cost of place funding from filling all the places will change from £10,000 to £6,000, resulting in a saving of £168,000.</p> <p>Total net cost for full capacity = £273,000</p>
Outcomes	<p>The pupils will be placed in the correct type of provision to meet their needs.</p> <p>The assumption is an equal split of savings between mainstream and Independent / NMSS resulting in a saving against Independent / NMSS of £2.7m per annum and a saving against mainstream of £240,000.</p>
Progress of Mitigations	<p>Three new places are in operation of the 63 places included in the original plan.</p> <p>A further 47 new places will be available in AY 2022/23, 18 in 2024/25, and 17 in 2025/26.</p> <p>The number of overall new places has increased from 63 to 82 places, although the phasing of the opening of new provisions is delayed compared with the original DSG Management Plan. The mitigation also includes full</p>

	<p>capacity of all RPs, bringing the total number of occupied RP places to 204.</p> <p>Future progress will be measured based on the opening of new RPs in line with the plan.</p>
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### Resource Provision – Capital

- 4.8. Setting up of new resource provisions in our mainstream schools has an impact on the capital budget. The table below shows the estimated place numbers, date of completion / opening and the status of capital expenditure.

New Places – Specialist	Places From	Estimated Number of Places	Place To	Estimated Date of build completion	Capital Expenditure Required	Estimated Date of Phased Opening (to from)
Wistaston Primary (RP)	0	24	24	Sept 24	Secured	Sept 23 – Sept 24
Shavington Secondary (RP)	0	14	14	Sept 23	Secured	Sept 23- Sept 24
Holmes Chapel (RP)	0	14	14	Sept 22	Secured	Sept 22- Sept 23
Macclesfield Academy (RP)	0	14	14	Sept 22	Secured	Sept 22 – Sept 23

### C. Special Schools

- 4.9. Cheshire East currently has six special schools: Springfield School; Park Lane School; Adelaide School; Adelaide Heath; NAS Church Lawton School and Axis School, supporting 513 pupils with an EHCP. 193 local children with an EHCP attend a special school in other local authorities.
- 4.10. The key issue is to plan a significant increase in expenditure. The reason for this is the key mitigation of growing our own provision in order to reduce the demand on Independent / NMSS settings which are of a considerably higher cost. Therefore, the significant cost impact of the additional places is offset by the savings from a reduction in Independent / NMSS provision equivalent to 252 places (in a 5 year period).

### Mitigation – Increase of special school places

Description	To increase the number of places within existing sites and create two new special schools giving 252 places in total over the 5 year period.
Cost of implementing	<p>The cost of place funding is not shown as this is accounted for within DSG income adjustments and income/export adjustments (although on a lagged basis).</p> <p>This assumes no change to the number of CE pupils in other LA special schools.</p>

Outcomes	Increasing capacity in own provision is forecast to reduce expenditure in Independent / NMSS by £14m.
Progress of Mitigation	<p>The overall number of special school places is now 252.</p> <p>Key updates relate to, revised capital plans, places complete and operating and also the phasing of availability of the new places. Some of the new provision will potentially not be available until after 2026/27.</p>

### Special School - Capital

4.11. Expansion/new build of special schools has an impact on the capital budget. The table below shows the estimated place numbers, date of completion / opening and the status of capital expenditure.

New Places – Specialist	Places From	Estimated Number of Places	Place To	Estimated Date of build completion	Capital Expenditure Required	Estimated Date of Phased Opening (to from)
Park Lane	86	40	126	Sept 22	Secured	Sept 22 – Sept 24
Park Lane	126	24	150	N/A	N/A	Sept 22-Sept 24
Axis	48	20	68	Sept 22	N/A	Sept 22 – Sept 23
Springfield Expansion or New Crewe Site	170	80	250	Sept 23	Secured	Sept 23
Dean Row	0	60	60	Sept 23	Secured	Sept 24 – Sept 26
Free School Bid (age range, primary need, size of school to be determined)	0	48	48	Sept 25	Not Secured (assumption this forms part of free school wave)	Sept 25-Sept 28
Free school Bid (age range, primary need, size of school to be determined)	0	48	48	Sept 25	Not Secured (assumption this forms part of free school wave)	Sept 25-Sept 28
Adelaide Heath	47	20	67		Not Secured	Sept 22-Sept 26



- 4.12. Note the council will be updating its SEN sufficiency statement in autumn 2022 and this will identify further additional local provision that is needed. It will be necessary to pursue additional capital projects to support this plan and the associated funding. Proposals for such projects will be subject to the normal approval process.

#### **Mitigation – Supported Internships in special schools**

Description	<p>A supported internship is a type of study programme that is specifically aimed at young people aged 16 to 24 who have an EHCP and want to move into employment and need extra support to do so.</p> <p>The mitigation to grow the supported Internship (SI) offer provides young people with a clear pathway to adulthood and into employment, which in turn reduces overall EHCP numbers and will positively impact on adult social care budgets.</p> <p>The mitigation assumes 12 supported internships within Cheshire East maintained special schools each year.</p>
Cost of implementing	<p>The cost of place funding and pupil top up funding has already been accounted for within the forecast. However top up funding is considerably lower than standard special school levels.</p> <p>If schools go over their place numbers due to SI's, additional place funding will be issued. Overall, with the lower top up rate and additional place funding, the impact is minimal on the financial element of the plan.</p>
Outcomes	<p>The EHCP is expected to cease after one year, therefore education beyond 19 does not continue, resulting in a reduction of EHCP numbers entering the non- maintained and independent sector.</p>
Progress of Mitigation	<p>Covid has impacted on the progression of this mitigation, however future years are set to be on track. 6 supported interns are due to complete by the end of 2021/22.</p>

#### **D. Non-Maintained and Independent Special Schools**

- 4.13. Non-maintained and Independent Special School placement are high cost placements for complex children. Children are placed in this type of setting when a local special school place is unavailable. Due to the lack of special school places (within maintained, academy, free special schools), the use of non-maintained and independent providers has and is forecast to increase.



- 4.14. The growth of EHCPs in this area is difficult to predict as the trend data shows a significant increase in EHCP pupils attending this type of setting in 2020/21 compared with prior years where levels remained consistent for a number of years.
- 4.15. The current EHCP number is 337 (January 2022). The unmitigated forecast assumes an increase of 132 EHCPs per year.
- 4.16. This setting type is by far the most expensive within the whole of the DSG management plan. However, there are a number of mitigations to target this area which will significantly reduce the growth of EHCPs and therefore also reduce the amount of expenditure. The mitigated expenditure in this area represents 28% of all the expenditure, whereas the number of EHCPs represent 9% of all EHCPs.

**Mitigation – Increase in specialist places (shown previously in the report against each setting type)**

Description	<p>To reduce the number of EHCPs in Independent / NMSS by increasing our own provision in special schools, RPs, EMPS and SIs. The forecast reflects reduction of 500 placements by 2026/27.</p> <p>In addition to reducing overall numbers, a further mitigation focuses on fee challenge.</p>
Cost of implementing	<p>The costs involved in the actions are included in earlier sections of the plan and relate to growing local provision.</p> <p>No costs have been included for the fee challenge element.</p>
Outcomes	<p>This is forecast to generate a cost saving of £35m overall.</p> <p>The plan assumes that the annual price increase can be halved from a typical 3% to 1.5%. This would provide savings of up to £4.7m by 2026/27 depending on other changes to that type of provision.</p>
Progress of Mitigations	<p>Current fees are £55,543 Pre 16, £60,312 Post 16.</p> <p>Compared with £49,067 Pre 16 and £59,053 Post 16 previously used.</p> <p>The average increase of top up has increased, potentially due to moving into higher bands / complexity of need, rather than actual fee increases.</p> <p>In addition to this, new providers for 2021/22 may have higher fees which were not included in the average costs in the previous plan.</p>

	Monitoring of the mitigation will continue and will be updated in the next refresh. This includes working with the commissioning team and reviewing costs on our payment system.
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### **Mitigation – Supported Internships in Non-Maintained Special Schools (NMSS) and Independent Special Schools**

Description	<p>A supported internship is one type of study programme specifically aimed at young people aged 16 to 24 who have an EHCP and want to move into employment and need extra support to do so.</p> <p>The mitigation to grow the supported internship offer provides young people with a clear pathway to adulthood and in to employed work, which in turn reduces overall EHCP numbers and will also positively impact on adult social care budgets.</p>
Cost of implementing	The cost of top up funding is significantly lower than the average cost of an independent placement. The cost is up to £3,750. However, the costs associated with all EHCPs within this section of the management plan are calculated using the average cost of £60,312.
Outcomes	<p>Students attending a SI programme at a NMSS/Independent school will gain employment (or be employment ready).</p> <p>The EHCP is expected to cease after one year, resulting in a reduction of EHCP numbers in the future.</p> <p>The mitigation also assumes supported internships within Cheshire East maintained special schools each year, will not move to a NMSS/Independent once they have finished the programme.</p>
Progress of Mitigation	Covid has impacted on the progression of this mitigation, however future years are set to be on track. 16 supported interns are due to complete by the end of 2021/22.

### **E. Further Education**

- 4.17. Cheshire East currently has three mainstream further education colleges: Reaseheath College; Cheshire College South and West and Macclesfield College. All the colleges offer additional support to students with EHCPs who are between the ages of 16 and 25 years old.
- 4.18. The main difference between the mitigated and unmitigated position relates to a reduction in pupils due to supported internships and the import / export adjustment, resulting in a reduction of £1.46m by 2026/27.

- 4.19. In the original DSG Management Plan the forecast had been based on a 25% increase per annum as advised by colleges in October 2020. The actual increase from Jan 20 to Jan 21 was 6%. From Jan 21 to Jan 22, the actual increase was 29%. The forecast for 2022/23 represents a 17% increase.

### Mitigation – Supported Internships in Further Education

Description	<p>A supported internship is one type of study programme specifically aimed at young people aged 16 to 24 who have an EHCP and want to move into employment and need extra support to do so.</p> <p>Where the SI programme forms an alternative to a course and is a lower cost option.</p> <p>The mitigation to grow the supported internship offer provides young people with a clear pathway to adulthood and in to employed work, which in turn reduces overall EHCP numbers and will also positively impact on adult social care budgets.</p>
Cost of implementing	<p>The cost of top up funding is up to £3,750 per annum per SI, which is significantly lower than the average cost of a FE placement, this is due to access to work funding claimed from Department of Work and Pensions (DWP).</p>
Outcomes	<p>The supported internship means the individual has reached the end of their education and have the skills to seek employment, it offers an exit route out of education.</p> <p>The EHCP is expected to cease after one year, therefore education in FE college does not continue.</p> <p>Over the five year period of the plan, 115 Supported Internships will be completed in FE Colleges and therefore reduce the number of EHCPs in future years.</p>
Progress of Mitigation	<p>The original plan intended to develop a CEC SI programme; however, focus is now on growing the offer within current providers such as Cheshire College and Macclesfield College, who have the experience to make this a successful programme.</p> <p>Covid has impacted on the delivery of the SI programme in respect of work placements, however future years are on track with the plan.</p> <p>18 supported interns are due to complete by the end of 2021/22.</p> <p>Monitoring of the mitigation involves the SI co-ordinator who provides details of SI numbers.</p>

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*Working for a brighter future together*

## **Children and Families Committee**

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<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	19 September 2022
<b>Report Title:</b>	School Organisation: Update on the proposal for a Primary School, Basford East, Shavington, following consultation
<b>Report of:</b>	Deborah Woodcock, Executive Director of Children's Services
<b>Report Reference No:</b>	CF/54/22- 23
<b>Ward(s) Affected:</b>	Weston/Basford Shavington Willaston and Rope

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### **1. Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1 This report provides an update to the previous committee paper, considered by the Children and Families Committee on 10 January 2022, on the establishment of a new primary school in Basford, Shavington.
- 1.2 At the 10 January 2022 Children and Families Committee meeting, it was agreed that an update would be provided to members of the committee on the outcomes from the informal consultation which is a required stage in the Department for Education (DfE) free school presumption process. This report and appendix 1 provide the detailed information for consideration and noting.

### **2. Executive Summary**

- 2.1. As the Strategic Commissioner of School Places, Cheshire East Council has a statutory duty to ensure a sufficiency of school places for children resident in its area and a commitment to allow local children to attend their local school wherever possible.
- 2.2. The data analysis indicates the need for additional school places, Reception

to Year 6, as a result of the development at Basford East, Shavington. These additional places would be provided by the establishment of a new 1 Form of Entry (FE) Primary School (with the option for a 30 Place Nursery), opening in September 2025.

- 2.3. At the Children and Families Committee meeting on 10 January 2022, 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 relating to the Basford East housing development. It was noted and approved that a period of informal engagement would be undertaken including briefings with local ward members, school leaders and wider stakeholders at the beginning of the process to help inform the specification of the school. It was agreed that the service would provide an update to be presented to the committee following this activity.

### **3. Recommendations**

- 3.1. That the committee notes, the summary of the feedback received, including the proposed mitigations, following the 4-week informal representation period which is a required stage in the DfE free school presumption process to allow the opening of a new primary school at Basford East, Shavington.
- 3.2. That the committee agrees to the progression of the prescribed free school process in the generation and submission of the draft specification for the new school to the DfE.

### **4. Reasons for Recommendation**

- 4.1. This recommendation is made based on the increased pupil forecasts for Shavington planning area for September 2025 and to ensure that Cheshire East Council meets its statutory duty to provide sufficient school places for children in their community.
- 4.2. To allow the service/directorate to ensure there is a reasonable timescale to implement the necessary statutory processes, procurement, and planning to deliver the new school in readiness for September 2025.

### **5. Other Options Considered**

- 5.1. Other options considered were detailed in the committee paper that was presented at the 10 January 2022 committee meeting. These

options included doing nothing which is an option which cannot be considered due to the need to ensure sufficiency of school places within the local area.

- 5.2. Weston Village Primary School is the only primary school within a 2-mile radius of the new school. Weston Village Primary was assessed for expansion however site restrictions mean that it was not deemed a viable option. Weston Village Primary had also requested and had confirmed a reduction in their pupil admission number (PAN) from 38 to 30 as from September 2022.

## **6. Background**

- 6.1. A detailed committee paper was presented at the 10 January 2022 committee meeting where a series of recommendations were approved:
- 6.1.1. The service 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.

## **7. Consultation and Engagement**

- 7.1. In accordance with the free school presumption advice for local authorities and new school proposers issued by the DfE (November 2019) to open a new school, local authorities must follow this process when considering opening a new school.
- 7.2. Before launching the competition to identify the sponsor to run the new school, the local authority will undertake consultation and engagement sessions.
- 7.3. This is not the formal statutory consultation which sponsors are required to undertake under section 10 of the Academies Act 2010, which takes place during the pre-opening phase i.e., after the sponsor has been selected.
- 7.4. As part of the consultation and engagement process, Cheshire East has undertaken the following:
- A formal briefing with local councillors.
  - A presentation and meeting was held with local schools.
  - A four-week representation period ran from 25 April 2022 to 22 May 2022 and a public notice was issued in the local press.

- Information was available on the Cheshire East website and during the representation period stakeholders, including Ward Members, MP, Diocese, and Town Council, were informed of the process.
- Information was emailed to all local schools together with a letter for distribution to their staff, governors, and parents.
- Two public drop-in sessions were held at Shavington Village Hall and Weston Village Church Hall with representatives from the Cheshire East Council School Organisation Team in attendance to discuss the proposal and seek views from parents and the local community.

7.5. Feedback gathered through consultation is summarised in Appendix 1 and this will be used to help formulate and finalise the Cheshire East Council's specification for a new school before its publication to invite expressions of interest from sponsors. Below is a summary of the feedback received: -

7.5.1. During the 4-week representation period a total of 38 responses were received: -

- 30 did support the proposal and left comments.
- 7 did not support the proposal and left comments.
- 1 no view provided.

7.5.2. Key issues raised from the consultation included: -

- Drop off and pick up/parent parking
- Children's play area close to the school grounds
- Safe road crossings near the school and pedestrian footbridges
- Cycle and walking routes linking the new developments in Basford area
- A full range of recreational facilities for the community and after school clubs

7.6. The DfE free school presumption process for proposing a new school has seven key stages, as set out in the table below. A proposed timescale for the remaining stages has been included for this specific new primary school for Shavington:

Stage	Process	Detail	Proposed Timescale
Stage 1	Notification	Notification to the DfE to trigger the process - <b>This has been completed</b>	December 2021



Stage 2	Informal Consultation	Consultation of the proposal with local schools, parents, carers, staff, pupils, school governors and trustees, Diocese representatives, local community, and ward members – Minimum of 4 weeks recommended - <b>This has been completed.</b> Feedback received will help formulate the specification for the school and complete the Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)	April – May 2022
Stage 3	Draft Specification	Draft specification and EIA submitted to DfE for approval	October 2022
Stage 4	Formal Specification for the school published (In-line with DfE requirements)	Following DfE approval, the LA and DfE publish the specification and invite potential sponsors to submit their applications. Recommended to allow 6-8 weeks but if time allows 12-14 weeks may be more appropriate	January 2023
Stage 5	Assessment Phase	The decision-maker (usually the LA) assesses/scores the applications, may invite potential sponsors for interview. This process is supported by the DfE regional leads.	February – March 2023
Stage 6	Sponsor Approval	The LA submits preferred sponsor to the RSC, which is taken to the Headteacher Board for potential approval.	April 2023
Stage 7	Implementation, pre-opening.	LA and approved sponsor work together to ensure the school opens as per the specification. This stage includes the approved sponsor undertaking Statutory Consultation prior to any funding agreement being issued.	May 2023

## 8. Implications

### 8.1. Legal

8.1.1. No additional legal commentary is required for this update report. Please refer to the previous detailed paper for legal implications.

### 8.2. Finance

8.2.1. Included in the Education and 14-19 Skills Capital Programme is a named scheme 'New School Shavington', with a total approved budget of £5m. This figure has not changed since the previous report was considered by committee; however, the recent MTFs review and inflation costs exercise will require an uplifted budget allocation for this scheme following the completion of future feasibility tasks.

8.2.2. The proposed new school is currently funded via Section 106 contributions

and Basic Need Grant. Section 106 education funding contributions are those agreed with new housing developers specifically to fund the additional pupil places needed due to new housing development, this is received in stages over many years.

8.2.3. The funding profile is as follows:

- £2.568m Section 106 contributions agreed.
- £2.432m Basic Need

8.2.4. At this stage, a provisional budget of £5 million inclusive of all professional and statutory fees has been allocated to the project. Design development will be commissioned to identify more accurately the costs of implementation of a standard 1 Form of Entry with the built infrastructure to expand to a 2 Form of Entry in the future primary school in line with BB103 requirements and the DfE's standardised design principles.

8.2.5. Revenue funding for schools is provided through the schools' block of the dedicated schools grant (DSG).

8.2.6. The new and growing school will be funded through the schools funding formula in place at the time and in line with the relevant minimum per pupil funding levels.

### **8.3. Policy**

8.3.1. In accordance with the free school presumption process, departmental advice for local authorities and new school proposers issued by the DfE (November 2019), to open a new school, local authorities must follow this prescribed process.

### **8.4. Equality**

8.4.1. A detailed Equality Impact Assessment will be completed and submitted as part of Stage 3 'Specification' of the DfE Free School Presumption process.

### **8.5. Human Resources**

Please see the previous report for implications relating to the new school.

### **8.6. Risk Management**

Please see the previous report for implications relating to the new school.

### **8.7. Rural Communities**

Please see the previous report for implications relating to the new school.

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

8.8.1. Please see the previous report for implications relating to the new school.

## **8.9. Public Health**

8.9.1. Please see the previous report for implications relating to the new school.

## **8.10. Climate Change**

8.10.1. Please see the previous report for implications relating to the new school.

<b>Access to Information</b>	
Contact Officer:	Mark Bayley Head of Service – Achievement and Attainment <a href="mailto:mark.bayley@cheshireeast.gov.uk">mark.bayley@cheshireeast.gov.uk</a>
Appendices:	Appendix 1 – Summary of Feedback Basford East
Background Papers:	<a href="http://moderngov.cheshireeast.gov.uk/ecminutes/documents/s91167/3c.%20School%20capital%20organisation%20-%20Basford%20new%20school%20proposal%20-%20Copy.pdf">http://moderngov.cheshireeast.gov.uk/ecminutes/documents/s91167/3c.%20School%20capital%20organisation%20-%20Basford%20new%20school%20proposal%20-%20Copy.pdf</a>

Services consulted on this report	Name of person consulted	Role of person consulted	Date consulted
Legal	Mandy Withington	Legal team manager	22/7/22
Finance	Sam Oakden	Senior Finance lead	28/7/22
Strategic Programme Board	Full Board meeting	Chaired by Jacky Forster	19/7/22
CLT	Corporate leads		24/8/22
Committee	C&F Committee		19/9/22

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**APPENDIX 1: PROPOSED NEW PRIMARY SCHOOL - BASFORD EAST,  
SHAVINGTON**

**SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK RECEIVED FROM PUBLIC  
CONSULTATION**

**1. Background**

The Basford East development in Basford/Weston area comprises of 715 new houses. This development has been identified in the Local Plan Strategy, (LPS) which was adopted in 2017 for the period 2010-2030. This site plan includes a 1 form of entry Primary School with the built infrastructure to expand to a 2 form of entry in the future.

Cheshire East consistently monitors school places to ensure there are sufficient places for all school age children. An analysis of the latest pupil forecasts has identified the need to provide additional primary school places in Shavington from 2025, this is in response to the increasing pupil population and additional pupils from this new housing development.

This free school presumption process needs to begin now so additional places will be on offer from September 2025.

The new primary school will form part of the community that will include sports facilities and green spaces. This will provide a strong 'heart' to the development and offer the opportunity to create a new place of individual character and community infrastructure.

A phased opening of the school is planned, this will help manage places in the local ~~area~~ line with housing growth and increased pupil numbers.

Where a local authority identifies the need for a new school, they are required to follow the Department for Education (DfE) statutory guidance, this policy is called 'Free School Presumption Process, (November 2019)'. In accordance with this guidance the local authority is required to undertake an informal consultation with neighbouring schools, parents, and key stakeholders to seek feedback on the proposal of the new school.

This document provides an overview of the feedback received during the informal ~~consultation~~ and will be used to help the service to formulate and finalise the specification for the new school.

## 2. Timetable of events

<b><u>Date</u></b>	<b><u>Stage</u></b>	<b><u>Action</u></b>
25 April 2022 – 22 May	Public consultation period begins	A public notice of consultation was issued in the local press.
25 April 2022	4-week Representation Period started	<p>All information made available on the Cheshire East webpages</p> <p>Electronic Survey opened for easy response, or a paper feedback form or direct email available</p> <p>Key stakeholders emailed:</p> <p>Local schools</p> <p>Parents/ carers</p> <p>Diocese</p> <p>Local MP</p> <p>Ward Members</p> <p>Parish and Town Councils</p> <p>Neighbouring local authorities</p>
3 May 2022	Public drop-in Session	A public drop-in session was held in Shavington Village Hall which ran from 8.00am to 5.00pm. Officers for the project were available for the whole day to answer questions and record any feedback.
19 May 2022	Public drop-in session	A public drop-in session was held in Weston Village Church Hall which ran from 1.00pm to 3.00pm. Officers for the project were available for the whole day to answer questions and record any feedback.
23 May 2022 – onwards	Feedback collated, summarised and reports produced.	Feedback and reports presented to DfE, Children and Families Strategic Board Corporate Leadership Team as they progress forward to committee.
January 2023	Publication of specification of new primary school Cheshire East, School Organisation and Capital Team webpages.	TBC
Summer 2023	Publicise the plans for the build of the new primary.	TBC

### 3. Summary of Feedback

This is a summary of the feedback received during the 4-week representation period, Cheshire East Council's response and proposed mitigation measures in response to the comments made. During the 4-week representation period a total of 38 responses were received:

- **30** did support the proposal and left comments.
- **7** did not support the proposal and left comments.
- **1** no view provided.

It should be noted that several respondents may have made more than one comment in their response hence the figures quoted will not necessarily equate back to the respondents' figure.

### 4. Summary of Comments

Suggestions coming forward included:

- Drop off and pick up point/parent parking
- Children's play area close to the school grounds
- Safe road crossings near the school and pedestrian footbridges
- Cycle and walking routes linking the new developments in Basford area
- A full range of recreational facilities for the community and after school clubs

#### 4.1. Comments for the new school

Here are some of the positive comments received regarding the new primary school:

*"A new school will help reduce pupil teacher ratios, provide competition which will raise performance, reduce parental vehicle travel so reducing climate damaging emissions, take pressure off existing schools. It's an investment for the future."*

*"Schools in the area don't have enough places"*

*"Support decision has potential to aid with issue accessing schools and assisting with appropriate class sizes"*

*"This is desperately needed"*

*"There are many children who have to travel quite a distance for school and there are many other children who will be starting school in the next few years. It would be better if it was done sooner"*

#### 4.2. Comments against the new school

*"If this is to cater for the new housing development at Basford east and surrounding areas then this is ok, my biggest concern would how on earth do you propose children and mums are going to get to this location. This is basically Crewe; the village links and community will be severed this resulting in the children now not being able to walk to school. All the Children will be driven to school thus increasing the carbon footprint!! Ludicrous idea."*

*"Not enough facilities. Crewe is constantly building houses but there aren't any shops, facilities, bus, or others being built in Crewe. The houses are unlikely to be affordable as well."*

*"The total area is overdeveloped"*

*"This development will have a harmful impact on the area. The area as well as new housing and the potential for future development, consists of industrial development. The main road that traffic is required to travel along to gain access is already busy. Carrying both freight and traffic to link up with the main dual carriageway. This will increase both noise and smell in the area. This will also impact on the environment. There is inadequate parking by the development. There is inadequate access for foot traffic. The main road is dangerous for young children to walk along. Also other primary schools who do not have full rolls can accommodate the children. We should be seeking to have our primary schools full across the borough before costly building works are undertaken as well as the increase to the budget involving additional staff and teacher's. The scheme needs to be reconsidered."*

#### **4.2.1 Mitigation measures**

The proposal is taking a holistic look at the school site. The new school provision is to encourage pupils to walk to a local school with the aim of reducing traffic in the locality. As part of the design development and planning application process there will be a requirement for a transport assessment and development of a school travel plan to be commissioned. As part of this assessment a full review of the area around the sited school will be included e.g., vehicular, and pedestrian access points, car parking, road safety, encouragement of sustainable modes of transport including cycle and scooter parking, school deliveries and staff parking.

#### **4.3. Comments about facilities at the new school**

*"The facilities within the new school must be comprehensive and include a full range of both recreational and after school activities. All of this needs to cater for the whole of the new community (Basford East on both sides of David Whitby Way and the South Cheshire Growth Village) in addition to Weston & Basford and Crewe Green Parishes."*

#### **4.3.1 Mitigation measures**

The new school will look to ensure that there are sufficient school places for local children, and as part of the proposal Cheshire East Council will encourage the use of the school building in the heart of the development to be used by residents and the wider community.

#### **4.4. Comments about Traffic/ Access/ Car Parking**

*"I can't see parking facilities near the school, for pupil safety there should be somewhere designated as a carpark. Some parents will quite likely have to drive even if they live close by to get to work etc. I would hope the school would also have before and after school provision for working parents."*

*"This development will have a harmful impact on the area. The area as well as new housing and the potential for future development, consists of industrial development. The main road that traffic is required to travel along to gain access is already busy. Carrying both freight and traffic to link up with the main dual carriageway. This will increase both noise and smell in the area. This will also impact on the environment. There is inadequate parking by the development. There is inadequate access for foot traffic. The main road is dangerous for young children to walk along. Also other primary schools who do not have full rolls can accommodate the children. We should be seeking to have our primary schools full across the borough before costly building works are undertaken as well as the increase to the budget involving additional staff and teacher's. The scheme needs to be reconsidered."*



*"I fully appreciate the ongoing need for a new primary school to service this and the other housing developments coming forward in this area, particularly the South Cheshire Growth Village, access along Weston Road to Mere Moss roundabout for HGVs is likely to be restricted. Every primary school in the local area suffers severe congestion in the morning and afternoon as car drivers drop off children and are prepared to block roads whilst they queue up. Many school entrances become 'no-go' areas between 8.30 and 9.30. Police intervention is not consistent, parents are simply not prepared to walk children in David Whitby Way will become the prime link from south Crewe to access the A500 and then onto the M6. If school traffic backs up onto David Whitby Way, a serious safety issue will occur.*

*Driver access provision and controlled parking on the School Site is absolutely essential to prevent problems. A design that makes it convenient to walk or cycle to the school must be looked into. Perhaps a 'ring road' one way access around the school could be implemented. The pedestrian crossing will be essential to provide a access to the new estate on the west side of David Whitby way to the school."*

#### **4.4.1 Mitigation measures**

The proposal is taking a holistic look at the school site. The new school provision is to encourage pupils to walk to a local school with the aim of reducing traffic in the locality. As part of the design development and planning application process there will be a requirement for a transport assessment and development of a School Travel Plan to be commissioned. As part of this assessment a full review of the area around the sited school will be included e.g., vehicular, and pedestrian access points, car parking, road safety, encouragement of sustainable modes of transport including cycle and scooter parking, school deliveries and staff parking.

This summary and report has been sent to planning leads for their consideration of the issues raised.

#### **4.5. Additional Comments**

"All new school constructions should include the provision of a sprinkler system for the safety of staff and children."

#### **4.5.1 Mitigation measures**

Cheshire East Council will comply with all safety recommendations set out in the BB100 school building guidance document. Building Bulletin 100 Design for Fire Safety in Schools, where the DCSF policy states that 'all new schools should have sprinklers installed except for a few low-risk schools. Below is the link to this guidance.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/building-bulletin-100-design-for-fire-safety-in-schools>

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## **Children and Families Committee**

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<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	19 September 2022
<b>Report Title:</b>	Holiday Activity Fund Grant – Open Procurement 2022-2025
<b>Report of:</b>	Deborah Woodcock, Executive Director of Children's Services
<b>Report Reference No:</b>	CF/55/22- 23
<b>Ward(s) Affected:</b>	All

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### **1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1. This report seeks agreement from the Children and Families Committee to move to an open procurement procedure, as set out at Regulation 27 of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015, to spend up to the total amount of 'holiday activity fund' (HAF) grant allocated by the Department for Education (DfE) each financial year.

### **2. Executive Summary**

- 2.1. In October 2021 the government announced further investment over 3 financial years for the holiday activities and food programme, which follows the successful roll out of the programme across England in 2021.
- 2.2. The 2022/23 HAF funding was awarded by the DfE in December 2021. Cheshire East's allocation is £878,640. The funding is expected to be used to support children eligible for benefit-related free school meals (FSM) with healthy food and enriching activities during the Easter, summer and Christmas holidays.
- 2.3. The supplementary estimate for this grant allocation was agreed by Finance Sub-Committee on 2 March 2022 and has now been added to the service budget.
- 2.4. To date, the HAF grant has been awarded via a grant agreement to holiday activity providers. It is proposed that from winter 2022 onwards, this grant is allocated via an open procurement procedure. Procurement for 2023/24 and

2024/25 will be within the grant allocated by the DfE for those financial years, which is expected to be broadly in line with the allocation for this financial year.

### **3. Recommendations**

- 3.1. The Children and Families Committee is recommended to approve the HAF grant to providers to be delivered via the open procedure from the winter programme in 2022 to 2025.
- 3.2. The Children and Families Committee is recommended to delegate authority to the Executive Director, Children's Services for the dispersal of funds and contract awards to providers for the delivery of the holiday activity and food programme up to the allocated HAF grant amount each financial year.
- 3.3. The Children and Families Committee is recommended to receive an annual report on impact and spend against the HAF grant.

### **4. Reasons for Recommendations**

- 4.1. The open procurement procedure will provide Cheshire East Council with increased transparency and control over the annual expenditure against the HAF grant. It will also provide increased assurance and security by way of a contractual agreement between providers and the council, as opposed to grant agreements.

### **5. Other Options Considered**

- 5.1. The council could continue to deliver the grant under a grant agreement. This process is how the grant was delivered in the years 2020/21 and 2021/22.

### **6. Background**

- 6.1. During the pandemic, a number of temporary grants and funding initiatives were introduced in recognition of the hardship this placed upon families and individuals. This included the 'HAF 2021' which ran across England. In Cheshire East, the HAF programme ran during Easter, summer and Christmas holiday periods. The grant supported over 3,000 young people and provided over 50,000 hours of physical and enriching activities.
- 6.2. The DfE has provided £878,640 of funding for 6 weeks of provision over 2022. This will provide 1 week of support in Easter, 4 weeks in summer and 1 week over Christmas. Funding will be allocated as required to the relevant school holiday period, with the actual split to be determined by need. An appropriate administration fee will be included within these costings.
- 6.3. On 27 October 2021 the government announced further investment over 3 financial years for the holiday activities and food programme to councils in England to support FSM young people in 2022 to 2025. This is an extension to the 2021 programme and runs from April 2022 to March 2025.

- 6.4. The HAF programme has the purpose of providing healthy meals and enriching activities for benefit related FSM eligible young people during the Easter, summer and Christmas holidays in 2022, with eligibility for the programme requiring a minimum of 85% of the programme to be delivered to benefit related FSM eligible young people with 15% of the programme available for young people with identified needs by providers/professionals. The funding was available to support clubs in offering comprehensive, inclusive, and accessible offers and to support quality improvements.
- 6.5. The proposed open procurement would not commit the council to expenditure but would provide a way that compliant contracts could be awarded to individual activity providers, subject to legislation and the council's procurement rules, contained within the Constitution.
- 6.6. The procurement will follow an open and transparent procurement procedure. The first stage is the selection process. The selection criteria will be set to ensure a high threshold for quality and cost and will focus on outcomes for children and families.
- 6.7. The new service specification and contract will contain a counteroffer stage to ensure that we achieve best value for money on all future activity applications and therefore ensure compliance with procurement rules and financial regulations. This procurement strategy provides an opportunity to explore a more personalised approach, and to improve choice and value for money.
- 6.8. The estimated aggregate value of the open procurement is such that these services must be procured in accordance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and in compliance with the council's Finance and Contract Procedure Rules. The service has engaged with the council's Legal Services and Corporate Procurement Team in this process.
- 6.9. The HAF programme is project managed within the Children and Families Service. A bi-weekly steering group, with representatives from across the council and partner agencies, is responsible for implementation and progress and impact monitoring of the HAF.

## **7. Implications**

### **7.1. Legal**

- 7.1.1. The HAF has been determined by the Secretary of State for Education in exercise of the powers conferred by section 31 of the Local Government Act 2003. The purpose of the grant is for local authorities to make free places at holiday clubs available in the Easter, summer and Christmas school holidays in 2022.

- 7.1.2. Where services wish to undertake an activity not originally identified in the budget, approval must be sought for a supplementary estimate.
- 7.1.3. Approval of a supplementary revenue estimate requires adherence to the provisions of the Financial Procedure Rules as set out in the Constitution and specifically the provisions of Chapter 3 Part 3 at para 18 shall apply:

#### **Funded from Additional Grants**

Directors may make applications for grants, where the application does not create a financial or any other commitment, in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer. However, if the application is for a grant in excess of £1m, or if any match funding will be required, then CLT must be consulted in advance.

Successful grant applications will require a supplementary estimate to incur spending, in line with the approval limits set out in the table below.

If grant application or receipt commits expenditure outside of the Control Totals then a Virement or Other Supplementary Estimate will also be required.

<b>Amount of grant to be received</b>	<b>Approval Level</b>
Up to and including £100,000	Officers
Between £100,000 and £500,000	Relevant Member of CLT in consultation with Chair of the relevant Committee and Chair of Finance Sub-Committee
£500k and up to £1m	Committee
£1m and above	Council

- 7.1.4. The supplementary estimate for this grant allocation was agreed by Finance Sub-Committee on 2 March 2022 and has now been added to the service budget.

#### **7.2. Finance**

- 7.2.1. Expenditure on the HAF will be fully funded by a government grant of £878,640 in 2022-23. The duration of the scheme is from April 2022 to March 2023. The HAF grant for 2023/24 and 24/25 will be included in Cheshire East's Medium Term Financial Strategy.
- 7.2.2. The council will spend the grant in accordance with the conditions and not exceed the amount advised by the DfE. There will not be any unfunded ongoing commitments as a result of this expenditure.
- 7.2.3. A payment of up to 80% of the total 2022/23 allocation was made in April 2022 following satisfactory receipt of a report to the DfE setting out:
- how the authority's 2022/23 programme will work
  - how many children the authority expects to work with in 2022/23.

- 7.2.4. A payment of up to the remaining 20% of the total 2022/23 allocation will be made in April 2023 following satisfactory submission of key information about the programme.
- 7.2.5. The authority must provide an annual report on the HAF programme to the DfE by 30 June 2023.
- 7.2.6. If the authority fails to comply with any of these conditions, the grant may be reduced, suspended or withheld.
- 7.2.7. Payment information for the following years (2023/24 and 2024/25) has not yet been received from the DfE.

7.3. **Policy**

- 7.3.1. The policy context is the corporate plan. Any policy implications that arise from activities funded by the HAF will be dealt with in an individual report to members or officer decision records.

7.4. **Equality**

- 7.4.1. In accordance with the public sector equality duty, the DfE has had due regard for the potential equalities impacts of this grant.
- 7.4.2. An equality impact assessment has been completed and is available via [Equality Analysis Impact Assessments \(cheshireeast.gov.uk\)](https://cheshireeast.gov.uk/equality-analysis-impact-assessments)
- 7.4.3. We expect that the implementation of the grant will have a positive impact in relation to the protective characteristic of age, particularly for children and young people. It will also support the need to ensure that we have fairer and more resilient communities.

7.5. **Human Resources**

- 7.5.1. Existing staff are being redeployed to administer this grant wherever possible. Reasonable administration costs are funded as part of the grant and we will ensure that the full costs of any additional staffing are offset against the grant.

7.6. **Risk Management**

- 7.6.1. There are several risks associated with providing grants to a high number of individuals and families.
- 7.6.2. As with any welfare payment to vulnerable recipients there is a risk of fraud, as recipients might appear to be eligible when they are not. To help mitigate this risk, the local authority will work with other organisations, including early years settings, schools, and colleges to administer this scheme to help identify vulnerable families, households, and individuals.

7.6.3. Risks are routinely assessed and reported on at the bi-weekly steering group, and remedial action is taken, as required.

**7.7. Rural Communities**

7.7.1. Children and families in rural areas of the council will directly benefit from receipt of the new grant as the activities will be available to across Cheshire East.

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

7.8.1. Children and young people who suffer the greatest inequality in terms of lack of household income will directly benefit from this grant. Cared for children are one of our most vulnerable groups and will continue to benefit from the grant.

**7.9. Public Health**

7.9.1. Poverty poses a threat to the public health of our residents as they are less likely to be able to access the conditions that promote a healthy physical and mental lifestyle. Holiday activities can help people to avoid stress and feel in control, to access experiences and material resources, to adopt and maintain healthy behaviours, and to feel supported by a financial safety net.

**7.10. Climate Change**

7.10.1. There are not expected to be any climate change implications from the HAF. Environmental impacts such as recycling, and waste are considered within grant applications.

<b>Access to Information</b>	
Contact Officer:	Douglas Hubbert, Business Development Manager <a href="mailto:Douglas.hubbert@Cheshireeast.gov.uk">Douglas.hubbert@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>	19 September 2022
<b>Report Title:</b>	Children and Families Q4/ year score card 2021/22
<b>Report of:</b>	Deborah Woodcock, Executive Director of Children's Services
<b>Report Reference No:</b>	CF/23/22-23
<b>Ward(s) Affected:</b>	All Wards

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### **1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1.** To provide Children and Families Committee with an overview of performance against the core indicator set within the 3 directorate areas of children's services. This report covers a range of the corporate objectives under the overarching corporate priority of a fair authority.

### **2. Executive Summary**

- 2.1** This report provides an overview of quarter 4 performance for children and families services together with the statutory reporting year end outturn for the relevant indicators across the children and families service for 2021-22
- 2.2** The committee will note that the format has changed in line with their request which includes comparator data where available and 2020/21 outturn data to provide trend information.

### **3. Recommendations**

- 3.1.** The Children and Families Committee is asked to:
- 3.1.1.** note the performance of children's services for quarter 4.
- 3.1.2.** provide scrutiny in relation to performance of children and families services.

#### **4. Reasons for Recommendations**

- 4.1. 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.

#### **5. Other Options Considered**

- 5.1. Not applicable

#### **6. Background**

- 6.1. This quarterly report provides the committee with an overview of performance across Children's Services. This report relates to quarter 4 of 2021-22 (1 January 2022 – 31 March 2022). This report also provides the details of the reported year end outturn for a range of indicators.
- 6.2. The outcomes framework scorecard contains 51 indicators across the 3 directorate areas within children's services and provides a strategic overview of the core activity with the service areas that demonstrate how we support the children and young people in Cheshire East
- 6.3. The following indicators have been highlighted for consideration

##### **Social Care**

- **1.13** – the % of repeat referrals has continued to reduce which offers an assurance that support provided to families has resulted in lasting positive changes. The rate is also favourable when compared to statistical neighbours and the England position
- **1.14** – assessments completed within 45 days. This has improved compared to the outturn for 2020/2. There will remain a continued focus to ensure that assessment and intervention happen in a timely fashion
- **1.18** – the rate of S47 enquires (child protection investigations) has increased indicating that we are increasingly taking the appropriate multiagency approach when situations arise. Our rate is higher than our statistical neighbour average but lower than the England rate which may suggest that we have increasingly complex individuals that we are supporting.
- **1.24** – the % of child protection conferences for a 2<sup>nd</sup> or subsequent time has reduced significantly. A low rate is an indicator that plans have been effective in addressing the concerns identified and that work has resulted in sustained change. Equally it indicates that where concerns remain the appropriate action is being taken in a timely fashion to commence care proceedings. As an authority we now compare much more favourably with the England average and our statistical neighbours.

- **1.27** – the rate of children in care continues to be in line with the national average but higher than our statistical neighbours. As a corporate parent it is important that these young people are supported by us for the right length of time and in the best homes for them.
- **1.28** – we have worked closely with our colleagues in the NHS to ensure that dental treatment is available for all our cared for children. This remains an ongoing challenge nationally
- **1.34** – the outturn for our NEET care leavers doesn't reflect an average of the quarters as the return requests the EET situation of the relevant individual on or around the relevant birthdate within the reporting year. The outturn is favourable compared to the latest available national and statistical neighbour cohort.

## Education

- **2.1 – 2.13** – the routine inspection of schools by Ofsted only recommenced in September 2021 so whilst the figures reflect the latest position there will be a number of schools that haven't been inspected for a number of years. Quality of provision remains a key partnership approach with our maintained schools and academies.
- **2.21** – rate of EHCP growth as a % of the 0-25 age group continues to increase and is higher than the national average. This places increased pressure to ensure a sufficiency of placements to support individuals to achieve their maximum potential
- **2.26** – timeliness of EHCP completion continues to be a challenge due to increased demand on services albeit the outturn for the reporting year (Jan 2022) shows an overall improvement and compares us favourably with the national average and in line with statistical neighbours

## Early Help and Prevention

- **3.1** – we are supporting increasing numbers of individuals at the early help level with Cheshire East prevention staff leading on 2 out of every 3 cases.
- **3.14 – 3.15** – we continue to have very high levels of eligible individuals accessing the 2,3- and 4-year-old offer ensuring that children are accessing education and support at the earliest opportunity. Our performance substantially exceeds the national picture.
- **3.16** – we met the agreed target criteria for families achieving outcomes under the family focus criteria. This indicator will now monitor the supporting families' criteria from Q1 2022/23
- **3.19** – Cheshire East overall numbers and rates of yr. 12-13 young people NEET continues to be substantially lower than the national picture evidencing that positive outcomes continue to be achieved for the vast majority of young people in the borough

## **7. Consultation and Engagement**

7.1. Not applicable.

## **8. Implications**

### **8.1. Legal**

8.1.1. There are no direct legal implications.

### **8.2. Finance**

8.2.1. Although there are no direct financial implications or changes to the MTFS as a result of this briefing paper, performance measures may be used as an indicator of budget pressures at a service level

### **8.3. Policy**

8.3.1. There are no direct policy implications.

### **8.4. Equality**

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

### **8.5. Human Resources**

8.5.1. There are no direct human resources implications.

### **8.6. Risk Management**

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

### **8.7. Rural Communities**

8.7.1. There are no direct implications for rural communities.

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

8.8.1. 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.

### **8.9. Public Health**

8.9.1. There are no direct implications for public health.

### **8.10. Climate Change**

8.10.1. This report does not impact on climate change.

Contact Officer:	Bev Harding, Business Intelligence Manager <a href="mailto:Bev.Harding@cheshireeast.gov.uk">Bev.Harding@cheshireeast.gov.uk</a>
Appendices:	Children and Families Outcomes Framework Score Card March 2022
Background Papers:	None

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## Children and Families Outcomes Framework Scorecard - March 22

Cheshire East has three overarching Corporate priorities within the Corporate Plan. These are Open, Fair and Green. The majority of Children and Families indicators sit within the "Fair" priorities. The Corporate performance framework is being finalised and the relevant links will be added in due course

Rates are calculated using the 2020 ONS mid year estimate 0-17 of 78,068

Indicator	Indicator name	20/21 outturn	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	21/22 outturn	Benchmark National	Benchmark Stat N'bour	Corporate plan link
1.1	Number of referrals	2273	601	454	495	413	1951			TBC
1.12	Rate of referrals	291.2	77	58.2	63.4	52.9	249.9	494	399	TBC
1.13	Percentage of repeat referrals	16%	18%	15%	13%	11%	15%	21%	20%	TBC
1.14	Percentage of assessments completed within 45 days	74%	78%	68%	83%	74%	78%	88%	91%	TBC
1.15	Number of children in need	1713	1739	1887	1716	1687	1687			TBC
1.16	Rate of children in need	219.4	222.8	241.7	219.8	216.1	216.1	321	271	TBC
1.17	Number of S47 enquiries (cumulative)	955	266	552	850	1123	1123			TBC
1.18	Rate of Children subject to section 47 enquiries (cumulative)	122.3	34.1	70.7	108.9	143.8	143.8	164	130	TBC
1.19	Number of Children subject to an ICPC (cumulative)	319	66	145	253	330	330			TBC
1.2	Rate of Children subject to an ICPC (cumulative)	40.9	8.5	18.6	31.4	42.3	42.3	60	48	TBC
1.21	Number of children with a child protection plan	236	220	234	256	245	245			TBC
1.22	Rate of children with a child protection plan	30.2	28.2	30	32.8	31.4	31.4	41	31	TBC
1.23	% of ICPC within 15 days of S47 enquiry	79%	74%	76%	80%	78%	78%	83%	86%	TBC
1.24	Percentage of children with a second or subsequent child protection (CP) plan (rolling yr)	28%	27%	20%	21%	15%	15%	22%	23%	TBC
1.25	% of children on CP plans reviewed within timescales	93%	93%	96%	94%	92%	88%	93%		TBC
1.26	Number of cared for children	518	527	519	528	522	522			TBC
1.27	Rate of cared for children	66.4	67.5	66.5	67.6	66.9	66.9	67	60	TBC

1.28	Children looked after who had their teeth checked by a dentist in the last 12 months (%)	35%	42%	44%	45%	42%	51%	40%	43%	TBC
1.29	Children looked after who had their annual health assessment (%)	86%	76%	80%	76%	74%	80%	91%	89%	TBC
1.3	% of cared for children placed out of borough and over 20 miles from home address	21%	22%	20%	17%	18%	18%	16%	19%	TBC
1.31	% of cared for children placed over 20 miles from home address (Cheshire East and out of borough)	28%	27%	26%	24%	24%	24%			TBC
1.32	% Children who ceased to be looked after in the period who were adopted (YTD)	17%	9%	7%	9%	9%	9%	10%	12%	TBC
1.33	% Children who ceased to be looked after in the period due to a Special Guardianship Order (YTD)	8%	20%	12%	11%	11%	11%	14%	13%	TBC
1.34	% of care leavers who are not in education, employment or training (aged 19-21) (NEET)	48%	47%	48%	46%	48%	41%	48%	47%	TBC
1.35	% of care leavers who are in suitable accommodation (aged 19-21)	98%	97%	98%	97%	89%	99%	88%	89%	TBC
2.1	Percentage good or outstanding primary schools	92%	Not available	92%	91%	89%	89%	92%	92%	TBC
2.12	Percentage good or outstanding secondary schools	80%	Not available	80%	79%	80%	80%	83%	81%	TBC
2.13	Percentage good or outstanding special schools	80%	Not available	75%	75%	75%	75%	94%	95%	TBC
2.14	Percentage attendance for primary pupils year to date	96%	97%	Not reported for Sept	94%	94%		96%	96%	TBC
2.15	Percentage attendance for secondary pupils year to date	93%	93%	Not reported for Sept	91%	90%		95%	95%	TBC
2.16	Percentage attendance for special school pupils year to date	83%	90%	Not reported for Sept	88%	88%		91%	92%	TBC
2.17	Number of permanent exclusions from Cheshire East Schools (latest term available)	14	6	Not reported for Sept	23	22				TBC
2.17	Current Number of pupils educated at home	457	509	435	457	496	496			TBC
2.19	Current number of children missing from education.	62	58	74	46	64	64			TBC
2.2	Total number with an education, health and care plan (EHCP)	3013	3142	3277	3402	3521	3521			TBC
2.21	Rate of children with an education, health and care plan (EHCP) NB as rate of 0-25 yr old (105,819)	2.8%	3%	3.1%	3.2%	3.3%	3.3%	2.3%		TBC



	Total % Pupils in CEC Maintained/State-funded with SEN Support.									
2.22	DfE / census measure from Jan census	8.7%	8.7%	8.7%	8.7%	9.4%		12.6%		TBC
2.23	Number of children with an EHCP open to social care	286	267	269	264	270				TBC
2.24	Number of children with an EHCP with an EHA	288	301	290	294	277				TBC
2.25	% of requests for Educational Psychologists (EP) advice completed within 6 weeks	59%	98%	89%	86%	26%	74%			TBC
2.26	Special Educational Needs – Education, Health and Care Plans completion within 20 weeks including exceptions (cumulative yr)	65.3%	86%	75%	67%	53%		58%	66%	TBC
2.27	Average number of weeks for EHC Plans to be issued (snap shot at quarter end to which it relates)	19	19.4	20.3	20.9	20.7				TBC
3.1	Current number of open Early Help Assessments/ plans (excluding short breaks)		1031	1105	1099	1158	1158			TBC
3.12	% of all open Early Help Assessments led by Cheshire East Prevention service staff	61%	65%	66%	62%	66%	66%			TBC
3.13	% 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)		20%	29%	28%	32%				TBC
3.14	% eligible children taking up 2 year old offer (termly figure only)		71%	71%	73%	84%		62%		TBC
3.15	% children taking up 3 and 4 year old offer (termly figure only)		93%	93%	95%	97%		88%		TBC
3.16	Number of Families meeting the family focus criteria where outcomes have been successfully concluded (quarterly fig)	318	87	129	103	13	332			TBC
3.17	Number of young people accessing the youth support service		163	2050	1345	1402				TBC
3.18	Number of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) individuals [yr. 12-13]	174	172	71	137	149	149			TBC
3.19	% of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) individuals [yr. 12-13]	2.30%	2.30%	0.95%	1.80%	1.99%	1.99%	2.80%		TBC

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*Working for a brighter future together*

## **Children and Families Committee**

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<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	06 September 2022
<b>Report Title:</b>	Corporate Parenting Committee Annual Report 2021-22
<b>Report of:</b>	Deborah Woodcock, Executive Director of Children's Services
<b>Report Reference No:</b>	CF/21/22- 23
<b>Ward(s) Affected:</b>	All

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### **1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1. The Corporate Parenting Committee Annual Report 2021-22 at Appendix 1 sets out the work of the Committee and progress against the Corporate Parenting Strategy over the past year.
- 1.2. This report supports the work of the committee in achieving the aim in the council's Corporate Plan to 'be the best Corporate Parents to our children in care.'

### **2. Executive Summary**

- 2.1 The Corporate Parenting Committee Annual Report details the progress and achievements over 2021-22 against the five pledges the Council has made to cared for children and care leavers in the Corporate Parenting Strategy.

### **3. Recommendations**

- 3.1. Children and Families Committee is recommended to:
  - Endorse the Corporate Parenting Committee Annual Report 2021-22 as set out at Appendix 1.

### **4. Reasons for Recommendations**

- 4.1. 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.

- 4.2. 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.

## **5. Other Options Considered**

- 5.1. 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.

## **6. Background**

- 6.1. The Corporate Parenting Committee, established in May 2016, is a cross-party advisory committee. The Committee is comprised of twelve cross-party members. Members were appointed on a politically proportionate basis and nominated by the political groups.
- 6.2. 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 holds partners to account for the discharge of their responsibilities.
- 6.3. The Corporate Parenting Committee Annual Report 2021-22 at Appendix 1 sets out the work of the Committee and progress against the Corporate Parenting Strategy over the past year.

## **7. Consultation and Engagement**

- 7.1. 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.

## **8. Implications**

### **8.1. Legal**

- 8.1.1. 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.

- 8.1.2. 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.

## **8.2. Finance**

- 8.2.1. 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.

## **8.3. Policy**

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

## **8.4. Equality**

- 8.4.1. 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.

## **8.5. Human Resources**

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

## **8.6. Risk Management**

- 8.6.1. 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.

## **8.7. Rural Communities**

- 8.7.1. There are no direct implications for rural communities.

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

- 8.8.1. The Corporate Parenting Annual Report, aligned to the Corporate Parenting Strategy, sets out implications for cared for children and young people and priorities for 2021-22.

## 8.9. Public Health

- 8.9.1. 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.

## 8.10. Climate Change

- 8.10.1. There are no climate change implications.

Access to Information	
Contact Officer:	Annemarie Parker Head of Service Cared for Children and Care Leavers <a href="mailto:Annemarie.Parker@cheshireeast.gov.uk">Annemarie.Parker@cheshireeast.gov.uk</a>
Appendices:	Appendix 1 – Corporate Parenting Committee Annual Report 2021-22
Background Papers:	The Corporate Parenting Strategy 2018-21 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

April 2021 – March 2022



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## Foreword

In Cheshire East, we believe caring for our cared for children and care leavers is one of the most important responsibilities we have. Elected members reviewed the new Cared for Children and Care Leaver's Strategy 2022 to 2026 at committee in June 2022 and agreed the 6 new pledges. The pledges within the strategy are ambitious in respect of how we will support and guide our cared for children and young people and our care experienced adults to strive to reach their full potential.



We are committed to ensuring that our children and young people have permanent homes that meet their individual needs locally so that they can stay connected to their families and communities. We have pledged that our children and young people will have the very best educational experiences, be healthy, be safe and prepared for their onward journey to adulthood. We added a new pledge to focus solely on participation (working together with children and young people) to ensure that children and young people are always at the heart of everything we do. Children and young people have told us that the most important thing we can do is listen to them.

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 as we recover from the pandemic- Covid 19. 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 be at the heart of everything we do, and our Shadow Committee, My Voice, has continued to meet throughout the year. 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.

We continue to develop the 'One Plan' which is an action plan we use 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.

In November 2021, we had an Ofsted focussed visit which looked at our arrangements for children in need and those subject to a child protection plan. The feedback and letter from Ofsted recognises the improvements we have made in this area and

helpfully supports us in future developments. This is a great foundation for us to continue in our journey for improvement.

In July 2022, we had a 3-week joint targeted area inspection, this inspection looked at how the partnership worked together to help and protect children at risk of exploitation. We await the formal feedback letter. We do however know that the inspection identified some areas of strength but also some areas where we need improvement, some which will require swift action. These areas require us to look at how we can support our workforce as a single agency and together as a partnership too.

We have continued to develop and embed 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 2021-22. 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

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 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. The terms of reference are included within the [council's constitution](#).

The Corporate Parenting Committee is comprised of twelve cross-party members, currently with an additional associate non-voting member, and council officers in attendance to support agenda items as required. The committee is administered by officers from democratic services. The committee has met on four occasions in 2021-22.

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 includes information on how services are supporting cared for children, young people and care-experienced adults, and provides feedback from external scrutiny, so that members can evaluate the service that is being delivered to ensure we are effectively meeting children and young people's needs. Performance reporting and impact is scrutinised by the committee, along with issues and risks.

The committee oversees the delivery of our cared for children's and care experienced adult strategy and the pledges that we made in June 2022.

## Corporate Parenting Strategy and Pledges

The Corporate Parenting Strategy 2018-21 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 in 2021/22 received a report on progress against the pledges from the strategy. **Four workstream groups** aligned to the pledges were in place to ensure that the strategy was delivered effectively.



The new **Cared for Children and Care Leavers Strategy 2022-26** is being co-produced with children and young people and will be launched in 2022, which will replace the current Corporate Parenting Strategy.

# 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.

### Key achievements this year

- The new Cared for Children and Care Leavers Strategy for 2022-26 has been co-produced with children and young people which sets out our ambitions as corporate parents and what actions we will take to continue to develop our support.

- 99% children and young people participated in their reviews.
- My Voice (our Children in Care Council) and the shadow committee continued to meet and are focused on improving outcomes for children and young people. Our young people have been involved in a range of projects including making cards which were sent by post to all our cared for children to celebrate International Care Day 2022. We have also held an art exhibition where young people contributed a range of artwork, photographs and poems to share their experiences of being cared for. Currently young people are developing a 'coming into care' guide which will be given to children and young people when they become cared for. Our young people have also been involved in interviews for new staff. This is an important part of our recruitment strategy to ensure that we capture the views and opinions of our young people. This is also a good way of young people telling new staff what they want from their social worker.
- Children and young people's views were sought and listened to through the cared for children's survey and care leavers' survey, which has informed our service development.
- The participation team visited more children in their placements to seek their views and wishes. The aim is that the participation team will visit all children and young people when they enter care and share with them all of the ways they can be involved in developing services.



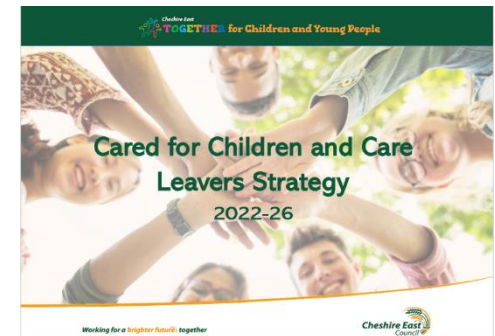
- Young people participated in frontline staff recruitment, particularly interviews.
- Councillors completed monthly visits with frontline safeguarding services which ensured there was councillor oversight of the issues that affect frontline teams.
- Several activities for November Children's Rights Month were ran with the participation team and the care leavers' service. These included photography competitions, a Crystal Maze activity day and a trip to Alton Towers. These activities were run in conjunction with Pure Insight and Just Drop In. Feedback from young people involved in these activities was positive. During the school holidays since February 2021, activity days have also taken place virtually led by a participation worker.

**"Being in care has been amazing. My social worker who I have been with has made sure I live with people I can trust. I feel like people are making good decisions about my future."**

Feedback from a young person in the cared for survey

## Next steps

- Continue to work together with children and young people and enable children to participate in a meaningful way to develop our services and inform practice.
- Stabilise the workforce so that children and young people benefit from enduring relationships with their social worker.
- Work together to ensure that the right children become cared for.
- Launch our Cared for Children and Care Leavers Strategy for 2022-26 and ensure there is effective governance in place for delivering this.
- Provide ongoing training and support to councillors, stakeholders and employees about being the best parents to our cared for children and care leavers.
- Regularly celebrate the achievements of our cared for children through events such as the Star Awards and national care leaver week.
- Continue to work with cared for children and care leavers to change the language we use.



## 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**.

### Key achievements this year

- We have carefully monitored the impact of covid upon children and young people's education and attendance. At the beginning of December 2021, the overall attendance figures for our school-aged children was 91%. As at March 2022, primary attendance was 88%, secondary was 89% and Special schools 88% - we have dedicated specialist attendance officers who have robust systems in place to track and monitor attendance daily and are

able to ensure timely support is in place. Targeted and creative approaches have been delivered to prioritise educational outcomes of our children, including a survey to children and young people about their experiences during the pandemic.

- A new governing board for the virtual school has been established and is chaired by the director of children's social care to increase accountability for children's outcomes through multi-agency governance including representatives from across foster carers, residential care homes, adoption counts, schools and settings.
- 87% of cared for children are in good/outstanding schools
- 100% cared for children and young people had at least one personal education plan in place during the pandemic.
- We have had no permanent exclusions for the past three years.
- We have 18 young people at university, this is our highest number ever, and we are proud and want to ensure that as many of our young people have this opportunity as possible.
- We have supported 7 young people into apprenticeships: 6 external and one within the council.
- We delivered strong support for the Afghanistan resettlement scheme in securing places in schools for all families involved – this has been recognised as best practice by the Home Office.

- Elective home education (EHE) advisors worked with social workers to review the education provided to electively home educated children on child protection or child sexual exploitation plans, offering support to make school applications if home education was not deemed appropriate as part of the plan.



- In the care leavers survey in October and November 2021, 90% of young people told us they know how to access education, employment or training.
- There has been a strong offer of support for post 16 young people through a dedicated virtual school team. The Virtual School have a dedicated Post 16 education advisor that works

across the team with our young people from year 11 up to year 13 to ensure clear post 16 pathways are in place. We work closely with the care leavers team and meet monthly to ensure smooth transitions are in place for those young people from aged 18. We have a dedicated learning mentor and post 16 tutor that have a specific focus on those not in education, employment or training (NEET) to ensure support is in place for re-engagement back into EET.

- Our NEET figures are continuing to show improvement, despite the pandemic, and our current performance for young people aged 16 to 25 is 37% NEET. We are continuing to work to improve this further. The statutory return figures are 29% of 17-18 are NEET and 41% of 19-21 and have a range of targeted support in place to address this including a specialist role via the Journey First project and a dedicated Venture with Confidence programme. Feedback from the participants is extremely positive and the programme has been successful as a pathway to get young people involved in a range of activities and into education, employment, or training. Previous programmes have seen real successes for our young people.
- The Virtual School and Care Leavers' service attended an employer event in November 2021 – this was a virtual event with 46 employers attending. The event enabled those employers who have successfully offered employment and apprenticeship opportunities to care leavers to share their experience. The



impact of this event was that employers have since offered our young people work experience, apprenticeships and careers advice.

- National Apprenticeship Week was celebrated in February 2022, and we used a variety of methods to increase apprenticeship awareness for our care leavers across the council.
- We established a new role of apprenticeship coordinator to support care leavers.

### Next steps

- Develop opportunities for apprenticeships within the council and local businesses. Offer support to care leavers in preparing for and undertaking apprenticeships from our apprenticeship coordinator role.
- Continue to improve the completion rate and quality of personal education plans across all ages from early years to post 16.
- 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 the use of pupil premium.

- Strengthen the voice of children and young people in supporting strategic development across all areas of the virtual school.
- Ensure that agencies providing opportunities for our children and young people are supported and equipped to understand and meet their needs.
- Ensure a robust action plan is in place to reduce NEET and encourage re-engagement opportunities for our care leavers.
- The Virtual School headteachers' report for 2021-22 will be presented in the November committee meeting, for approval. This will provide full details of this academic year with an outline of the impact and achievements of our children and young people.



## 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**.

### Key achievements this year

- We have reduced our cared for population from 539 (end of Q3 2020-21) to 522 end Q4 2021-22 evidencing a whole system approach and shared vision to supporting children and young people to remain with their families where they are safe to do so. This equates to 67 cared for children per 10,000 of the child population within Cheshire East, which is slightly lower than last year. Latest statistical neighbour comparison is 60, the National figure is 67 and the Northwest region is 97.

- Children can remain within their family through bespoke packages of support. Additional resource into edge of care has supported more children to remain in their family where this is safe and appropriate.
- We are continuing to see progress in our vision for children and young people 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 and our Mockingbird constellations. We have increased the number of children living inside the borough: at the end of March 2021, 302 (58%) were placed within Cheshire East and at the end of March 2022 this figure was 321 (61%) of cared for children. Our latest data indicates that we have reduced the number of our children living outside of the boundary and over 20 miles away from 21% last year to 18.6% this year. Nationally the average is 16% and our statistical neighbours are 19%.
- 40% of our cared for children are living with Cheshire East Foster Carers, (this includes connected carers). We are looking to increase this and there has been an active fostering recruitment campaign.
- We are continuing to work to reduce the number of children who live in residential care. In March 2021, we had 40 children living in residential settings, but had reduced this to 31 at the end of March 2022.

- 11 new mainstream fostering households were approved between April 2021 and March 2022.
- The increase in foster carer contacts and referrals has created a net increase of placements of between 17 and 25 (if siblings placed together).
- We have now moved most of the court work from the Child in Need/Child Protection teams to the Cared for Children's teams. The aim of this transfer is to support effective early permanence planning. We have a continued focus on permanence through a weekly panel chaired by heads of service. In the 6 months to end of September 2021, 48% of children who entered care had their plans of permanence endorsed in their second review.
- We have worked in partnership with our regional adoption agency Adoption Counts to achieve permanence for 14 children in 2021/22 through adoption. Another 17 are living in their adoption placements.
- Flude House, one of our bespoke children's homes was inspected by Ofsted and was judged 'Good'.
- The number of children where care orders have been discharged is increasing; in 2020/21, we discharged care orders for eight children and in 2021/22 we have discharged care orders for 18. There are several applications currently before the court so we are hopeful that this number will

significantly increase. This means that children are able to live within their family without the intrusion of the Local Authority where this has been assessed to be in their best interests.

- We have launched 'Together for Fostering', our own fostering recruitment and assessment team.
- We have improved communications and engagement with foster carers with regular newsletters, forums, attendance at gatherings and surveys.
- Foster carers are involved in service developments, and a foster carer is a member of the virtual school governing body.



## Next steps

- Continue to ensure that cared for children and young people can live in good, safe homes locally, as early as possible. Develop a discharge team for children that are already living with their family or parents to reduce the need for care orders and ongoing intervention.
- We will ensure children and young people have opportunities to stay connected to their families and friends in the least restrictive way possible.
- Review all residential placements monthly to ensure that children and young people can have the opportunity to live within a family.
- Develop the No Wrong Door model and principles within Cheshire East which will provide support to young people who are within, or on the edge of, care.
- Increase support to cases where there is a possibility of adoption disruption and prevent these children entering the care system again.
- Further strengthen our communication and engagement with foster carers and involve them in service development.

## 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**.

### Key achievements this year

- In the cared for children's survey conducted in January – March 2021, 87% young people said they had someone to talk to if they had any health concerns.
- 79% care leavers said they feel well informed of how to make good choices regarding their health, and the local services to help them.
- 80% of cared for children have an up-to-date health assessment.
- 85% of cared for children in Cheshire East had an up-to-date review health assessment.
- 100% of young people have health passports by their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.

- For children 5 and under 94% of developmental checks were completed within timescales.
- 97% of immunisations were completed.
- Our dedicated emotional wellbeing service delivers support for young people and their carers.
- As a result of multiple escalations made by the Designated Nurse to NHS England related to difficulties in Cheshire children being able to see a dentist, a dental access pilot was launched across Cheshire and Merseyside. This has been set up and run by NHS England's dental team and represents an opportunity for all our children and young people to access a dentist more easily. A number of dental practices across Cheshire and Merseyside were identified and agreed to see any looked after child referred to them. An electronic referral form was developed and the Designated Nurse acts as a gatekeeper of referrals made within Cheshire East.



## Next steps

- Track and monitor the health needs of our children and young people, including those who are currently living outside of Cheshire East, ensuring their needs are met.
- We will support children and young people in care to have improving emotional mental health and wellbeing.
- We will ensure cared for children and care leavers have their health assessed in a timely way and that assessments are of a good quality and used to inform the care plan.
- Promote the new NHS England dental referral programme to ensure cared for children have access to timely dental health services.
- We will support timely and effective transitions from children's to adults' services.
- Develop an effective tool that can be used to measure health outcomes for cared for children.



## 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.

### Key achievements this year

- We are currently working with 315 young people in the Care Leavers' Service, of whom just over 30 are open to us formally under the 21+ Offer; a further 140 young adults know that they can also access support and advice from us at any time via this provision.
- We are very proud of Cheshire East Council's commitment to our care leavers. The council has covered the £20 cut to Universal Credit for six months from October 2021 for all young adults who receive the benefit and our 16- and 17-year-olds in supported accommodation, a total of 125 young people.

This has been exceptionally well received by our care leavers and Mark Riddell, National Advisor for Care Leavers.

- We have reviewed and enhanced the local offer to care leavers.
- Ignition Panel continues to meet monthly to offer young people choice and involvement in decision making around 16+ and supported accommodation. We continue to find that holding the meeting virtually over Teams has actually increased young people's participation and led to a greater sense of ownership in the decisions that are made.
- We have recommissioned our 16+ supported accommodation offer together with our young people.
- Our successful tenancy ready course has an average of two young people per month completing to secure their B status.
- 98% of our care leavers are in suitable accommodation and we are in touch with these young people. There are four young people who choose not to engage with the service, but we know where they live, and they know they can change their mind if they need support. Our use of emergency accommodation is at an all-time low and when we analysed the last nine cases, we found that in over half of them, the arrangement had suited the young person.
- We have strengthened our practice in relation to 16/17-year-old homeless young people.

- We have reduced our figure for young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) to 34% with a further 3% involved in re-engagement work; these figures are lower than the national average and compare well with our neighbouring authorities. Over the past year, our Apprenticeship Coordinator has increased the number of young people in full-time schemes to 9 but is currently supporting another 28 to become 'apprenticeship ready', many of whom are on the verge of securing a position. We also have 18 Care Leavers at University, the highest figure in recent years.
- Our latest NEET course for young people who have experienced specific difficulties in accessing work or training has been another great success: Cal is starting an apprenticeship with the Youth Service; Allie has an apprenticeship with Motherwell, Will is starting a work placement/apprenticeship at a local Farm; Jack signed up for college and Kelly, who has never been able to engage on the course, is looking at volunteering and attending the next one; Gemma has passed her probation as a Teaching Assistant apprentice at a local school and is now considered 'an integral part of our team'. Finally, James, who has been receiving long term tier 4 treatment for mental health problems is attending college and looking to move into supported accommodation; the hospital have stated on many occasions that our involvement and James attending NEET course have been fundamental in improving his wellbeing and progression.
- We have successfully and proactively been involved in the National Transfer Scheme to bring asylum seeking young people to this area from the south coast. We have developed a music project with the Love Music Trust and a group of musicians from Manchester who were originally refugees themselves.
- Mentoring and wellbeing support to our care leavers has continued to be offered through our partnership with Pure Insight. In April 2021 we increased our funding to Pure Insight in response to demand from our young people. As a result of this additional funding, we were able to ensure that no young person was on a waiting list to access support. Feedback from young people around the support they receive from Pure Insight is overwhelmingly positive and we're incredibly proud of our 4+ year partnership. It represents an essential cornerstone of the Local Offer to our Care Leavers across emotional well-being and psychological support, mentoring and support to young parents. Pure Insight's amazing staff are passionate and authentic and never fail to go the extra mile, something that is so important in engaging young adults who may have good reason to be fearful of the involvement of statutory agencies. It's always hard to put a price on some of these softer outcomes but we're confident that the partnership delivers both outstanding outcomes, and outstanding value.
- Together with Pure Insight, we actively support our young people to become good parents themselves; Amy had a son in

January last year, she is still in a relationship with the father and they are doing well; she is living independently and working. Kathy, who has 2 children is at University and will complete her degree this year; she has a good bond and relationship with her children and has ongoing support with the counsellor. Megan had her daughter in December; both parents are coping really well and she is attending baby groups and is engaging with the health visitor, who has no concerns.



## Next steps

- Involve children in care and care leavers in developing their plans for after care.
- Ensure care leavers are supported to make decisions that affect their lives.
- Understand how children and young people want us to communicate with them and look at ways to develop our digital offer in line with their views.
- Publish and publicise our offer to care leavers in accessible ways, in line with statutory guidance. Ensure that care leavers know what they are legally entitled to and are helped to access support after they leave care.
- Celebrate the achievements of our care leavers during National Care Leavers week and as a matter of routine. One of our Senior PAs regularly collates achievements by our young people during her supervision of team members. Here are just half of those recorded during only two months' work:
  - ❖ Carl has accepted a placement in Crewe with Emerging Futures and his PA has supported him to register with a recruitment agency and complete his CV
  - ❖ Mia has started on the Princes Trust, and she is really enjoying it
  - ❖ Hussein has moved into a shared house with another young person and is loving it!



- ❖ Caleb has done well in his mock exams in college.
- ❖ Jamie had completed his bronze and silver independence packs
- ❖ Ed has completed his Silver Independence packs
- ❖ Kathy has passed her driving test and bought a little Fiat!
- ❖ Nicola is happy working at the cat rescue
- ❖ Adele has just been taken on as an apprentice at a nursery where she was doing a placement.
- ❖ Jemma has completed the Tenancy Ready Course, is registered on Cheshire Home Choice and is now ready to move into her own property.
- ❖ Shameen has passed her theory test
- ❖ Emma finally has her provisional licence
- ❖ Davina has given birth to a daughter and has signed for her own property.
- ❖ Jill and Peter are being stepped down from pre-proceeding to CP.
- ❖ Mohammed has passed his driving test
- ❖ Chien has started his work placement at a nail bar
- ❖ Kevin has nearly finished his four-year apprenticeship and has just signed for his first tenancy.
- ❖ Shane is working with the drug and alcohol service in prison
- ❖ Jake has been engaging with Pure Insight and has been seeing his GP
- ❖ Mary has graduated from the Prince Trust

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*Working for a brighter future together*

## **Children and Families Committee**

**Date of Meeting:** 19 September 2022

**Report Title:** School Organisation: Academisation of Schools:  
**Forward Plan**

**Report of:** Deborah Woodcock, Executive Director of  
Children's Services

**Report Reference No:** CF/25/22- 23

**Ward(s) Affected:** All

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### **Purpose of the report**

This report is presented to committee to allow committee members to be informed of planned schools across the borough who are seeking to move to academy status and join a multi academy trust. The forward plan shows such schools and those that will require committee approval or will be progressed through delegated authority.

There is no change to this paper from the version which was considered at the July committee meeting. No further schools have formally identified themselves for consideration to convert to academy status.

**Note: The 'registration of interest' form for the local authority to initiate a multi-academy trust as per the paper presented at the July meeting has been submitted. An outcome as to whether we have been successful in this initial pilot phase should be known sometime in September.**

### **1. Executive Summary**

- 1.1 At the Children and Families Committee meeting on 12 July 2021 committee approved the delegation, with certain exemptions, for current and future conversions including academy leases and commercial transfer agreements jointly to the Executive Director of Children Services and the Executive Director of Place. Where exemptions apply delegation is not applicable and a full report would be presented to committee.
- 1.2 It was proposed that committee will receive a forward plan at each meeting highlighting conversions due to take place and confirmation of the conversions

that have taken place so that committee is fully informed and can note and scrutinise the academisation process. The forward plan has not been to the last two committees due to the size of the agenda and number of key decisions being taken at these meetings, however, this will be included on the forward plan for all meetings going forward.

- 1.3 A summary report (Appendix 1) provides an update for committee on those schools which have/are planning to convert to an academy so that committee members are kept informed. Note that in the vast majority of cases, schools converting to an academy will be required to join an existing multi-academy trust.

## **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 Recommendation**

- 3.1 The committee has asked to receive a forward plan at each meeting highlighting conversions due to take place and confirmation of the conversions that have taken place.

## **4. Other Options Considered**

- 4.1 The option to not inform committee of academy approvals is not considered appropriate as each academy conversion will have varying levels of risk and the inclusion of a forward plan of pending conversions allows committee members to be kept aware of future changes.
- 4.2 School governing boards apply to the secretary of state to progress with an academy order, 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.
- 4.3 Failure to cooperate could result in the Secretary of State making transfer schemes which would be binding on the council.

## **5. Background Information**

- 5.1 At the C&F committee meeting in July 2021, committee agreed the delegation for academy conversions as below:
  - a. The Executive Director of Children's Services, in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer and Monitoring Officer, has 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.

- b. 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.
  - c. No delegation may be exercised to execute any agreement as set out above where:
    - The school has a deficit of £100k or there is any significant impact on the Medium Term Financial Strategy
    - There are substantive third-party land interests.
      - i. Any public funds are to be reclaimed under section (land contributions)
      - ii. Any current or proposed legal claim has been identified where an indemnity is sought against Cheshire East Council on any matter.
- 5.2 This report presents the status of a range of recent and future conversions so that committee are kept aware of ongoing work in this area. However, it should be noted that proposed conversion dates can be delayed for a variety of reasons.

## **6. Consultation and Engagement**

- 6.1 Appropriate consultation and engagement takes place as part of the academy process with both staff and the local community.

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

### **7.1 Legal**

- 7.1.1 All legal requirements are undertaken and approved ahead of any academy conversion.

### **7.2 Finance**

- 7.2.1 All financial requirements are undertaken and approved ahead of any academy conversion

### **7.3 Policy**

- 7.3.1 The implementation of academy conversion is undertaken in accordance with national legislation as per the various Education Acts

### **7.4 Equality**

- 7.4.1 Not applicable for this report summary

## 7.5 Human Resources

7.5.1 All HR requirements (mainly relating to TUPE arrangements) are undertaken and approved ahead of any academy conversion.

## 7.6 Risk Management

7.6.1 All associated risks are considered by legal, finance and HR as part of managing the academy conversion process.

7.6.2 The implications of the roll out of UNIT 4 /ERP administrative/transactional system have increased levels of risk due to the requirement to establish a new payroll process as part of the transition to academy status. This has generated some delays in conversion dates due to associated services having the capacity to build payroll structures ready for conversion.

## 7.7 Rural Communities

7.7.1 Not applicable for this report summary

## 7.8 Children and Young People/Cared for Children

7.8.1 There is scrutiny of multi academy trusts by the Regional Schools Commissioner to ensure they have capacity to adopt the school. Therefore, assuring that the school joins a strong trust that can ensure outcomes for children and young people continue to improve

## 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.

Access & Authorisation of Information	
Contact Officer:	Mark Bayley Head of Service – Infrastructure and Outcomes <a href="mailto:mark.bayley@cheshireeast.gov.uk">mark.bayley@cheshireeast.gov.uk</a>
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>  Committee paper from 12 July 2021
	<a href="#">Academisation of Schools Report.pdf (cheshireeast.gov.uk)</a>

## APPENDIX 1:

### C&F Committee: School Academisation – Forward Plan

Date of Meeting: 19 September 2022

The following table will be updated ahead C&F Committee meetings 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

NOR : Numbers of Pupils on Roll ( 2021 census)

School	Phase	Status	Core School information	Proposed (P) & Actual (A) Conversion Dates	Commentary
Bosley CofE	Primary	Diocese of Chester:	NoR : 35 – Macc. rural school. Ofsted: 2016: Good	A: 1 <sup>st</sup> September 2021	Converted on time following approval at July C&F Committee.
Audlem St James'	Primary	Diocese of Chester:	NoR : 187 – rural school. Ofsted: 2018: Good	P: 1 <sup>st</sup> November 2021 A: 1 <sup>st</sup> December 2021	Converted following approval at C&F Committee meeting in October
Middlewich High	Secondary	Community Maintained	NoR : 705 Ofsted: 2019: Good Leisure Centre on site.	P: 1 <sup>st</sup> November 2021 A: 1st December 2021	Converted following approval at C&F Committee meeting in October
Christ the King	Primary	Joint Diocesan: Chester & Shrewsbury Diocese.	NoR : 87 Macclesfield Ofsted: 2018: Inadequate	P: 1 <sup>st</sup> November 2021 A: 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2022	No requirement to be considered by Committee. Significant work required to agree suitable trust with both Diocesan.
Elworth Hall School	Primary	Community Maintained	NoR : 201 Sandbach Ofsted: 2022: Requires Improvement	A: 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2022	No requirement to be considered by Committee.
Oakfield Lodge	Secondary	Pupil Referral Unit (those at risk or have been permanently excluded)	NoR : 60 Crewe Ofsted: July 21: Requires Improvement	P: 1 <sup>st</sup> February 2022 A: 1 <sup>st</sup> September 2022	Expected conversion now planned for 1 September. Recs approved at Committee March 23 2022
Wilmslow Group of schools: <i>Proposing to all convert into a multi-academy trust at same time. schools outlined below:</i>	1x Secondary 4 x Primary			Date as yet to be confirmed	Ongoing discussions taking place with schools – will be brought to future Committee for consideration.
Wilmslow High School	Secondary	Community Maintained	NoR: 2130 Ofsted:2019: Good		

			Significant build programme currently in programme		
Styal	Primary	Community Maintained	NoR : 119 Ofsted: 2018: Good Land ownership: National Trust		
Alderley Edge	Primary	Community Maintained	NoR : 203 Ofsted: 2014: Outstanding		
Ashdene	Primary	Community Maintained	NoR : 419 Ofsted: 2019: Outstanding		
Lindow	Primary	Community Maintained	NoR : 210 Ofsted: 2018: Good		
Implications of recent White Paper: Trust expectations	All			N/A	Registration of interest submitted for the local authority to initiate a multi academy trust – outcome expected in September 2022.



## Work Programme – Children and Families Committee – 2022/23

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
	14 Nov 2022	Takeover of Committee by children and young people for November Children's Rights Month							
CF/20/22-23	14 Nov 2022	Business Plan for Crewe Youth Zone	To be informed of arrangements for the opening, operation and governance of the Youth Zone.	Director of Early Help and Prevention	Yes	Yes	Yes		N/A
CF/19/22-23	14 Nov 2022	Cheshire East Safeguarding Children's Partnership Annual Report	To receive the annual report of the Safeguarding Children's Partnership.	Director of Children's Social Care	N/A	No	Yes		N/A
CF/28/22-23	14 Nov 2022	Children and Families Scorecard Q1	To consider key performance measures.	Executive Director Children's Services.	N/A	No	Yes	A council which empowers and cares about people	N/A
CF/22/22-23	14 Nov 2022	Children's Travel Support Review	To consider the independent review of travel support for children and young people and approve the recommended actions with the review.	Director of Education and 14-19 Skills	Yes	Yes	Yes		N/A
CF/24/22-23	14 Nov 2022	Children's Home Sufficiency	To ensure sufficient homes for cared for children and young people within Cheshire East.	Director of Children's Social Care	No	Yes	Yes		N/A
CF/27/22-23	14 Nov 2022	Mid Year Review Financial Report	To receive the second financial review for Children and Families and to note or approve virements and supplementary estimates as required.	Director of Finance and Customer Services (s151 Officer)	N/A	No	Yes	Ensure that there is transparency in all aspects of council decision making	N/A

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/32/22-23	14 Nov 2022	Update on Academisation	To receive an update on the forward plan for academisation.	Director of Education and 14-19 Skills	Yes	Yes	Yes	A council which empowers and cares about people	N/A
CF/29/22-23	14 Nov 2022	Update report on progress against the Mental Health Spotlight Review	To receive an update on progress against the Mental Health Spotlight Review.	Director of Early Help and Prevention	N/A	No	Yes	A council which empowers and cares about people	N/A
CF/18/21-22	16 Jan 2023	Annual Progress Report on the SEND Strategy	To receive the annual progress report on the SEND Strategy.	Director of Education and 14-19 Skills	N/A	No	Yes	A council which empowers and cares about people	N/A
CF/35/22-23	16 Jan 2023	Children and Families Scorecard Q2	To consider key performance measures.	Executive Director Children's Services.	N/A	No	Yes	A council which empowers and cares about people	N/A
CF/33/22-23	16 Jan 2023	MTFS Budget Consultation	To respond to the budget consultation for Children and Families Services.	Director of Finance and Customer Services (s151 Officer)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Ensure that there is transparency in all aspects of council decision making	N/A
CF/34/22-23	16 Jan 2023	Ofsted action plan and progress update	To receive an update on progress against the recommendations from the Ofsted ILACS inspections.	Director of Children's Social Care	N/A	No	Yes	A council which empowers and cares about people	N/A
CF/30/22-23	16 Jan 2023	Report on the Educational Psychology Service	To receive an update on the Educational Psychology Service.	Director of Education and 14-19 Skills	N/A	No	No		N/A
CF/31/22-23	16 Jan 2023	School Catering Review Outcomes	To consider the recommended outcomes from the review of school catering.	Director of Education and 14-19 Skills		Yes	Yes		N/A
CF/36/22-23	16 Jan 2023	Supported Employment Strategy	To approve the Supported Employment Strategy.	Director of Commissioning	Yes	Yes	Yes	A council which empowers and cares about people	N/A

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/56/22-23	16 Jan 2023	The Dingle Primary School - Construction Contract	Authority is sought for the Executive Director of Children's Services to award a construction contract for the expansion of The Dingle Primary School.	Director of Education and 14-19 Skills	TBC	TBC	TBC	Ensure all children have a high quality, enjoyable education that enables them to achieve their full potential	
CF/37/22-23	16 Jan 2023	Update from the Transformation Board	To receive an update on the progress of transformation projects overseen by the Transformation Board.	Executive Director Children's Services.	N/A	No	Yes	A council which empowers and cares about people	N/A
CF/38/22-23	16 Jan 2023	Update on Academisation	To receive an update on the forward plan for academisation.	Director of Education and 14-19 Skills	Yes	Yes	Yes	A council which empowers and cares about people	N/A
CF/18/22-23	13 Feb 2023	Independent Care Review Outcomes	To update Committee on the outcome of the Independent Care Review and implications for services.	Director of Children's Social Care	N/A	No	Yes		N/A
CF/39/22-23	13 Feb 2023	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	Yes	Yes	Yes	A council which empowers and cares about people	N/A
CF/40/22-23	13 Feb 2023	Update on Academisation	To receive an update on the forward plan for academisation.	Director of Education and 14-19 Skills	Yes	Yes	Yes	A council which empowers and cares about people	N/A
CF/44/22-23	20 Mar 2023	12 Month Report on Councillor 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	No	Yes	A council which empowers and cares about people	N/A
CF/45/22-23	20 Mar 2023	Progress on the All Age Carers Strategy	To receive an update on the progress against the All Age Carers Strategy.	Director of Commissioning	N/A	No	Yes	A council which empowers and cares about people	N/A

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/41/22-23	20 Mar 2023	Review of the learning disability and mental health strategy	To review the learning disability and mental health strategy.	Director of Commissioning	Yes	Yes	Yes	A council which empowers and cares about people	N/A
CF/43/22-23	20 Mar 2023	Self-evaluation of Children's Services	To receive the self-evaluation of services which shows the quality and impact of services.	Executive Director Children's Services.	N/A	No	Yes	A council which empowers and cares about people	N/A
CF/42/22-23	20 Mar 2023	Second financial review of 2022/23	To receive the third financial review for Children and Families and to note or approve virements and supplementary estimates as required.	Director of Finance and Customer Services (s151 Officer)	N/A	No	Yes	Ensure that there is transparency in all aspects of council decision making	N/A
CF/46/22-23	20 Mar 2023	Update on Academisation	To receive an update on the forward plan for academisation.	Director of Education and 14-19 Skills	Yes	Yes	Yes	A council which empowers and cares about people	N/A

**CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL****Minutes of a meeting of the Local Authority School Governor Nomination Sub-Committee**

held on Wednesday, 30th March, 2022 in the Committee Suite 1,2 & 3,  
Westfields, Middlewich Road, Sandbach CW11 1HZ

**PRESENT**

Councillor S Carter (Chair)

Councillors M Beanland, D Edwardes and A Harewood

**OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE**

Su Garbutt, Senior Governance Officer, School Governance and Liaison  
Josie Lloyd, Democratic Services Officer

**17 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Hayes.

**18 PUBLIC SPEAKING/OPEN SESSION**

There were no public speakers.

**19 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The following declarations of interest were made in the interest of openness:

Cllr Edwardes declared that he knew both applicants for Bollinbrook CE Primary School and, as he had nominated one of the applicants, would not take part in the vote for this appointment.

Cllr Carter declared that he knew one of the applicants for Bollinbrook CE Primary School.

All members declared that they knew the applicant for Mobberley Church of England Primary School as she was a current Cheshire East Councillor.

**20 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING****RESOLVED:**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 24 November 2021 be agreed as a correct record.

**21 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC****RESOLVED:**

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

## **22 LOCAL AUTHORITY NOMINATIONS TO SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES**

The committee received the report which detailed the current Local Authority Governor vacancies within Cheshire East maintained schools and academies, in the context of vacancies at a national level, and recommended individuals for nomination to identified posts.

It was noted that there were two applicants for the post at Bollinbrook Church of England Primary School and it was agreed that the School Governance team would write to the unsuccessful applicant to advise of an upcoming vacancy.

### **RESOLVED:**

That, having regard to the statutory guidance in making nominations, the following be approved:

Nominations for Appointment:

**BOLLINBROOK CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Andy Jones

**BOLLINGTON CROSS CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Diane Murdoch

**MOBBERLEY CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Cllr Charlotte Leach

**SCHOLAR GREEN PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Debra Foxley-Smith

**SPRINGFIELD SCHOOL**

Michael Cladingbowl

Nominations for Re-appointment:

**BUGLAWTON PRIMARY SCHOOL**

John Whitelock

**LOWER PARK SCHOOL**

Carol Williams

**MARTON AND DISTRICT CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Joe Norris

**PARK LANE SCHOOL**

Tandy Palmes

ST JOHN'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND, SANDBACH HEATH  
Jennifer Cox

**23 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The date of the next meeting was noted to be 8 June 2022.

The meeting commenced at 14.00 and concluded at 14.28

Councillor S Carter (Chair)

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## **CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL**

Minutes of a meeting of the **Corporate Parenting Committee**  
held on Tuesday, 15th March, 2022 in the Committee Suite 1,2 & 3,  
Westfields, Middlewich Road, Sandbach CW11 1HZ

### **PRESENT**

Councillors M Asquith, J Barber, J Buckley, C Bulman, S Handley, S Holland and D Jefferay

### **ALSO PRESENT**

Deborah Woodcock, Executive Director of Children's Services  
Kerry Birtles, Director of Children's Social Care  
Alison Talheth, Interim Head of Fostering  
Shan McParland, Designated Nurse Looked After Children (joined virtually via Microsoft Teams)  
Josie Lloyd, Democratic Services Officer

### **29 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR**

In the absence of the Chair and Vice Chair, the committee appointed Cllr Carol Bulman to chair the meeting.

### **30 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Bailey, Councillor Butterill, Councillor Flavell, Councillor Marren and Councillor Saunders.

### **31 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **32 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Director of Children's Social Care advised the committee that there may have been an inaccuracy with the number of care leavers at university stated in the officer's verbal presentation of the Corporate Parenting Progress Report which was received at the previous meeting and referenced in the minutes. It was agreed that this would be checked and, following the meeting, it was confirmed that the figure of 18 was correct for the age group of 18 – 24 year olds.

### **RESOLVED:**

That the minutes of the previous meeting be agreed as a correct record.

**33 UPDATE FROM THE SHADOW COMMITTEE (VERBAL)**

The committee received a verbal update on the work of the Shadow Committee.

The committee noted the success of a recent art exhibition event where a group of care experienced young people were able to present their work.

**RESOLVED:**

That the update be noted.

**34 CORPORATE PARENTING SCORECARD QUARTER 3**

The committee received the report which set out the performance for Corporate Parenting for quarter 3 of 2021-22 (1 October – 31 December 2021).

A query was raised regarding the percentage of completed health assessments which was reported as 76% in the report. The committee were advised that more health assessments had been completed but were awaiting quality assurance and were therefore not included in the data presented. It was expected that the figure would be higher in the next report.

A further query was raised regarding the scorecard measuring the experience of cared for children and care leavers. The committee were advised that this is measured through a number of mechanisms including participation in reviews, annual surveys and the shadow committee. The service area were actively looking to strengthen how this feedback could be evidenced further and would review the scorecard indicators as part of this.

**RESOLVED:**

That the report be noted.

**35 MAINSTREAM FOSTERING RECRUITMENT AND FOSTER CARE FORTNIGHT UPDATE REPORT**

The committee received the report which provided an update to committee on recruitment activity undertaken by the mainstream fostering service and plans to support Foster Care Fortnight in May 2022.

A suggestion was made for the Fostering Team to contact schools for support with sharing and promoting the communications around fostering and it was agreed that this would be looked into.

**RESOLVED:**

That the report be noted

**36 CORPORATE PARENTING COMMITTEE FORWARD PLAN**

The committee received the report which presented a proposed forward plan of reports for the Corporate Parenting Committee for 2022-23 to support the committee in fulfilling its role as given in its terms of reference.

**RESOLVED:**

That the committee approve the forward plan of reports for the Corporate Parenting Committee for 2022-23.

The meeting commenced at 16:00 and concluded at 17:00

Councillor C Bulman

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## **CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL**

Minutes of a meeting of the **Corporate Parenting Committee**  
held on Tuesday, 28th June, 2022 in the Committee Suite 1,2 & 3, Westfields,  
Middlewich Road, Sandbach CW11 1HZ

### **PRESENT**

Councillor K Flavell (Chair)

Councillors R Bailey, J Buckley, C Bulman, S Handley, S Holland, D Jefferay  
and S Edgar

### **ALSO PRESENT**

Kerry Birtles, Director of Children's Social Care  
Annemarie Parker, Head of Service: Cared for Children and Care Leavers  
Laura Rogerson, Head of Service: Inclusion  
Josie Lloyd, Democratic Services Officer

### **37 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillors Asquith, Barber, Butterill and  
Saunders. Cllr Steven Edgar attended as a substitute.

Cllr Brian Puddicombe attended as a visiting member.

### **38 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **39 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 15 March 2022 be agreed as a  
correct record.

### **40 UPDATE FROM SHADOW COMMITTEE (VERBAL UPDATE)**

The committee received a verbal update on the work of the Shadow  
Committee.

The Cared for Children Survey closed last week and the team were in the  
process of collating the feedback and considering how best to respond in a  
meaningful way.

A number of mobile phone applications were being looked into for development as a mechanism for seeking feedback and engagement from young people.

A query was raised as to whether all Cared for Young People had access to IT to enable them to use the app and it was noted that, at an age appropriate level, IT equipment was provided. A concern was raised regarding safeguarding young people in using technology, particularly Internet access. Assurances were given that foster carers and residential staff were provided with training which included the supervision of Internet access at an age appropriate level. All IT equipment provided by the Council is age appropriately restricted.

A competition was due to be held over the summer to seek suggestions from young people for a new name for Corporate Parenting.

An annual celebration event for the Shadow Committee was due to be held in November and committee members were welcome to attend.

**RESOLVED:**

That the update be noted.

**41 CARED FOR CHILDREN AND CARE LEAVER STRATEGY**

The committee received the report which set out the proposed new Cared for Children and Care Leavers Strategy 2022-26, previously known as the Corporate Parenting Strategy, for Cheshire East to improve outcomes for cared for children and care leavers.

A query was raised regarding figures on page 21 which referred to the 76 completed Care Leaver Surveys and it was requested that these figures be clarified for future reports to state that the percentages refer to those who responded, as opposed to all care leavers.

It was confirmed that there was a typographical error on page 48 which referred to 'prisonisation' and should be 'prioritisation'.

The committee noted the positive impact of the Apprenticeship Coordinator and a request was made for this officer to attend a future meeting.

A concern was raised about endorsing the decision to change the name of the committee before all committee members had attended the Corporate Parenting training. It was therefore agreed that this recommendation would be voted on separately. Assurances were given that further training sessions would be scheduled as soon as possible for those who had been unable to attend, with the aim of all having attended by the next committee meeting in September.

**RESOLVED:**

Unanimously:

1. That the Corporate Parenting Committee endorse the Cared for Children and Care Leavers Strategy 2022-26 which will progress to Children and Families Committee for approval on 11 July 2022.
2. That the pledges in the strategy be taken to full Council on 19 October 2022, where members can pledge their commitments to Cared for Children and Care Leavers.

By majority:

3. That the Corporate Parenting Committee endorse the decision to change the name of our Corporate Parenting Committee. Further recommendations regarding the change of name will be brought to a future committee following consultation with children and young people.

The meeting commenced at 10.00 and concluded at 10.50

Councillor K Flavell (Chair)

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