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## **Corporate Policy Committee**

**13 February 2024**

### **Transfer of Local Enterprise Partnership Functions to Local Authority Control**

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**Report of: Peter Skates, Acting Executive Director Place**

**Report Reference No: CP/64/23-24**

**Ward(s) Affected: All**

#### **Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) functions become the responsibility of Local Authorities from 1st April 2024.
- 1.2 Those functions are currently provided by the Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership (referred to as LEPCo in this report) and this report sets out proposals for how they could be transferred to the Council.
- 1.3 This report supports our corporate priorities of; An open and enabling organisation – *Look at opportunities to bring more income into the Borough* and A thriving and sustainable place – *thriving urban and rural economies with opportunities for all.*

#### **Executive Summary**

- 2.1. This report sets out the changes needed to implement the requirements of Government guidance on Local Enterprise Partnership functions. An options appraisal was undertaken to determine the optimum way of delivering the functions and this report sets out its conclusion and the suggested way forward.
- 2.2. It advises that the Council should increase its shareholding in the LEPCo and that it should be a company which is controlled by the three Councils across Cheshire and Warrington i.e. Cheshire East, Cheshire West and Chester and Warrington Borough Councils.
- 2.3. To ensure that the changed company structure is able to be effective and has the correct governance arrangements, a number of structural changes and agreements should be put in place between the parties.

- 2.4. A new Joint Committee should be formed between the Councils with a new Board appointed alongside the creation of a new Business Advisory Board.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

That Corporate Policy Committee recommend that Council:

1. Agree the retention of the partnership approach between Warrington Borough Council, Cheshire West and Chester Council and Cheshire East Council in respect of sub-regional functions.
2. Agree that Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership (including Marketing Cheshire) functions should continue to be delivered by a Company jointly owned by all three Councils, based on the business case set out in Appendix A.
3. Agree to set up a Joint Committee (JC) by 1 April 2024 with Terms of Reference as set out in Appendix B.
4. Agree that a Cheshire and Warrington Business Advisory Board be created to ensure a continued influential business voice in sub-regional economic strategy and priorities following the end of the Cheshire and Warrington LEP Board. Terms of Reference be agreed by the Joint Committee.
5. That delegated authority be granted to the Director of Growth, in conjunction with the Council's Section 151 Officer and Monitoring Officer, to effect non-material changes to the proposed changes to the Articles of Association of C&W LEP as referenced in Appendix C of this report.
6. Recommend to the Joint Committee that they then make changes to the Articles of Association and that the name of Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership be changed to Enterprise Cheshire and Warrington (ECW).
7. Agree the findings of the due diligence report undertaken and set out in Appendix D, including finances, risks and liabilities that the Council will incur in respect of LEPCo.
8. Recommend to the Joint Committee that when established, one officer from Cheshire East Council, with appropriate corporate skills and experience is appointed as a Director of LEPCo. That the officer is identified through consultation with the Council's Monitoring Officer, Place Director and Section 151 Officer.

9. Agree to enter into a Service Agreement with Cheshire West and Chester Council, Warrington Council and LEPCo on the terms set out in Appendix E, and to delegate final approval of the terms of the Service Agreement to the Director of Governance and Compliance in consultation with the Place Director and S151 Officer.
10. Recommend the Business Plan of the LEPCo to the Joint Committee as set out at Appendix F.
11. Agree that Cheshire East Council should continue to be the Accountable Body for the purposes of funding, and that the Director of Governance and Compliance be authorised to make any necessary changes to the Collaboration Agreement.
12. Agree that the Council's Monitoring Officer be given the authority to make any consequential changes to the Council Constitution to give effect to these recommendations.

## **Background**

3.1 The Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership has supported economic growth across the sub-region since 2011. Over that period it invested almost £250 million into the sub-region, facilitating the Northgate development in Chester, the Congleton Link Road and the Omega development in Warrington; created one of the most successful Enterprise Zones in the country and UK's largest and best invested bioscience campus; helped position Cheshire & Warrington to become the first place in the world to have a decarbonised industrial cluster; and established the Sustainable and Inclusive Growth Commission to advise on how Cheshire and Warrington could become the healthiest most sustainable, inclusive and growing place in the Country.

3.2 In August 2023 the UK Government confirmed that the functions currently carried out by LEPs would become the responsibility of Local Authorities by April 2024. Those functions are set out more fully in Appendix A, but in summary are;

*a. Embedding a strong, independent, and **diverse local business voice** into local democratic institutions.*

*b. Carrying out **strategic economic planning** in partnership with local leaders that clearly articulates their area's economic priorities and sectoral strengths.*

*c. Continuing to **deliver a number of functions [programmes]** on behalf of government departments, shaped by the local business voice where relevant.*

*d. Where appropriate, **helping to broker and support new or deeper devolution deals**, where requested by local partners.*

3.3 The Guidance provides that how those functions should be implemented would be decided locally. However, it sets out that wherever possible local authorities should work together to deliver LEP functions within a 'Functional Economic Area'. A Functional Economic Area is defined as 'the area over which the local economy and its key markets operate' and it requires a population of 500,000+.

3.4 Cheshire East Council has historically delivered these functions through the Cheshire and Warrington LEP, which is set up as a company limited by guarantee. Cheshire East, Cheshire West and Chester and Warrington Councils together with the Chair and Vice-Chair (two business sector persons) each have 20% ownership.

3.5 During Summer 2023, officers considered a number of options for the Councils to deliver LEP functions. These options were evaluated against the backdrop of the importance of delivering Council-led sub-regional economic development and growth as well as ensuring Member oversight and control.

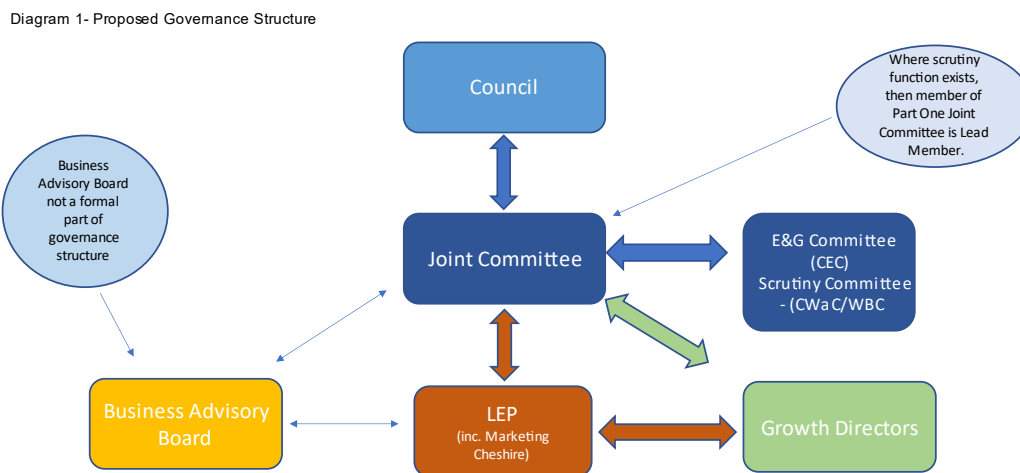
## **Business Case and Options Appraisal**

4.1 The LEP commissioned an external consultant to consider options for the future. Following detailed analysis as set out in the Business Case and Options Appraisal set out in Appendix A, the preferred operating model for Cheshire and Warrington is to transfer full ownership and control of the LEP to the three Cheshire and Warrington Councils i.e. each Local Authority will increase their existing ownership of the Cheshire and Warrington LEP from 20% to c.33% per Council. The business case also includes detail on Marketing Cheshire, a wholly owned subsidiary of the Cheshire and Warrington LEP.

## **Governance**

5.1 To support the jointly owned company structure, officers are recommending a Joint Committee comprised of two members from all three Councils. This will provide joint Council oversight and control of sub-regional economic development work and act as a 'shareholder committee'. The Joint Committee would be a formal committee of the Councils and align to the current governance structure as follows:

Diagram 1: Proposed governance structure



OFFICIAL-SENSITIVE Legal

5.2 The Joint Committee is split into Part One and Part Two business, as set out in the proposed Terms of Reference at Appendix B. For Part One business, one elected Member on the Joint Committee will be responsible for exercising the functions of the shareholder for Cheshire East Council. For Part Two, all three members on the Committee will provide strategic leadership for sub-regional economic growth. This includes acting as the strategic body across economic growth priorities for Cheshire and Warrington, providing a coherent single position on the major economic strategic issues for the sub-region.

5.3 Members of the Committee will be supported by the existing Cheshire and Warrington Growth Directors Group, comprising senior officers from the three Councils and led by the three Council's Growth Directors. This group will act as the operational "client" for LEPCo, ensuring that it delivers the sub-regional priorities agreed by the Joint Committee. Scrutiny oversight will be undertaken through existing Council scrutiny arrangements for Cheshire West and Chester and Warrington Borough Councils, and through the Economy and Growth Committee for Cheshire East Council, as set out in Diagram 1 above.

5.4 It is proposed to create a Business Advisory Board to support the governance structure. The Terms of Reference could be agreed by the Joint Committee and aligned to guidance as set out by Government. To maintain the current practice of excellent business engagement and influence in the sub-regional economic agenda for Cheshire and Warrington, the Chair of the Business Advisory Board could be a non-voting member of the Joint Committee, following a model already adopted in a number of other areas including Liverpool, Manchester and in West and North Yorkshire.

5.5 Scrutiny of the functions would be undertaken by the Economy & Growth Committee, as this is within its terms of reference i.e. the LEPCo will become a local authority controlled company, and not an external body. Finance Sub-Committee may wish to consider what, if any, role they would want to have in providing oversight and will be responsible for appointment to the Joint Committee.

5.6 The current board of C&W LEP comprises the Leaders of the three Councils (or their nominees) and two business persons as Chair and Vice Chair, and eight other business representatives. It is proposed that all current directors will resign by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024. In the new structure, the Councils themselves would retain more control over the company through changes to the Articles, as proposed at Appendix C, and the Councils will exercise that control through the Joint Committee. A new board will need to be appointed to the LEPCo and this could be comprised of officers, including the Chief Executive and Finance Director of LEPCo who have the relevant expertise. It is also recommended that appropriate officers from each Council are appointed to the Board of LEPCo.

5.7 It should be noted that the existing arrangement of the LEP as the sole shareholder of Marketing Cheshire will remain in place – albeit that the LEP will be wholly council-owned. The current board of Marketing Cheshire comprises one councillor from each Council, the Chief Executive and Finance Director from the LEPCo and seven business representatives. No changes are proposed to the Board at this time.

## **Due Diligence**

6.1 As members will note from the due diligence note at Appendix D, the LEPCo is set up as a company limited by guarantee. This structure has ‘Members’ as opposed to ‘Shareholders’ and the three Members will be the Councils. The Council already owns a 20% share of LEPCo, and as its share will increase to 33%, we have considered whether the Council will be taking on additional liabilities/risks as a result. As this is a company limited by guarantee, then the Councils’ liabilities to the LEPCo are limited to £1, and the Members of the LEPCo would have to choose whether to e.g. find additional funding for the company in the event of financial failure. Similarly, as it is a company limited by guarantee there is no distribution of any dividend.

## **Accountable Body**

7.1 The S151 Officer for Cheshire East Council is the Accountable Officer for the Cheshire and Warrington LEP and has to provide an Annual Assurance Statement to Government as part of that role. For the year 2022/23 the assurance framework for the Cheshire and Warrington LEP was found to be ‘satisfactory’. Those matters which were raised were classed as ‘minor’ and will

be completed or no longer be applicable as a result of the restructure of the LEPCo.

7.2 Cheshire East Council entered into a Collaboration Agreement with the LEPCo for the provision of accountable body services. To allow for continuity, we are proposing that this arrangement continue for 2024/25 but the Collaboration Agreement will need updating to allow for the structural changes to the LEPCo.

### **Service Agreement**

8.1 To ensure that the LEPCo and the Councils are clear on expectations and outcomes, we propose that a Service Agreement be put in place between all parties on the terms set out at Appendix E. To allow for negotiation and flexibility between the parties, authority should be delegated to officers to finalise the terms and conditions.

### **Business Plan for the LEPCo**

9.1 The LEPCo will report to the local authorities of Cheshire and Warrington, with the primary goal of supporting the realisation of the agreed sub-regional vision: *"to be the healthiest, most sustainable, inclusive, and growing economy in the UK."*

9.2 Objectives are concentrated at the sub-regional level, complementing the efforts of each individual authority in the following areas:

#### **1. Strategic Economic Planning:**

- Completing and publishing the Cheshire and Warrington Sustainable and Inclusive Economic Plan.
- Updating and publishing new strategic transport and skills plans for Cheshire and Warrington.
- Putting in place a new programme co-ordination and oversight body to ensure the successful delivery of the world's first net zero industrial cluster .
- Supporting elected leaders to put in place a Fair Employment Charter for Cheshire and Warrington.

#### **2. Economic Insight and Delivery:**

- Provide high-quality, forward-thinking evidence and insight to support the work undertaken by the LAs and LEPCo to make Cheshire and Warrington the healthiest, most sustainable, inclusive and growing place in the country
- Development and promotion of the Cheshire Science Corridor as a key national innovation hub.
- Ensure that people have the skills they need to realise the opportunities available to them in Cheshire and Warrington and

that businesses are able to access the people they need including by funding 640 training places for shortage occupations.

- Working with regional partners to ensure that the £260 million available in Life Sciences and Evergreen investment funds supports the development of the Cheshire and Warrington economy as effectively as possible. Support all 84 secondary schools to deliver first class careers education for their students.

### **3. Marketing Cheshire:**

- As the Visit England designated Local Visitor Economy Partnership (LVEP) for Cheshire and Warrington, lead on marketing Cheshire and Warrington as a great place to visit, live, work, invest and study.
- Develop and publish a Destination Management Plan alongside the Strategic and Inclusive Economic Plan.
- Support the creation of a Tourist Business Improvement District (TBID) in the Chester area
- Further strengthen the delivery of visitor information in Cheshire and Warrington but implementing the recommendations of the sub-region's review of visitor information.
- Offering excellent sub-regional communications and PR services.

9.3. A draft Business Plan for 2024/5 is attached at Appendix F. Within the draft Plan are detailed activities for the year and a headline budget (including anticipated budget for 2025/26). This confirms both Teckal compliance and a balanced budget.

9.4 Rural Economy and Rural Communities will remain a focus LEPCo to ensure consistency of approach, and the promotion of key rural issues that need support at local, regional and government level.

9.5 The UK Government's commitment to engaging with economic functional areas is outlined in the Levelling Up White Paper (2022) and subsequent guidance associated with Local Enterprise Partnership transition arrangements in England. By focusing on these functional areas, which represent key sectors and industries, the government aims to optimise regional strengths and capitalise on unique economic potential. Through targeted engagement at scale, policymakers can tailor policies and interventions to address specific challenges and opportunities within each functional area, thereby promoting innovation, productivity, and job creation. This approach of intervention at economic functional areas is a policy shared across the main political parties – with recent Labour Party communications also highlighting the approach, for example, within the 2023 'Renewing our Democracy and Rebuilding our Economy' Commission Report.



## **Consultation and Engagement**

10.1 The proposals set out in this report have not been subject to consultation. There is no requirement to undertake any statutory consultation in relation to the matters contained within this report.

## **Reasons for Recommendations**

11.1 The Options Appraisal is contained in the Business Case set out at Appendix A. The recommended option of increasing the shareholding in the current LEPCo provides an outcome which Officers consider to be the most cost efficient, with the least risk and most speed for the Council.

11.2 The proposed governance solutions offer a shared model for the Councils to continue to deliver effective sub-regional economic development. They provide a formal, democratic-led governance structure in accordance with government guidance as well as clarity on roles and responsibilities.

11.3 Maintaining a strong business voice to support sub-regional priorities is also a local and national priority, and the creation of a Business Advisory Board will support this by ensuring that there is representation by local businesses.

## **Other Options Considered**

12. The options appraisal contained in Appendix A sets out in full the other options considered and reasons for discounting them.

## **Implications and Comments**

### *Monitoring Officer/Legal*

13.1. The legal implications are set out in this report and its appendices, including the summary of due diligence undertaken. Members should note the need for the LEPCo to ensure Teckal compliance, as it will be delivering services direct for the Council without these being tendered. More information on this area is set out in Appendix A, but the use of a Service Agreement and the level of control which the Councils have over the Board will help to support the LEPCo with Teckal compliance. Care will need to be taken to ensure that it does not breach the 20% threshold for services which are being delivered to third parties and this should be monitored by the Board.

13.2. It will be necessary for the Council to ensure that the relationship between the Councils as owners of the LEPCo is clearly set out and documented, through changes to the Articles. This will ensure that the Councils have adequate control over the company and its Board of Directors. This will need

to be agreed by the first meeting of the Joint Committee. The Joint Committee terms of reference provide that all three Councils need to agree certain matters, for example loans or guarantees to be taken out by the LEPCo, or borrowing or raising any money.

13.3. A Joint Committee will need to be set up and serviced, in accordance with the terms of reference set out in Appendix B. The Councils are enabled to set up Joint Committees under Part VI of the Local Government Act 1972 and Part I Chapter 2 of the Local Government Act 2000. Local Authorities are permitted to have non-voting members on their committees, and this will allow for the Chair of the proposed Business Advisory Board to sit on the Joint Committee.

13.4. The proposed Business Advisory Board will not be set up as a committee of the Councils and will not form part of our constitutional arrangements. It will however need to be serviced, with appropriate arrangements made for a lead officer, with a forward plan for both to ensure that the work is both manageable and meaningful.

13.5. A range of Service Level Agreements will also be needed to ensure that LEPCo receives, and pays for, any services it receives from the Councils. This will also help to avoid issues with Teckal compliance as set out in the Business Case.

13.6 The Constitution may also need to be changed to ensure that committee terms of reference and the scheme of delegation are still suitable, given the additional functions which the Council is taking on.

#### *Section 151 Officer/Finance*

14.1. Cheshire East Council is the Accountable Body for the LEP. The recommendations include that Cheshire East should continue to act in an accountable body role under the new structures; consequently this will ensure continuity of financial oversight and assurance, with regard to management of the pre-existing funding streams and associated programmes, as well as for the new arrangements reflecting the more direct role of the local authorities.

14.2 Members will be aware that the existing arrangements include the Enterprise Zones, a long-term initiative whereby the LEP retains business rates from those zones, for reinvestment in economic development activities and projects; and that the local authorities have each provided a £10m loan facility to 'pump-prime' particular projects (with the loans being repayable from future retained business rates generated).

14.3 By far the majority of funding for the LEP comes from Government, either in the form of 'core'-type funding (for LEP management and administration) or for specific programmes of activity. Only a relatively small proportion of funding comes from the local authorities as annual 'subscriptions'; though in addition

any interest earned on grant monies held by Cheshire East is also passed on to the LEP.

14.4 At the end of December 2023 the Government informed local authorities that it would provide core funding of £240,000 in 2024/25 towards the cost of functions undertaken by LEPs until March 2025. This funding will be paid to Cheshire East as the Accountable Body for these functions in Cheshire and Warrington. This is a reduction of £10,000 on the core funding provided to the LEP in 2023/24. Any Government funding beyond 2024/25 will be subject to future Spending Review decisions.

14.5 It should be noted that the Government revenue support of £240,000 is a relatively small part of the 'LEP' company model's total expected income in 2024/25 of £8.845 million, which is made up of: funding from the Departments for Education, Business and Trade and Energy Security and Net Zero to deliver specified programmes; retained business rates via the Enterprise Zones; grants for 'interest on balances' held by Cheshire East as accountable body; and some £30,000 each from the three Councils as 'local authority subscriptions'.

14.6 It should also be noted that with regard to Marketing Cheshire, the funding model is based on around 35% traded services, and that income via trading is a requirement of Local Visitor Economic Partnerships status.

14.7 A draft operating budget for the new Enterprise Cheshire and Warrington company for 2024/25 is shown below. It is worthy of note that this budget does not require any more funding from local authority revenue budgets than is currently provided (the 'LA Grants' line reflects both local authority subscriptions and the passing on of core Government grant funding).

## ECW FIRST DRAFT BUDGET 2024/25 – LEP AND MARKETING CHESHIRE

	LEP	MC	TOTAL
<b>INCOME</b>			
LA Grants	£ 333k	£ 282k	£ 615k
Government Programme Grants	£ 4335k	£ 170k	£4505k
Commercial Income	£ 0k	£ 425k	£ 425k
Enterprise Zone	£ 2500k	£ 200k	£2700k
Interest on balances with bank and Cheshire East	£ 600k	£ 0k	£ 600k
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>£ 7768k</b>	<b>£ 1077k</b>	<b>£8845k</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>			
LEP and MC Running Costs	£ 2501k	£ 1098k	£3599k
EZ Loan Repayments	£ 1427k	£ 0k	£1427k
Programme Expenditure	£ 3459k	£ 0k	£3459k
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>£7387k</b>	<b>£ 1098k</b>	<b>£8485k</b>
<b>SURPLUS / (DEFICIT)</b>	<b>£ 381k</b>	<b>(£ 21k)</b>	<b>£ 360k</b>

14.8 2024/25 will be a transitional year, with a reduced level of Government core funding support. In preparing the business plans and budgets for future years, the new local authority company will need to manage and plan for its activities within budget envelopes created by available funding streams and its use of reserves, as core and project-based funding from Government continues to reduce.

14.9 Further details on the finances of the existing LEP can be found in the annual accounts published on their website:

<https://cheshireandwarrington.com/how-we-work/transparency/finance-and-funding/>

14.10 There is no cost to the Council with regard to increasing its shareholding. With regard to accounting for new local authority-owned company, we will need to determine the extent to which the accounts are consolidated and/ or disclosed in the statutory accounts for Cheshire East (and of Cheshire West & Chester and Warrington Councils) for the 2024/25 year onwards.

#### *Policy*

<b>An open and enabling organisation</b> <i>Ensure there is transparency in our decision making</i>	<b>A thriving and sustainable place</b> <i>A great place for people to live, work and visit</i> <i>Thriving urban and rural economies</i>
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#### *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion*

15. There are no direct equality implications as a result of this report. The services are currently provided by LEPCo – it is proportion of company ownership which is changing.

15.2 In respect of the functions which are transferring to the Council, it will need to ensure that in delivering the functions it undertakes any necessary EIA for the future or ensures that this is undertaken by LEPCo and that LEPCo comply with all equalities duties.

#### *Human Resources*

16.1 The staff will remain the responsibility of LEPCo and will continue to be employed on their existing terms and conditions. However, some harmonisation of HR policies with the Council(s) over time might be helpful, and it will be important to manage any reputational risk around staffing.

16.2 The LEPCo may be considered to be a local authority ‘associated company’ for purposes of equal pay legislation. As part of the due diligence,

work has been undertaken to ensure that there are no equal pay issues which may arise as a result of the increase in shareholding. *Equal pay issues are currently being checked by each Council as C&W LEP Directors are predominantly male.*

### *Risk Management*

17.1. The Council is increasing its shareholding from 20% to 33%, and already has some share of responsibility for the risks of the C&W LEP, which are set out in this report and appendices.

17.2. There is a risk of disputes with the other Councils over the future direction of the company, or that one Council will want to withdraw from the arrangements. These risks can be mitigated by ensuring that they are covered within the Articles and providing that any Council who wishes to withdraw has to indemnify the others against subsequent losses and give one year's notice.

17.3. There is a risk that the company will lose its Teckal compliant status due to trading by Marketing Cheshire. This can be mitigated by close monitoring of their finances. The agreements which we are proposing to put in place, and the changes to the Articles to provide greater control to the Councils, will help to ensure Teckal compliance over the 'control' limb of the Teckal test.

17.4. There is a reputational risk with Council staff over the pay and staffing levels in LEPCo – even if there are not equal pay/discrimination issues. C&W LEP staff earn significantly more than Council staff, although that they do not receive an LGPS pension, and they could be considered to have a greater staff number in their area compared to the Councils.

17.5. There is a risk that the Board of Marketing Cheshire (currently made up of a business owners and councillors) and the shareholders will not agree on the future direction of the business. This can be mitigated by changing the Board of Marketing Cheshire for the future, or collapsing it into the LEPCo, but this is not without reputational risk and will need to be managed sensitively.

17.6. There is a risk that the Chair and Vice Chair of the C&W LEP and other board members do not resign. This could lead to reputational risk as the Councils would have to remove the Chair and Vice-Chair, to access their share of the LEPCo. They would also have to remove the Board to ensure control.

17.7. There is a risk that the representatives on the Business Advisory Board do not feel that they are making a valid contribution or their views are not being considered. This can be mitigated by ensuring a proper appointment process and induction, being clear about the role and responsibilities.

17.8. There is a risk of Government funding and programmes ceasing, but this risk would be in place without the Councils' increasing their share in the LEPCo.

17.9. There is a risk that the Councils do not appropriately manage the LEPCo and leave themselves exposed to financial risks. Whilst in law the Councils' liability is limited to £1, there would be significant reputational risk if the Councils failed to meet the debts of the LEPCo. However this proposal is increasing the level of shareholding and so the Council already has some exposure to this risk. The governance arrangements should provide greater control and focus to help mitigate the risk.

17.10 A risk register is included in the Business Case at Appendix F.

### *Rural Communities*

It is important that the Rural Economy and Rural Communities remain a focus sub regionally to ensure consistency of approach, and the promotion of key rural issues that need support at local, regional and government level. The new LEPCo structure will continue to focus on the opportunities to support Rural Communities, supported by the Joint Shareholder Committee and the local authorities.

### *Children and Young People including Cared for Children, care leavers and Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)*

There are no direct implications for children and young people as a result of this report.

### *Public Health*

There are no direct public health implications but decision making by the Joint Committee and the Board should have regard to the Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

### *Climate Change*

There are no direct climate change implications as a result of this report.

<b>Access to Information</b>	
Contact Officer:	Deborah Upton, Legal Services <a href="mailto:Deborah.upton@cheshireeast.gov.uk">Deborah.upton@cheshireeast.gov.uk</a>
Appendices:	Appendix A: Business Case and Options Appraisal Appendix B: Joint Committee Terms of Reference Appendix C: Proposed changes to the Articles of Association Appendix D: Due diligence report Appendix E: Heads of Terms – service agreement Appendix F: Business Plan
Background Papers:	Government Guidance dated August 2023 and December 2023