

Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

Engagement and our equality duty

Whilst [the Gunning Principles](#) set out the rules for consulting ‘everyone’, additional requirements are in place to avoid discrimination and inequality.

Cheshire East Council is required to comply with the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty. The Equality Act 2010 simplified previous anti-discrimination laws with a single piece of legislation. Within the Act, the Public Sector Equality Duty (Section 149) has three aims. It requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act, by consciously thinking about equality when making decisions (such as in developing policy, delivering services and commissioning from others)
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it, by removing disadvantages, meeting their specific needs, and encouraging their participation in public life
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not

The Equality Duty helps public bodies to deliver their overall objectives for public services, and as such should be approached as a positive opportunity to support good decision-making.

It encourages public bodies to understand how different people will be affected by their activities so that policies and services are appropriate and accessible to all and meet different people’s needs. By understanding the effect of their activities on different people, and how inclusive public services can support and open up people’s opportunities, public bodies are better placed to deliver policies and services that are efficient and effective.

Complying with the Equality Duty may involve treating some people better than others, as far as this is allowed by discrimination law. For example, it may involve providing a service in a way which is appropriate for people who share a protected characteristic, such as providing computer training to all people to help them access information and services.

The Equality Act identifies nine 'protected characteristics' and makes it a legal requirement to make sure that people with these characteristics are protected from discrimination:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnerships
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

Applying the equality duty to engagement

If you are developing a new policy, strategy or programme you may need to carry out an Equality Impact Assessment. You may be able to ascertain the impact of your proposal on different characteristics through desk-based research and learning from similar programmes, but you also need to carry out some primary research and engagement. People with protected characteristics are often described as 'hard to reach' but you will find everyone can be reached – you just need to tailor your approach, so it is accessible for them.

Contacting the [Equality and Diversity mailbox](#) will help you to understand how you can gain insight as to the impacts of your proposals and will ensure that you help the Council to comply with the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Section 1 – Details of the service, service change, decommissioning of the service, strategy, function or procedure

Proposal Title	CEC Transformation.
Date of Assessment	August 2024
Assessment Lead Officer Name	Chris Allman
Directorate/Service	Corporate
Details of the service, service change, decommissioning of the service, strategy, function or procedure.	<p>Transformation Plan Introduction: Cheshire East Council faces its most challenging set of circumstances since it was formed. Financial pressures are driving the need to close at least a £100 million budget gap to ensure financial sustainability and avoid issuing a Section 114 notice. Recent external review and inspections have identified several areas where the organisation requires significant transformation and improvement. At the same time the Council needs to reset its operating model and define its ambitions to help it capitalise on the borough's strengths as well as being responsive to new developments including a new national government.</p> <p>The Council is preparing to launch a Transformation Portfolio to shape and deliver the widespread, fundamental changes it anticipates that it needs to make to respond to these challenges. It has already appointed an external transformation partner, Inner Circle Consulting and collaborated with them to identify a range of opportunities that could help the Council address financial and strategic challenges. It has carried out a readiness assessment of its current capability and capacity to successfully deliver the complex programme of change required. This work has led to the development of a Transformation Plan which is being shared with Corporate Policy Committee on 21st August 2024 and needs to be submitted to the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government by 27th August.</p> <p>The Transformation Portfolio: The Council has developed a Transformation Portfolio to address the challenges it faces. The successful delivery of this plan will result in a radically different organisation that not only achieves financial recovery but also workforce stability, economic growth and improved outcomes for residents. The Transformation</p>

Portfolio will take multiple years to deliver, given the amount of change involved. The Portfolio will initially comprise six programmes each containing a range of projects and other initiatives. It should be noted that the programmes and projects listed form the first part of the work to be delivered. New projects will be scoped and considered for inclusion over the life of the Programme.

1. Workforce – Design and delivery of a new target operating model encompassing staffing, ways of working, capabilities and culture. Projects and initiatives include:
 - a. Target Operating Model
 - b. Agency Staff
 - c. Workforce Productivity
2. Social Care – Projects to transform high-needs, high-care / statutory social care services. Note: Adult Social Care Cost & demand Modelling, ASC Fees & Charging, Reablement and ASC workforce development will all report in but not form part of the Programme. Projects and initiatives include:
 - a. Continuing Healthcare – Adults
 - b. Continuing Healthcare – Children’s
 - c. Pathways for Adulthood / Transitions
 - d. Commissioning & Brokerage
 - e. Learning Disabilities Provision
 - f. Reunification
 - g. Children in Care (Under-10 + Step Down)
 - h. Children’s (CSC) Cost & Demand modelling
3. Place - Projects and ongoing initiatives that will transform the Council’s approach to place-based services, shaping the local economy and use of Council assets. Projects and initiatives include:
 - a. Advertising
 - b. Corporate Landlord
 - c. Asset strategy refresh
 - d. PL4: Automatic Number Plate Recognition enforcement
 - e. Specialist housing

- f. Libraries
- g. Tatton Park
- h. Waste
- i. Alternative Service Delivery Vehicle review
- j. Economic strategy

4. Early Intervention and Prevention - Develop a whole-council response to supporting residents to become more resilient, self-sufficient and avoid crises requiring intensive support. This also aims to manage long-term demand for services. Projects and initiatives include:

- a. Early intervention and prevention
- b. Customer

5. Digital - Digitally enabled projects and programmes that will realise benefits for the Council and residents. Projects and initiatives are to be agreed as part of a prioritisation exercise, but likely to include a broad range of initiatives.

6. Special Projects - Projects that do not fit neatly within any of the above programmes but will deliver important benefits linked to the financial and strategic objectives of the Council. Projects and initiatives include:

- a. Fees & Charges
- b. Third Party Spend
- c. Outbound mail
- d. Grant Funding
- e. Income recovery & debt
- f. Council Tax banding

At this time, due the external deadline faced for the Transformation Plan and the pace at which the work has needed to move, the transformation activity has looked at the overall approach rather than the impacts of proposed programmes and projects. Therefore, no engagement has yet taken place with those groups who share one or more protected characteristic to determine if the projects within the programme

are feasible based upon the needs of those groups. It is acknowledged that this can be done using staff network groups and Equality Impact Assessments will be produced for projects to determine any specific impact on those with protected characteristics. It should also be noted that the programmes and projects listed above form the first part of the work to be delivered. New projects will be scoped and considered for inclusion over the life of the Programme.

Work to date in phase 1 - Opportunity identification and definition:

In March 2024, the transformation approach for the council was approved by Corporate Policy Committee. As part of that report the appointment of a delivery partner to help the council with its transformation journey was approved. Inner Circle, were appointed as the council's transformation partner on the 29th April 2024.

Since May, a blended team consisting of colleagues from Inner Circle and the council have been working together to undertake a full review across all services of the council. The first stage of the transformation process has been to identify those opportunities that offer the greatest value as well as the initial quantification of the resource that will be required to implement those changes. A significant amount of work has been undertaken to identify opportunities for change.

Several deep dives into service areas have also been undertaken to explore the opportunities in more detail, these include:

- Third Party Spend (no non-financial benefits listed)
- Digital First – Potential Benefits include:
 - An improved customer experience, acknowledging that those who are not digitally aware or are digitally excluded may require specialised support and guidance.
- Continuing Healthcare (in both Adults and Children's Services). Potential benefits include:
 - The Council discharging its responsibilities in line with CHC National Framework guidance (adults).
 - People who require services are managed by the appropriate organisation based on their needs.
 - The Council will not funding cases unlawfully
- Preparing for Adulthood / Transitions. Potential benefits include:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Early identification of young people to reduce need and support successful transition ▪ Improved experience for young people and their families through consistent experiences & expectation managements and improved and aligned practice between teams ▪ Maximised independence for young people • Adult Social Care – Learning Disability Support, Commissioning & Brokerage. Potential benefits include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Embedding independence and outcomes improvement for adults with learning disabilities ▪ Improved market management and engagement ▪ Improved provider choice for residents ▪ Improved timeliness of placement finding • Children’s Services – reunification of looked after children to the family <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increase in the number of children returning to live with family or Kinship Carers – as per Stable Homes Build on Love (2023) ▪ Increase life-long relationships for cared for children. ▪ Cultural shift within workforce and improved practice – 'Families First' • Assets <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Longer-term benefits will come from unlocking housing delivery by reducing homelessness and ensuring people are living in the right accommodation for their needs. The financial benefit will be seen in housing, ASC, and children. Given the timescale for the development of new homes, these benefits won’t be realised in the four years. • Economic Development and Growth <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A single articulation of Cheshire East’s vision for the economy, enabling coordinated partnership work and an ability to measure progress towards this. • Early Intervention and Prevention. Potential Benefits include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reduction in fulfilment times and high complexity demand ▪ Addressing a multitude of complex needs through a single point of contact ▪ Reducing pressure and demand for statutory services ▪ Improved relationships between services, 3rd Sector and the public.
--	---

It should be noted that these 'deep dives' do not include a business case, and were done to assess prioritised opportunities to get confidence in the size of benefits. Therefore, although financial and non-financial benefits have been identified which may impact on some protected characteristics (non-financial benefits listed above), there have been no specific learnings about the impact upon those who share one or more protected characteristic as they did not go into this level of research. Individual EIA's will be completed for each new project that goes ahead that will identify this.

Although the primary driver is ensuring the long-term financial sustainability of the Council, the portfolio will also aim to deliver non-financial benefits, linked to the strategic priorities, wherever possible. Further non-financial benefits that have been identified within the projects scoped for delivery are listed below:

- Outcomes for young people with complex needs – Improved experience of children and young people transitioning to adult social care support – promoting greater independence and wellbeing through better support;
- Outcomes for adults with learning disabilities – Improved experience and independence for individuals through most suitable, cost-effective packages of care;
- Improved outcomes for residents – Improved self-sufficiency and reductions in events triggering support from statutory services;
- Accommodation – Develop suitable housing for residents with specific needs, learning from experience and good practice elsewhere; and,
- Economic growth – Improvements in inwards investment and job creation through a shared growth strategy and action plan.

The Council, working with Inner Circle, has developed a Transformation Portfolio to address the challenges it faces. The successful delivery of this plan will result in a radically different organisation that not only achieves financial recovery but also workforce stability, economic growth and improved outcomes for residents. This information has been established. This information is contained within the Transformation Plan which must be provided to government prior to the 27th August 2024.

At the same time the organisation recognised that it did not have experience of delivering the level of change likely required by their situation and challenges. The Council commissioned an organisational

readiness assessment which found that although there was a low readiness for change, the leadership was aware of this and had started to take actions to improve maturity of the organisation. It detailed a set of specific recommendations which have been incorporated within either the mobilisation of the Transformation Portfolio, supporting communication and engagement, or specific projects.

The main aims of the transformation programme are to:

a) Support the council to address the 4-year funding gap of £100m as outlined in the Medium-Term Financial Strategy.

This will be done through the development and implementation of a Transformation Portfolio comprising of programmes, projects and other initiatives, to shape and deliver the widespread, fundamental changes it anticipates that it needs to make to respond to these challenges. The primary driver being the delivery of savings, additional income and cost mitigations. to close the £100 million budget gap over the next four years. Consequently the delivery of financial benefits will be the key measure of success for the programme.

b) Invest in digital technologies to enable services to adopt technology for various activities and processes, using digital capabilities to transform processes, whilst ensuring specialised support and guidance is given to those that need it.

This will be done through a prioritisation exercise on the huge range of projects already underway to identify the optimum blend of initiatives that will deliver maximum benefits for the council and residents. This will provide enabling support to move to new ways of working and a new operating model and be feasible to deliver given the capacity of IT and enabling services. This would allow the council to potentially accelerate new high-value projects to close the budget gap.

c) Develop an organisational workforce that is flexible, ensuring all staff have the necessary skills to work effectively within a transformed council.

This will be done through the design and delivery of a new target operating model encompassing staffing, ways of working, capabilities and culture.

	<p>Why is a Transformation Programme needed?</p> <p>The current financial situation of the council means it has no option but to transform the way it delivers services. The council faces a significant four-year funding gap of £100 million that needs to be addressed to maintain appropriate reserves and balance the budget. Failure to do so will mean that the council will need to issue a S114 Notice.</p> <p>The Council must ensure that it fulfils its statutory duties in relation to the approved budget set by council on the 27th February 2024, the only way to do this is by changing systems and process to achieve the stated savings published within the Medium-Term Financial Strategy.</p> <p>The requirement for a transformation programme has been established through the approval of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy in February 2024, the Section 151 Officer’s Section 25 report, and through the conditions that need to be met as part of the Exceptional Financial Support from the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government where providing a transformation programme is a key requirement by 27th August 2024.</p> <p>The transformation programme will include service redesign, supported (where appropriate) by improved digital capabilities and will be contribute to the savings for the next 5 years as set out in the Medium-Term Financial Strategy.</p>
<p>Who is Affected?</p>	<p>The individual projects and programmes, within the Council-wide transformation portfolio, will affect the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cheshire East Council staff – The transformation programme will establish a target operating model for the council, which will be fundamentally different to the one in place now. When an organisation embarks on transformation of this scale, it can either have a positive or negative impact on culture depending on the approaches taken therefore, it is critical that the transformation programme builds on the culture and behaviour work which has already been embedded into the organisation, and is key to forming cross directorate relationships, ensuring in collaboration, Transformation is integral to the way the Council conducts its business.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents of Cheshire East Council – this includes people of all characteristics who live within Cheshire East and will be affected by changes to the services. • Non-residents who use council services that will change as a part of the transformation plan – People who travel through the area or into the area for work/leisure may be impacted by some of the changes. • Anyone who contacts the council – Invest in digital technologies to transform processes will change the way people contact the council. Those who are not digitally aware or are digitally excluded may require specialised support and guidance. • Partners and Service Providers – Changes in information sharing and integration between council departments and partners. • Businesses owners – The plan could change how a business operates and the customers who visit. • Community Organisations within Cheshire East Council – The plan could change how an organisation operates and the customers who visit. • Members/Councillors – May get increased queries from residents about the changes adding to their workload. <p><i>At this stage, the full detail of all the changes are not fully known. An individual Equality Impact Assessment will be completed for each project / workstream where change is occurring including which protected characteristics may be impacted and how.</i></p> <p>The transformation programme has an aim to improve the experience of all customers when interacting with the council and will seek to ensure that the council recognises and addresses individual needs and/or barriers to accessing services now and in the future.</p>
<p>Links and impact on other services, strategies, functions or procedures.</p>	<p>The transformation programme is one of several elements that need to be progressed in parallel to deliver stability in the council’s financial position, the others being:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Sound day-to-day budget management. b) Monitoring delivery of savings, growth, and income in Medium Term Financial Strategy 2024-28. c) Developing robust proposals (business cases) for Medium Term Financial Strategy 2025-29. d) Recommendations from Local Government Association Corporate Peer Challenge e) Establishment of the independent assurance panel.

The transformation programme also has links to the following areas of work in the council:

Finance:

- Exceptional Financial Support – Transformation Plan to be provided to Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) by 27th August 2024 to secure the requested Exceptional Financial Support of up to £17.6m.
- Medium Term Financial Strategy - support the budget savings of £100m over the next 4 years.
- High-Level Business Cases - HLBC must be an integral part of the transformation programme to ensure that the activities already identified as part of the MTFS are achieved.
- Local Government Association grant - The council received a grant award from the Local Government Association for £105,000 to support the transformation programme which is being used to offset the Phase 1 costs.
- Phase 2 funding – Council, at its meeting on 17th July, approved up to £3m to fund Phase 2 of the transformation programme. This will be funded through existing reserves of the council in the first instance. This funding will need to be replaced either through any initial delivery of in-year savings or through identifying any additional flexible capital receipts that can be used to fund transformation work.
- Section 151 officers’ section 25 report - the Council must transform to create sustainable services.

Note: The transformation programme is in addition to the already established in year spend controls such as Strategic Financial Management Board (SFMB). SFMB provides strategic oversight and challenge for procurement activity, strategic assets, workforce (including recruitment watch and agency contracts) and financial management (including financial reporting and planning).

Policy/Plans

- Cheshire East Council Plan – The principle and themes of the transformation programme are aligned with the council’s vision, priorities and values as outlined in the Corporate Plan 2021-2025 and refreshed Cheshire East Plan 2024/25. The transformation programme seeks to directly support the aims of being an open and enabling organisation, a council which empowers and cares about people, working together with residents and partners, and a thriving and sustainable place.

- Policy and Strategy Framework, with an emphasis on Digital Assurance and Performance Management
- Decision-Making Accountability – The Local Government Association have undertaken a ‘Decision-Making Accountability’ (DMA) review of senior leadership capacity which will provide valuable insight to guide the organisation’s plans for transformation and improvement.
- Corporate Peer Challenge review/report - The Local Government Authority recently assessed the council’s organisational leadership, capacity and structure. The peer challenge report provides valuable insight to guide the organisation’s plans for transformation and improvement.
- Asset Management Plan – Developing the plan to align it to service requirements and dispose of surplus assets. Which in turn can be used to fund transformational activities.

Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion

- Public Sector Equality Duty – At all stages of transformation, consideration is given to the Public Sector Equality Duty under s.149 of the Equality Act 2010 and it is recognised that we must remove or minimise disadvantage and take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing all protected characteristics such as a disability or age.
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy – The transformation programme will be aligned to the Cheshire East Council commitments to within the Strategy.
- The council’s approach to equality and diversity is to put it at the centre of everything we do. It looks to do this by:
 - Working with staff [further details in the [link](#)]:
 - Equality champions – their role is to:
 - *assist their team and service with anything related to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)*
 - *support the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion officer*
 - *share and get involved in opportunities to raise awareness of EDI*
 - *start the conversation with colleagues about EDI*
 - *share best practice and celebrate diversity across the Council and community in Cheshire East*
 - Equality and Diversity staff network groups – including:
 - Black, Asian and minority ethnic staff network

- Differently Abled
- Early Careers Network
- VibranCE
- The Circle
- Women's Staff Network
- Working with the community:
 - Age UK Cheshire East
 - Body Positive
 - Cheshire & Merseyside Adult Gender Identity Collaborative (CMAGIC)
 - Cheshire Race & Equality Centre
 - Disability Information Bureau
 - Disability Positive
 - EASS
 - Flutterbys
 - Healthy Baby & You – One You Cheshire East
 - Maternity Services – East Cheshire NHS Trust
 - Pride of Romani
- Adopting best practise such as from the LGA Transformation Network

Adults, Children and Young People

- SEND work – In Children and Families significant work reviewing SEND services has been undertaken in conjunction with the Department of Education to identify what change is required to ensure long-term financial affordability and sustainability of services for the council.
- Together Strategy – A broader programme of service transformation under the banner of the Together Strategy – a 4-year programme to excellence is part of the MTFs to ensure we are doing different for less with further integration and practice improvement.
- Children’s Services Improvement Plan – Although having separate actions, the transformation plan will support the achievement of the Improvement plan to address the findings from the Ofsted inspection of children’s services which took place in February and March 2024.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Social work practice and commissioned care services – Adults, Health, and Integration have reviewed social work practice and commissioned care services and have their own targeted activities which is separate to the transformation plan.
--	--

<p>How does the service, service change, strategy, function or procedure help the Council meet the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty?</p>	<p>At all stages of transformation, consideration will be given to the Public Sector Equality Duty under s.149 of the Equality Act 2010 and it is recognised that we must remove or minimise disadvantage and take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing all protected characteristics such as a disability or age. Equality, diversity, and inclusion will be at the heart of all plans for change with an Equality Impact Assessment completed alongside a Business Case for all change projects.</p> <p>As part of the development phase, the change will be assessed against the potential impact upon groups / individuals that share one or more protected characteristic including undertaking desktop research along with engaging with groups that represent / support individuals that share one or more protected characteristics to understand their needs and how the proposals could best support these potentially affected individuals.</p> <p>The following examples demonstrate how the council is meeting the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty:</p> <p>Decision-making:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equality Impact Assessments will be completed at key stages of the transformation programme as well as for individual projects / workstreams and will ensure that the impacts of change, on both internal and external stakeholders, will form an essential part of decision making. • The Local Government Association have undertaken a 'Decision-Making Accountability' (DMA) review of senior leadership capacity which will provide valuable insight to guide the organisation's plans for transformation and improvement. This will help to stabilise the organisation ensuring that there is buy-in from all levels of the organisation to contribute to the success of the overall programme. <p>Internal and external policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council will have an external assurance review on its financial management policies. • The principle and themes of the transformation programme are aligned with the council's vision, priorities and values as outlined in the Corporate Plan • The Policy and Strategy Framework, with an emphasis on Digital Assurance and Performance Management will be implemented.
--	---

- The transformation programme will be aligned to the Cheshire East Council commitments to within the [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy](#).

Procuring goods and services:

- As part of the first phase of the transformation programme, a full review of procurement, commissioning and contract management has taken place with a variety of actions having been agreed – both with existing contracts as well as supplies and services to be procured and contracts that are due to end.

The services they provide:

- The financial situation of the council means that it has no option but to transform the way it delivers its services. Reviews across Social Care, Place, Corporate Services and Cross-cutting areas such as workforce and procurement have taken place, including benchmarking services against comparator authorities, to identify opportunities for the next four years. The transformation programme will facilitate deeper and broader service redesign, supported where appropriate by the investment in enhanced digital capabilities (whilst ensuring specialised support and guidance is given to those that need it).
- The transformation programme has an aim to improve the experience of all customers when interacting with the council and will seek to ensure that the council recognises and addresses individual needs and/or barriers to accessing services now and in the future. The council will do this by implementing as part of the Financial Strategy Management Board control and review panels to ensure best value and accessibility for all Cheshire East residents.

Recruitment, promotion and performance management of employees:

- Organisational structures and operating models will be reviewed to establish a new target operating model, which will be fundamentally different to the one in place now. The council will develop an organisational workforce that is flexible, ensuring all staff have the necessary skills to work effectively within a transformed council.
- The Policy and Strategy Framework will be implemented, with an emphasis on Performance Management, linked directly to the Cheshire East Plan 2025-29 and the MTFs, that includes a list of

	key deliverable actions for the year 2024/25 and clarification of the strategy structure of vision, aims and priorities.
--	--

Section 2- Information – What do you know?

What do you know?	What information (qualitative and quantitative) and/or research have you used to commission/change/decommission the service, strategy, function, or procedure?
Information you used	<p>Research from a joint Charter Institute of Management Accounts and the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy study identified that transformational change and medium to long term financial sustainability are inseparable, stating:</p> <p><i>“Transformation involves a significant change in approach to an organisation’s operating model, technology, process and/or service delivery, in order to deliver better outcomes and improve efficiency.”</i></p> <p>It is therefore important that the future transformation plan is done with this in mind. This will result in effective change management whilst building and maintaining relationships with external partners and developing new financial and staffing structures. Additional capacity and capability will be needed in order for the required savings to be achieved in a timely manner, assessment is under way by Inner Circle as to the likely level of the resource that will be needed to deliver required changes.</p> <p>The first step in the transformation programme was to assess and priorities opportunities. This involved benchmarking performance, interviewing leaders and budget holders, analysing specific service data, current programmes of work and spend. This resulted in a list of key opportunities by service and cross-cutting themes. Following on from this, more in depth reviews of top opportunities identified by the Transformation Board, (a decision-making Board who meet weekly), took place to test feasibility, impact and outcomes. This resulted in providing key opportunities with evidence-based assumptions on costs, scope, key deliverables and timings.</p> <p>Alongside this work, organisational readiness was looked at. This involved a review of capabilities and existing capacity for transformation, designing a baseline and reporting metrics to support Programme Management Office function and interview key stakeholders on transformation requirements. This resulted in a co-designed organisation readiness assessment and mobilisation of Programme Management Office functions.</p>

	<p>Based on all the research, a transformation plan is being developed which includes short, medium and long-term programmes of activity to deliver the financial recovery, the anticipated resources, capabilities and investment required to achieve them and the key risks and issues relating to delivery. The transformation plan will be submitted to can be submitted to the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government by 27th August 2024.</p> <p>The Transformation plan is being developed alongside a new Cheshire East Corporate Plan for 2025 and beyond which recognises that that promoting equality, diversity and inclusion will improve public services for everyone, with the aim of reducing inequalities, promoting fairness and opportunity for all and supporting our most vulnerable residents.</p>
<p>Gaps in your Information</p>	<p>At this stage, the list of programmes and initial list of projects, has been established. However, the various changes, that are to be made as a result of these hasn't been fully established. Whilst some of the changes will be business as usual, many will be change activity and will undertake a full Business Case including an Equality Impact Assessment.</p> <p>In developing the respective Business Cases and Equality Impact Assessments, desktop research will be undertaken along with engagement with groups that represent individuals with protected characteristics where it has been identified that they may be impacted by the proposed change.</p> <p>By doing so, at each stage of development, the Council can demonstrate that it is monitoring and measuring the improvements made in the context of the obligations under the Equality Act (2010) and our Public Sector Equality Duty.</p>

3. What did people tell you?

<p>What did people tell you</p>	<p>What consultation and engagement activities have you already undertaken and what did people tell you? Is there any feedback from other local and/or external regional/national consultations that could be included in your assessment?</p>
--	---

<p>Details and dates of the consultation/s and/or engagement activities</p>	<p>The critical financial position currently facing Cheshire East Council and the urgent need to transform the organisation has meant there the Council has had to move quickly. Inner Circle (the transformation delivery partner) have conducted a thorough review of the organisation, including our services, financial positioning and processes. They have spoken to senior leaders and asked challenging questions alongside making numerous information requests, so they can better understand the current position of the council and its ability to meet the challenges of any transformation programme. Inner Circle are now using that information to develop a plan to shape our transformation and improvement journey that must be submitted to the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government by the 27th August as part of the criteria for exceptional financial support. Engagement to date includes:</p> <p>To date, the following internal engagement has taken place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Monthly – Trade Union Briefings [Virtual] <i>To update and allow feedback from the respective Trade Unions on the proposals as they are developed.</i> ▪ June 2024 – Deep Dive sessions with key stakeholders [Face to Face and Virtual] <i>These included sessions led by Transformation Partner Inner Circle with stakeholders from early intervention and prevention, strategic asset management and economic growth, becoming a digital first organisation, adult social care commissioning and brokerage and children services placement optimisation.</i> ▪ 11/07/2024 – People Managers [Virtual] <i>To communicate the roles and responsibilities as well as outlining the pace of change required to support financial stability whilst providing the opportunity for members to have visibility and engagement regarding the proposals, including Q&A.</i> • Members <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 09/07/2024 & 10/07/2024 – All Member Briefing [Face to Face and Virtual] <i>To connect, inform and update the workforce on the transformation programme and potential changes ahead, including Q&A.</i> <p>In addition, regular, transparent communications have been sent to all staff to outline the challenges along with progress as well as what is expected to happen and when.</p> <p>As yet, wider consultation hasn't taken place with various stakeholders who share one or more protected characteristic.</p>
--	---

	<p>Furthermore, in September 2024, a series of 'All staff transformation briefing events' are planned both in-person and online. This will include outlining the high-level plan whilst allowing discussions and feedback from colleagues.</p>
<p>Gaps in consultation and engagement feedback</p>	<p>Due to how quickly the transformation programme needs to progress, there has not been an all staff or public consultation on the programme.</p> <p>The communications that have been sent to all staff to bring them on the journey may not have reached those currently off work, i.e., maternity, long term sick.</p> <p>During the implementation phase, when potential changes are to be designed and ultimately implemented, specific engagement with various stakeholders that represent groups or stakeholders who share one or more protected characteristic will be undertaken. This will potentially include representatives from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internally – within Cheshire East Council including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Equality champions ○ Equality and Diversity staff network groups - including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Black, Asian and minority ethnic staff network ▪ Differently Abled ▪ Early Careers Network ▪ VibranCE ▪ The Circle ▪ Women's Staff Network • Externally – working with the community: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Age UK Cheshire East ○ Body Positive ○ Cheshire & Merseyside Adult Gender Identity Collaborative (CMAGIC) ○ Cheshire Race & Equality Centre ○ Disability Information Bureau ○ Disability Positive ○ EASS

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Flutterbys ○ Healthy Baby & You – One You Cheshire East ○ Maternity Services – East Cheshire NHS Trust ○ Pride of Romani
--	---

4. Review of information, consultation feedback and equality analysis

Protected characteristics groups from the Equality Act 2010	What do you know? Summary of information used to inform the proposal	What did people tell you? Summary of customer and/or staff feedback	What does this mean? Impacts identified from the information and feedback (actual and potential). These can be either positive, negative or have no impact.
Age	To be determined once engagement has taken place on individual projects/programmes. EIAs to be produced for all individual business cases and service changes covered by the Transformation Programme.	Specific engagement has yet to take place with the specific characteristic. <i>For changes anticipated to impact this characteristic, specific engagement may be undertaken with:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Age UK Cheshire East ● Early Career Staff Network Group 	No impact anticipated for the delivery of the new Target Operating Model. Impact of any service redesigns is not yet known.
Disability	To be determined once engagement has taken place on individual projects/programmes. EIAs to be produced for all individual business cases and service changes covered by the Transformation Programme.	Specific engagement has yet to take place with the specific characteristic. <i>For changes anticipated to impact this characteristic, specific engagement may be undertaken with:</i>	Impact anticipated for the delivery of the new Target Operating Model is not yet known. Impact of any service redesigns is not yet known.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Disability Information Bureau</i> • <i>Disability Positive</i> • <i>Differently Abled Staff Network Group</i> 	
Gender reassignment	To be determined once engagement has taken place on individual projects/programmes. EIAs to be produced for all individual business cases and service changes covered by the Transformation Programme.	<p>Specific engagement has yet to take place with the specific characteristic.</p> <p><i>For changes anticipated to impact this characteristic, specific engagement may be undertaken with:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Cheshire & Merseyside Adult Gender Identity Collaborative (CMAGIC)</i> • <i>Flutterbys</i> • <i>VibrantCE Staff Network Group</i> 	<p>No impact anticipated for the delivery of the new Target Operating Model.</p> <p>Impact of any service redesigns is not yet known.</p>
Pregnancy and maternity	<p>Specific engagement to be take place for TOM for those who are pregnant/on maternity leave.</p> <p>To be determined once engagement has taken place on individual projects/programmes. EIAs to be produced for all individual business cases and service changes covered by the Transformation Programme</p>	<p>Specific engagement has yet to take place with the specific characteristic.</p> <p><i>For changes anticipated to impact this characteristic, specific engagement may be undertaken with:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Healthy Baby & You – One You Cheshire East</i> • <i>Maternity Services – East Cheshire NHS Trust</i> 	<p>Impact anticipated for the delivery of the new Target Operating Model is not yet known.</p> <p>Impact of any service redesigns is not yet known.</p>
Race/ethnicity	To be determined once engagement has taken place on individual projects/programmes. EIAs to be produced for all individual business	Specific engagement has yet to take place with the specific characteristic.	No impact anticipated for the delivery of the new Target Operating Model – EIAs to be produced for all individual business cases and service

	cases and service changes covered by the Transformation Programme.	<p><i>For changes anticipated to impact this characteristic, specific engagement may be undertaken with:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cheshire Race & Equality Centre • Pride of Romani 	changes covered by the Transformation Programme
Religion or belief	To be determined once engagement has taken place on individual projects/programmes. EIAs to be produced for all individual business cases and service changes covered by the Transformation Programme.	<p>Specific engagement has yet to take place with the specific characteristic.</p> <p><i>For changes anticipated to impact this characteristic, specific engagement may be undertaken with:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EASS 	No impact anticipated for the delivery of the new Target Operating Model – EIAs to be produced for all individual business cases and service changes covered by the Transformation Programme
Sex	To be determined once engagement has taken place on individual projects/programmes. EIAs to be produced for all individual business cases and service changes covered by the Transformation Programme.	<p>Specific engagement has yet to take place with the specific characteristic.</p> <p><i>For changes anticipated to impact this characteristic, specific engagement may be undertaken with:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Womens Staff Network Group • The Circle Staff Network Group 	No impact anticipated for the delivery of the new Target Operating Model – EIAs to be produced for all individual business cases and service changes covered by the Transformation Programme
Sexual orientation	To be determined once engagement has taken place on individual projects/programmes. EIAs to be produced for all individual business cases and service changes covered by the Transformation Programme.	<p>Specific engagement has yet to take place with the specific characteristic.</p> <p><i>For changes anticipated to impact this characteristic, specific engagement may be undertaken with:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Body Positive • VibranCE Staff Network Group 	No impact anticipated for the delivery of the new Target Operating Model – EIAs to be produced for all individual business cases and service changes covered by the Transformation Programme

Marriage and civil partnership	To be determined once engagement has taken place on individual projects/programmes. EIAs to be produced for all individual business cases and service changes covered by the Transformation Programme.	Specific engagement has yet to take place with the specific characteristic.	No impact anticipated for the delivery of the new Target Operating Model – EIAs to be produced for all individual business cases and service changes covered by the Transformation Programme

5. Justification, Mitigation and Actions

Mitigation	What can you do?
<p>Please provide justification for the proposal if negative impacts have been identified?</p> <p>Are there any actions that could be undertaken to mitigate, reduce or remove negative impacts?</p> <p>Have all available options been explored? Please include details of alternative options and why they couldn't be considered?</p> <p>Please include details of how positive impacts could be further enhanced, if possible?</p>	<p>Actions to mitigate any negative impacts or further enhance positive impacts</p> <p>The council, to achieve the required savings identified within the MTFs, must transform how it currently delivers its services. It is not a viable option to do nothing. The only option, to potentially avoid the need to issue a section 114 notice, is to do the transformation programme as quickly and efficiently as possible and bring in additional capacity and expertise to support it.</p> <p>The transformation programme will include a new target operating model, which will be fundamentally different to the one in place now. A new operating model will articulate how the organisation will run at a future point in time when the transformation from the 'As-Is' state to the 'To-Be' has been achieved. This will likely impact on clients, customers, residents and staff in various ways – including lots in a positive way.</p>

The programme has an aim to improve the experience of all customers when interacting with the council – this will involve customers self-serving via the website and reduce staff time spent dealing with some queries.

Government commissioners advised that organisational change capacity is a key ingredient to support the council in delivering transformation to achieve medium to long term change that will support achievement of savings and also, in the event of a section 114 notice being issued, organisational change capacity is also essential to deliver necessary actions arising from interventions.

In implementing the Transformation Portfolio, the following options were considered:

- Do nothing
 - The impact of this is: Without the change required to create sustainable finances the council may be unable to fulfil its statutory obligations.
 - The associated risk is that the Council would enter s114 and have its powers taken away.
- Transformation, resourced in house
 - The impact of this is: Reduced costs associated with procurement of a delivery partner, development, and ownership within existing resource.
 - The associated risk is that existing capacity and/or capability is insufficient to deliver the transformation programme resulting in the required level of savings not being achieved.
- Transformation resourced completely externally
 - The impact of this is: Rapid deployment of resources to achieve savings, up-front cost required and ongoing costs.
 - The associated risk is that this option is not financially sustainable in the long term.

	<p>In developing the individual projects and programmes that will make up the Transformation Portfolio, a suite of options will be considered. Some of this work is already underway.</p>
--	---

6. Monitoring and Review -

Monitoring and review	How will the impact of the service, service change, decommissioning of the service, strategy, function or procedure be monitored? How will actions to mitigate negative impacts be monitored? Date for review of the EIA
Details of monitoring activities	<p>Key risks, including those that impact upon individuals that share one or more protected characteristic, will be managed initially at a project level. These will be identified, analysed and monitored through the development of the Business Case along with the completion of an Equality Impact Assessment. These will be completed by the Project Teams.</p> <p>Through the life of the project, all risks and issues will be monitored regularly via Project Boards with escalation to the respective Programme Board via the Project Manager and/or Project Sponsor to the respective Programme Director to provide guidance and/or make decisions.</p> <p>The Council welcomes feedback from the general public because their comments can contain valuable information to help to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improve the standard of services delivered • put things right when they have gone wrong • learn from mistakes <p>The Council is committed to equal opportunities and our aim is to make our Corporate Compliments, Suggestions and Complaints policy easy to use and accessible to all customers. It will be widely publicised, available in a variety of formats on request, and customer leaflets containing a feedback form will be available in the Council's Customer Service Centres.</p>

	<p>Staff will provide information on the complaints procedure for customers wishing to make a complaint and provide any assistance they may require, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assist with the completion of a customer feedback form; assist in making the appropriate arrangements for customers who may have specific requirements, e.g. British sign language interpreter, wheelchair access, etc; • assist in arranging for the services of an interpreter where appropriate. <p>This Equality Impact Assessment will be presented, along with the transformation plan, to the Corporate Policy Committee on 21st August 2024.</p> <p>The transformation plan will be submitted to the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government by 27th August.</p> <p>Further detail will be included within this Equality Impact Assessment at key stages of the transformation programme and will be produced for all individual business cases and service changes.</p>
<p>Date and responsible officer for the review of the EIA</p>	<p>The Equality Impact Assessment will be reviewed by the Director of Transformation once feedback on the transformation plan has been received from the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government and next steps are known.</p>

7. Sign Off

When you have completed your EIA, it should be sent to the [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Mailbox](#) for review. If your EIA is approved, it must then be signed off by a senior manager within your Department (Head of Service or above).

Once the EIA has been signed off, please forward a copy to the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Officer to be published on the website. For Transparency, we are committed to publishing all Equality Impact Assessments relating to public engagement.

Name	
Signature	

OFFICIAL

Date	
------	--

8. Help and Support

For support and advice please contact EqualityandInclusion@cheshireeast.gov.uk