

## Cheshire + Warrington

# Communications and engagement highlight report



Bringing better jobs, better transport, smarter investment

-now's the time.

August 2025

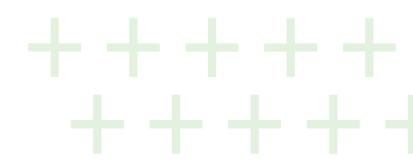
## Background



Our communications strategy is focused on ensuring that regional stakeholders are informed of the process, how they get involved, and what they can influence.

We have had a planned approach to engaging core stakeholders since September 2024, and we have engaged, at key milestones, with councillors, staff, MPs, relevant committees/boards, businesses, and partner organisations, as well as our residents through a programme of community engagement.

## Activity to date – highlights



- Promotion of the government's consultation
- Launch of ambassador programme sharing testimonials and continued engagement with identified ambassadors
- Devolution newsletter <u>first issue July 2025</u>
- **Social media** improving visibility/engagement across Cheshire and Warrington devolution accounts, myth-busting/dispelling misinformation, sharing FAQs etc.
- Internal communications with staff across the three councils/ECW
- Business engagement in partnership with the Business Advisory Board/ECW
- Member engagement programme of activity across three councils/town and parish councils

# Communications and engagement – Key insights

#### Media coverage

- **52** pieces of news coverage
- 1.07 million estimated views

#### Social media

- 1.1 million impressions
- **386.7k** total reach

## **Cheshire and Warrington devolution website**

8.8k active users

#### Page views:

- Homepage 8.2k
- <u>Devolution</u> 1.8k
- Get involved 1.2k
- Latest updates 1k

## Social media – organic posts

#### **LinkedIn (July/August):**

- 9.5k impressions
- 4.8k members reached
- 6.4% engagement rate
- Followers have grown by 74 to 718
- Account growth is steady, with a positive monthly follower increase

#### Facebook (July/August):

- 752k impressions (up by 297%\*)
- 310k reach (up by 281%\*)
- 438 interactions



<sup>\*</sup>all % figures compared to May/June

## Social media – paid for advertising

## Promotion of devolution explainer animation

- 51.4k video plays
- 34.8k reach
- 68.2k impressions

#### Younger people campaign

- Targeting people aged 21 to 40
- 437k reach
- 957k impressions
- 1k link clicks

#### 'Now is the time' campaign

- Ongoing running a series of ads from 8 August until 13 September 2025
- Initial ad set is targeting people aged 18 to 30
- Ads will run across META (Facebook/Instagram) and LinkedIn – currently only META is running to ensure best cost per result and good budget utilisation
- 36.8k reach
- 95.4k impressions
- 86 link clicks
- Campaign will be evaluated on 26 August and adjusted accordingly

# Community engagement programme

Community engagement is a key part of our overall communications and engagement strategy.

To support with this work, we commissioned an agency – **Social** – to facilitate a programme of community engagement across Cheshire East, Cheshire West and Chester, and Warrington, with a key focus on targeted youth engagement.

During some of our events, we asked our residents about their thoughts on devolution – Watch the video on the Cheshire and Warrington website

### Community engagement programme

#### We have directly engaged with

- 560 individuals
- 453 via community pop-up events
- 64 people engaged via community events
- 43 young people targeted

## Top devolution priorities from community engagement

44% - transport

**28%** - economy

16% - environment

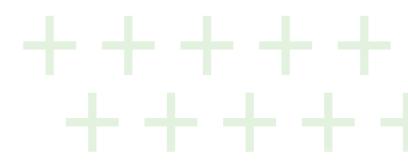
**12%** - skills

#### Next steps



- Following this initial phase of communications and engagement activity, we have refreshed our strategy
- We have sharpened our approach to focus on key audiences, including younger adults, elected members, and other communities of influence, and giving key advocates the opportunity to have their voice heard
- We are continuing with myth busting/work to dispel misinformation this
  is still common in the feedback we receive, so we must be relentless in
  correcting misinformation/raising awareness of the benefits of devolution
- Work is focusing on an intensive PR campaign and broadening our community and member engagement
- This means...

### Updated strategy



- Residents, businesses and partners will understand what devolution is and isn't, the potential benefits, the process and timeline, and how it affects them
- Staff will understand what devolution is and isn't, how it affects their roles, the process, and what it means for their organisation
- Members will understand what devolution means for their authority and area, and the stages of the devolution process and decision-making, so they are equipped and supported to talk about devolution using consistent messaging
- Members will see the feedback of residents, businesses and communities in the evidence base for decision making and devolution priorities
- All stakeholders will know how to get involved and have their say and will be able to see that their responses are reflected in local decision-making