

Version 9
Consolidated (Interim) Sustainable Community Strategy for Cheshire East
August 2008

Vision

“Shared vision and shared sense of priorities for a place set out in a Sustainable Community Strategy”
(Creating Strong, Safe and Prosperous Communities: Statutory Guidance HM Government July 2008)
This will be a statement of the Partnership’s ‘Vision’ - for example “Working together to improve community life”.

Introduction and Context

From 1 April 2009, Cheshire East Council will inherit the duty under Section 4 of the Local Government Act 2000 to produce and deliver with its key strategic partners, a Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) for promoting or improving the economic, social and environmental well-being of their area and contributing to the achievement of sustainable development in the UK. The Act created a discretionary power for the Council to do anything they consider likely to promote or improve the economic, social or environmental well-being of their area. This is designed to encourage closer joint working between local authorities and their partners to improve local communities’ quality of life. Statutory guidance to which local authorities must have regard sets out that SCSs are to be produced in partnership with all local delivery agencies and their communities. The Act introduced the concept of Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) with the expectation placed on Local Authorities to seek the participation of local stakeholders in the process.

The statutory guidance for the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 further confirms the duty and embeds the delivery of SCSs in the new national performance framework for local authorities and their key strategic partners, who now have a statutory ‘duty to co-operate’ placed upon them.

The Local Area Agreement (LAA) is described in recent guidance as being “at the heart of the new local performance framework helping to deliver the ambitions for the place and its people, as set out in the Sustainable Community Strategy”. The LAA is also described as being the only vehicle for agreeing targets between local government and its delivery partners, and Central Government (with the exception of 16 Statutory Education and Early Years targets).

Commitment to Partnership Working

For Cheshire East there is a proven track record of successful partnership working to build upon, despite organisational boundaries and the sheer complexity and scale of ensuring active involvement of so many diverse stakeholders. The successful People & Places bid makes full commitment to continuing this success at all levels. There are SCSs developed through CCP and LSPs for Congleton, Crewe & Nantwich and Macclesfield Boroughs. The Cheshire SCS was developed via the Communities of Cheshire Partnership Framework from the District SCSs and other available evidence. The Local Area Agreement (LAA) in its turn was

developed from the Cheshire SCS and also in partnership. There is a clear connection between all these documents. The various SCSs, together with the agreed 'severable' (into Cheshire East and Cheshire West & Chester) LAA in place for Cheshire, have all been properly consulted upon, agreed, reviewed and evaluated and are currently seen as 'live' partnership documents.

Purpose and Status of this Interim Document

This Consolidated (Interim) Sustainable Community Strategy document for Cheshire East should be seen as a review and a re-affirmation where appropriate of the current statistical evidence, priorities and commitments identified and agreed by partners and reflected in the various constituent documents/strategies. These have included issues for local residents and the public, private and voluntary, community and faith sector organisations and partnerships responsible for delivering services for priorities in the new area. It affords the opportunity also to check out and respond to any available new evidence that may affect these priorities. For example, the results of the Cheshire Community Survey 2008 are currently being analysed and over the next few months the Joint Needs Assessment and the Place Survey information should be available. The ongoing work will reflect this new information and will then feed into the development from April 2009 of the brand new Sustainable Community Strategy for Cheshire East, with partners and according to agreed proper mechanisms, including an extensive twelve week public consultation. This will consolidate the vision and priorities leading to approval from the future Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) and Cheshire East Council during summer/autumn 2009.

It has been necessary to develop this interim approach, as the Shadow Cheshire East Council will need to produce a Corporate Plan and decide upon its first budget in autumn 2008 for 2009/2010. Similarly other key partners will need to have regard to the identified priorities and to possible commitments and funding decisions in order to reflect this in their own budget setting and planning processes. It is also needed to inform the Cheshire East year 2 targets for the Local Area Agreement.

Cheshire East in perspective

Cheshire East is a Great Place to Live

Cheshire East's geology, physiology and vegetation make for a diverse and rich landscape. The mix of topography, soils and land use presents an area of contrasting character, ranging from the highland and lowland rural areas to the more densely populated areas in the north east of the authority.

Cheshire East is a good place to live as evidenced by the 2008 Community Survey which indicated 93% of Cheshire East's adults like living in their local area with a similar proportion (93%) saying that they were satisfied with Cheshire East as a place to live. When respondents were asked specifically about their quality of life (from the 2005 Quality of Life Survey) 52% described it as very good and a further 44% described it as quite good. 1% said it was very or quite poor. See Figures A2 to A7 in appendices.

Cheshire East has a population of 360,700 and an area of 116,638 hectares. In addition to 'Cheshire West and Chester' on the west, Cheshire East is bounded by the Manchester conurbation to the north and east, Stoke on Trent to the south and Peak District/ Derbyshire and Staffordshire Moorlands. It contains the industrial town of Crewe, the old mill towns of Macclesfield, Bollington and Congleton, the historical market towns of Nantwich, Knutsford and Sandbach, the roman salt town of Middlewich, the commuter town of Wilmslow, as well as the smaller settlements of Holmes Chapel, Poynton and Disley.

Cheshire East is characterised by wonderful countryside facilities such as Teggs Nose Country Park, The Cloud and the Gritstone Trail. There are splendid historical towns and major national visitor attractions such as Tatton Park (over 830,000 people visited in 2006), castles built of the distinctive local sandstone and spanning a thousand years of history from Beeston, to Peckforton and Cholmondeley with its extensive ornamental gardens. The canals and waterways are a major recreational and tourism feature for boats but also for fishing, walking and wildlife. Cheshire has more gardens open to the public per head of population than anywhere else in the UK and a large proportion of these are to be found in Cheshire East. Surveys have shown that these facilities attract people from all over the North West as well as further afield. These are vital for the local economy of East Cheshire.

Cheshire East's People

Cheshire East has an increasing proportion of Older Residents

Cheshire East has a population of 360,700 (2007 mid-year estimate). This is 5% of the North West's population and 0.7% of England & Wales' population.

The age structure of the Cheshire East is slightly older than that of England & Wales. 5% of Cheshire East's population is aged under 5 and 12% are aged 5 to 14. 18% are aged 65 or more. There will be around 5% fewer children living in Cheshire East by 2026 than there were in 2006. The number of people aged 85+ will double between 2006 and 2026, increasing demands for formal and informal support for vulnerable people. The working age population (16-64) will decline slightly (by about 3%). The proportion of

older workers (aged 45-64) in this group will increase. This trend will not only put pressure on the caring services but will also impact on the labour market, restricting the capacity to maintain economic growth.

Over 3% of Cheshire East residents were non-white according to the new ethnicity estimates produced by government in 2005. Of these about a third are of Asian origin. There are also a significant number of economic migrants who have arrived from Eastern Europe, mainly Poland and although the numbers of people applying to work in the UK has fallen according to Home Office statistics, many people already here want to stay. A HM Treasury funded project 'The Changing Community in Crewe' is in the forefront of understanding and development in this area of change.

Community Safety

Cheshire East Crime is low but perception is still high

Cheshire East is a relatively safe place to live although Cheshire's Quality of Life survey shows it is still a top concern for residents. In 2006/7 there were 27,383 recorded crimes in Cheshire East, this is 76 per 1,000 population. This is well below the National Average of 100. The most common crimes were violent crime and criminal damage. There were 1,589 crimes recorded as burglary (dwelling), this is 11 per 1,000 households. The Quality of Life Survey 2005 highlighted that 'reducing crime and disorder is respondents' top priority for improving their quality of life. Around two-thirds (61%) felt worried or very worried about being a victim of crime. In Cheshire East in 2006/7 there were 2.7 fires per 1,000 population compared with a figure of 0.7 within the 'family group' of Fire Authorities used to compare. Of this 2.7, 1.86 (nearly 69%) were deliberately started fires.

The Government's Respect strategy aims to tackle anti-social behaviour and calculates perceived levels of activity. In Cheshire East, 53% of respondents perceived a high level of anti-social behaviour with 19% perceiving a very high level, a score of 16 or above. 47% of people perceived a low level of anti-social behaviour with 21% perceiving a very low level, a score of 5 or below. (Further work is being done on comparators for these figures).

Economic Trends

Cheshire East Economy in Good Shape

Cheshire East has major strategic significance. It lies at the heart of the second largest concentration of economic and commercial activity in the UK. Cheshire East is home to the vehicle, food-technology, chemicals, pharmaceutical industries. It also has centres of excellence in financial services, information communications technology, distribution, and tourism. Economic output (GVA) per head is higher than the national average, £18,800 compared to £17,500 for the UK (2008 forecast).

In January 2008 there were 2,670 Cheshire East residents claiming Job Seekers Allowance, giving an unemployment rate of 1.3% (compared to 2.2% for Great Britain and 2.4% in the North West). Grosvenor Ward in Crewe has the highest unemployment rate (5.6%). 82% of Cheshire East's 129,000 workers are in service occupations. 17% of employees worked in manufacturing in Cheshire East in 2006, a higher proportion than nationally (11%) and agricultural employment stood at 5,300. There were 14,890 VAT registered businesses in 2006. 1,335 businesses had registered in the previous year.

Health

In Cheshire East the majority of people are feeling healthy

In the 2008 Cheshire Community Survey 57% of people described their health as good with 13% describing it as not good. Life Expectancy at birth for males and females is similar to England and Wales (2004-06). The death rate is slightly higher than England and Wales (10 deaths per thousand population compared to 9).

In the 2008 Cheshire Community Survey 17% of people said that they smoked, nationally 25% of over 16's smoked. 85% drank alcohol compared to 66% nationally, with 8% drinking more than 22 units a week.

At May 2007, 4% of the total population were claiming disability living allowance compared to 6% for the North West. Of these claimants 17% were due to mental health causes compared to 15% for the North West. In the 2008 survey 44% of residents knew a family member who had mental health problems, and 1 in 5 had experienced work colleagues with mental health problems

Central & Eastern Primary Care Trust's (PCT's) Strategic Needs Assessment February 2008 (includes Vale Royal in its figures) puts current average life expectancy at birth as being greater for females than males by around 4 years, although the PCT's population has a higher life expectancy overall than for England for both males and females. There are however, important differences in current male life expectancy between local towns in Cheshire East; ranging from 75.4 years in Middlewich to 80.7 years in Poynton.

For females, current life expectancy at birth in Cheshire East ranges from 79.4 years in Middleswich to 84.1 years in Alsager. Across the PCT circulatory diseases (including coronary heart disease and stroke) and cancers account for 37% (M) and 26% (F) of deaths.

Children's and Adult Services

Cheshire East pupils perform above average

There are 127 primary schools (26,400 pupils), 21 secondary schools (22,800 pupils) and 4 special schools in Cheshire East (compared to 10 in Cheshire West and Chester). Pupils perform well compared to the national average. The proportion of GCSE candidates achieving grades A*-C was 63% in 2006 compared to 59% for England. Key Stage achievements were similarly above average. 86% of pupils achieved level 4 or above in Key Stage 2 English with 82% for Key Stage 2 Maths and 77% of pupils achieved level 5 or above in key stage 3 English with 82% for key stage 3 Maths.

In 2005/6 there were 4,150 referrals to Children's Services in Cheshire East. 12 Children's Centres will be operational by April 2009 with a further 7 to be developed by March 2011.

There are 6 Community Support Centres in Cheshire East providing day care and respite care for older people, with the primary aim of helping to maintain older people in the community. Further information on the wide range of care services for adults and older people specifically in Cheshire East is not yet available to include.

Housing and Households

House Prices are a significant issue for Cheshire East Residents

In the second quarter of 2008 the average house price in Cheshire East was £215,700 (this compares to 189,000 in Cheshire West and Chester. The latest (2007) average household income was £37,000, giving an affordability (house price to household income) ratio of 5.8 compared to 4.2 for the North West region. In 2006 there were 160,700 dwellings in Cheshire East with the highest % in council tax band C (20%). Between 2002/3 and 2005/6 just over 4,500 new houses were built. At the 2001 census, there were 147,144 households with residents in Cheshire East. The structure of households in Cheshire East is very similar to national and regional patterns. In 2001, 25% of Cheshire West & Chester households were all pensioner households (North West 24%, England

& Wales 24%), of these 21,118 (57%) were pensioners living alone. 29% of households had dependent children (North West 30%, England & Wales 29%). 28% of households were people living alone (North West 31%, England & Wales 30%). Looking at the average figures understates the affordability problem in certain housing markets within Cheshire East.

The Environment, Transport and Access to Services

Cheshire East has slightly higher than average domestic carbon emissions and households are more likely than average to own more than two cars

Within Cheshire East Domestic CO₂ emissions per capita was 2.66 tonnes (UK = 2.5 tonnes). In the 2007 Cheshire Omnibus Survey: 87% said that recycling was important to combat climate change and 85% also said waste minimisation was important to combat climate change. In 2001, 82% of households in Cheshire East had access to a car compared to 73% for England and Wales; 40% of Cheshire East households owned 2 or more cars (England & Wales 29%).

Access to services is also measured by the Index of Multiple deprivation within the Barriers to Housing and Services Domain. 19 Lower Level Super Output Areas in Cheshire East are in the top 20% nationally. The car was the dominant means of travel to work by Cheshire residents (72% drivers or passengers in the 2001 Census): other means of travel to work were: foot (9%), bus (2%), and train (2%). At the 2001 Census the most popular destinations outside Cheshire East to work were Cheshire West and Chester and Manchester; the most popular origins for people travelling into Cheshire East were Cheshire West and Chester and Stockport.

Leisure and Culture

Cheshire East is home to many well visited attractions

There are a number of historic properties, gardens, museums, art galleries and other attractions across Cheshire East. In 2006,

830,800 people visited Tatton Country Park, Macclesfield, 64,000 people visited Jodrell Bank, 105,000 people visited Quarry Bank Mill. In the 2006 Cheshire Community survey 76% of residents used the internet. 68 % had broadband.

There are 18 libraries (excluding mobiles).

Cheshire has more gardens open to the public per head of population than anywhere else in the UK and a large proportion of these are to be found in Cheshire East. 2008 has provided the opportunity to develop and promote these “Gardens of Distinction” during Cheshire’s Year of Gardens 08. Continuity Planning is in hand during the latter part of 2008 to build on the success on the year and reinforce the position of Cheshire as a “must see” European destination.

Challenges and Priorities for Action

In many respects the picture across Cheshire East is very positive with much to build upon for a successful future. Most of Cheshire East’s adults like living here and are satisfied with it as a place to live. There is wonderful countryside with facilities that attract people from all over the North West and further afield. It is a relatively safe place to live with recorded crimes well below the national average. Cheshire East has major strategic significance and economic output (GVA) per head is higher at £18,800 compared with £17,500 for the UK. The majority of Cheshire East adults describe their health as good. Pupils in Cheshire East schools perform well compared to the national average. In 2008 the average house price in Cheshire East was £215,700 (compared to £189,000 in Cheshire West and Chester) and the average household income was £37,000.

Most regional and national indicators point to Cheshire East doing well but there is another side to this picture with important challenges to be addressed. There are persistent problems in some areas or with addressing the needs some people have. The Cheshire Community Survey 2008 has found that for Cheshire East: the top priorities mentioned for making a good quality of life in the area were ‘issues for young children’ (45%), ‘issues for our ageing population’ (42%), ‘affordable and appropriate housing’ (40%), and ‘make communities even safer’ (38%). The top priorities mentioned for improving the quality of life in their area were ‘issues for children and young people’ (46%), ‘make communities even safer’ (44%), ‘affordable and appropriate housing’ (44%) and ‘issues for our ageing population’ (37%). This is consistent with all the existing plans and strategies.

Map A7 in appendices shows the 14 Lower Level Super Output Areas in Cheshire East that rank within the 20% most deprived in England, according to the Government’s measure of deprivation (Index of Multiple Deprivation 2007). 6% of Cheshire East’s population live in these 14 areas. They are concentrated in north and west Crewe, east Congleton, east and south Macclesfield and north of Wilmslow. Disadvantage is strongly correlated with health problems, e.g. high mortality rates, mental illness, respiratory and circulatory diseases.

The CEPCT Strategic Needs Assessment draws attention to risk factors contributing to ill health such as tobacco use, physical inactivity, excessive alcohol consumption, poor diet with secondary factors such as hypertension, being very overweight. Food

poverty – most likely to be older people, people with disabilities, households with dependent children or someone who is unemployed, members of black, minority and ethnic groups.

Priority Issues

The priority issues outlined in the document 'A Sustainable Community Strategy for Cheshire – interim document May 2008' were developed in partnership and strongly informed by the 6 Borough Sustainable Community Strategies and the various Cheshire wide and local LSPs and thematic partnerships. All the 7 SCSs were in turn strongly influenced by what people said via surveys or as a result of wide consultation. The work so far indicates that these priorities hold true but with the benefit of more recent information, additional work is being undertaken to check out the detail – aggregating some information and disaggregating other information to give a clear picture. There are some areas where there may be insufficient recognition or gaps currently, for example 'leisure, sport and culture', business development and possibly 'rural issues'. More work will need to be done on these areas as part of the development of the brand new SCS for Cheshire East.

The appendices include a matrix with detailed information on current priorities and targets set across all 4 SCSs for Cheshire East.

Summary list of priorities (in no order)

Reducing inequalities / narrowing the gap between the most disadvantaged and successful areas of Cheshire East and sectors of the community

Addressing the key issues surrounding our ageing population

Addressing the priority services for children and young people

Improving access to and availability of affordable and appropriate housing

Reducing anti-social behaviour, arson and criminal damage

Reducing re-offending

Tackling the adverse impact of alcohol (*this is a key Health issue AND Safer issue*)

Achieving sustainable management of waste resources

Responding to the challenge of climate change

Reducing worklessness and improved skills

Improving road safety, maintenance

Improving environmental cleanliness

Maintaining an efficient transport network

Reducing the risk of industrial and commercial emergencies

Additional key themes from existing Plans – some may be implicit in those above.

- Third Sector Development (including Compact development)
- Empowerment/ influencing decisions
- Mental health
- Improved business and enterprise development – support for businesses, making land available for employment use, improvements to infrastructure
- More vibrant Market towns, improve vitality of town and village centres, attracting quality employment, tourism and the visitor economy, Cheshire Year of Gardens 08 Continuity Planning
- Improved amenities and improved access to them – culture, leisure, sport, play, community learning, family learning, extended schools, allotments, green spaces, parks
- Improved protection for designated natural environments, heritage buildings, include local distinctiveness designations
- Rural Issues.

Brief summary of context and evidence supporting the priority issues

1. Reducing inequalities / narrowing the gap between the most disadvantaged and successful areas of Cheshire East and sectors of the community

This is a key theme that many of the LAA improvement targets are designed to address. It is a key theme in Crewe & Nantwich SCS where the approach has been to target specific geographic areas most in need of a comprehensive range of support via a 'Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy'. There are actions within all the 3 existing District SCSs aimed at addressing this priority area for example 'Reducing the number of neighbourhoods in the worst 25% nationally in terms of multiple deprivation' (C&N), 'Improving environmental quality for people living in the most deprived neighbourhoods' (M). Many of the key priority targets are being achieved by actions focused on specific needs in neighbourhoods, for example 'Working age people out of work claiming benefits in the worst performing neighbourhoods' (LAA NI 153), 'Improve geographic access, disabled access and the affordability of learning opportunities' (C), 'Increase the take up of welfare benefits' (C&N), to name a few. There are also priorities flagged up across thematic areas, for example 'Tackle child poverty' and 'Improve the economic well-being of older people at retirement age' that will contribute to reducing inequalities. The recent increases in fuel and food prices are likely to make the financial situation worse for many people.

Map A7 in the appendices shows the 14 Lower Level Super Output Areas in Cheshire East that rank within the 20% most deprived in England, according to the Government's measure of deprivation (Index of Multiple Deprivation 2007. 6% of Cheshire East's population live in these 14 areas. They are concentrated in north and west Crewe, east Congleton, east and south Macclesfield and north of Wilmslow. Disadvantage is strongly correlated with health problems, e.g. high mortality rates, mental illness, respiratory and circulatory diseases.

Map A1 shows the Average Income Data 2007 - top 20% most deprived Super Output Areas, Cheshire East (MSOAs containing Top 20% labelled).

Map A5 shows Lone Parents claiming income support

Map A6 shows Mental Health conditions

Map A7 shows Overall Index of Multiple Deprivation

Map A9 shows Model-based Data on Smoking

Map A10 shows Standardised Mortality Ratios

(Evidence for the gap widening in Cheshire East – more detailed work is being done on this).

Current priorities for action:

- Reduce the risk factors associated with heart disease and stroke.
- Achieve smoking cessation targets and reduce the number of people with cancers.
- Increase well-being programmes in areas of highest disadvantage.
- Improve attainment in children and families from low-income backgrounds.
- Reduce proportion of people who are very overweight.
- Reduce mental health related unemployment and increase the number of local workplaces signing-up to the 'Mindful Employers Charter.
- Increase access to sources of support for emotional and psychological difficulties.
- Develop accessibility planning strategies to improve access to jobs and key services (link to LDF).
- Increase number of residents who say they can influence decisions in their locality, with specific targets for key areas.
- More people feel that they belong to their neighbourhood.
- Increase community gardens and allotments for people to grow their own food.
- More people believe that people from different backgrounds get on well together.
- Increase the overall/general satisfaction with the local area.

- Increase access to green spaces.

2. Addressing the key issues surrounding our ageing population

This features as a key priority across all the existing SCSs and the LAA. The number of people aged 85+ will double between 2006 and 2026, increasing demands for formal and informal support for vulnerable people. The working age population (16-64) will decline slightly (by about 3%). The proportion of older workers (aged 45-64) in this group will increase. This trend will not only put pressure on the caring services but will also impact on the labour market, restricting the capacity to maintain economic growth. (More work being undertaken on housing issues for older people will draw on the Local Development Framework and Housing Strategy).

Falls are a major cause of disability and the leading cause of mortality due to injury in people over 75. Around 92% of fractures are caused by a fall and in 90% of those falls, the patient has osteoporosis. Falls account for 20% of all patients in orthopaedic beds with hip fractures placing greatest demand on resources. Ref CSCS over 30% of people aged 65 and 50% over the age of 85 living in the community will fall in a year (in Cheshire). Reducing falls has great benefits in improving quality of life for older adults and reducing demand for treatment and care.

Current priorities for action include:

- Improve independence,
- Reduce hospital and institutional care by supporting older people, where appropriate and chosen,
- Improve housing for older people and tackle fuel poverty,
- Improve economic well-being of older people at retirement age,
- Empower older people to have a greater voice and influence on decisions which affect them,
- Improve the number of older adults retained and successfully retrained to contribute to the local economy.

Map A8 shows the % and distribution of Population aged 75+ in 2006 as % of total population. Figure A1 shows the forecast population of 75+ and 85+ age-groups for Cheshire East from 2001 – 2026. The Macclesfield SCS mentions specifically people whose mental, physical and emotional well-being is at risk in rural and socially-isolated communities. More work is ongoing re rural issues and concerns. Map A4 shows All Emergency Admissions to Hospitals.

3. Addressing the priority services for children and young people

The prospects for many children and young people in Cheshire East look good. The majority enjoy a good quality of life in an area seen as affluent and academic attainment continues to be higher than the national average. There are however considerable numbers of children and young people for whom the picture is less bright. Their circumstances mean that they are less likely to achieve the outcomes set by central government, be healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution and achieve economic well-being. In 2005/6 there were 4,150 referrals to Children's Services in the Cheshire East area.

Crewe & Nantwich LSP members have raised concerns that educational attainment standards are falling in comparison with the rest of Cheshire. Work is underway to establish if and why this may be happening. Work is also ongoing to produce Cheshire East specific figures for the priority actions listed below.

Current priorities for action include:

- Tackle child poverty
- Reduce teenage conceptions
- Reduce the number of children who are very overweight
- Reduce the number of children exposed to domestic abuse.

Note: The LAA NI 117 (and PSA 14) relate to 16 to 18 years olds who are not in education, employment and training (NEET). This appears as a priority in some of the existing SCSs but not others. Further work is being progressed to establish the position on this. Map A5 shows Lone Parents claiming Income Support.

4. Improving access to and availability of affordable and appropriate housing

This is a stated priority in the Cheshire SCS and the Congleton and Macclesfield SCSs but less of an issue in Crewe & Nantwich. The Congleton SCS states "There is a shortage of high quality low cost market or affordable housing" the Macclesfield SCS states "Affordable housing is a key issue for the Borough, which is an area with the highest house prices in the region and with planning policies that severely constrain new house building" and goes on to state "There is an identified need for at least 200 affordable housing units to be built each year". The Cheshire Community Survey 2008 has found that for Cheshire East affordable housing is one of the top priorities for both making and improving a good quality of life. In 2008 the average house price for Cheshire East was £215,700 (compared to £189,000 in Cheshire West and Chester). The recent issues with the UK housing market will have further consequences. Around 25% of households are pensioners. Issues overall are both in terms of affordability but also the need for appropriate and adapted housing.

Current priorities for action include:

- Improve provisions of new affordable housing in urban areas, market towns and sustainable rural areas to support the local economy and the wider economy of the North West (connects to LDF and housing strategy)
- Improve the provisions of supported and specialist housing for older people and vulnerable client groups, especially homeless households
- Sustain regeneration and the provision of decent homes and manage economic impacts on the housing market.

5. Reducing anti-social behaviour, arson and criminal damage

This has been flagged up as a priority within all 4 existing SCSs. Cheshire East is a relatively safe place to live with recorded crimes in 2006/7 being 76 per 1,000 population, well below the National Average of 100. The Cheshire Quality of Life survey shows it is still however a top concern for residents (figure x). Most common crimes were violent crime and criminal damage. Map xx shows the pattern of distribution of recorded crimes in 2007 across Cheshire East. There are higher incidences as might be expected in the major towns but a large area also features across Knutsford Rural.

The Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service highlight an issue with small deliberately started fires (Map xx) and make the links with it being recognised nationally as a signal of anti-social behaviour (ASB) and the broader community implications such as the impact on investment in the area, employment opportunities, reducing accessibility to social and community activities. They have set a target to reduce deliberate fires from 669 in 2006/7 to 417 in 2008/9 (1.16 per 1,00 pop) a reduction of 37.67%.

Map A2 shows All Recorded Crimes (rate per '000 population), Q4 2007

Map A12 shows Cheshire East - Small Deliberate Fires Excluding Vehicles 2006/2007 by Lower Super Output Area

Figure A8 shows Perceived Level of Anti-Social Behaviour by behaviour problems

Current priorities for action include:

- Reduction in ASB as measure by reported incidents
- Perceptions of drunk or rowdy behaviour as a problem
- Increase the % of people who state that the police and local council are dealing with the anti-social behaviour issues that matter in their area
- Work in community safety partnerships to reduce arson

- Reduce the level of youth fire setting by working with partners in youth organisations
- Work with waste managers to reduce wheelie bin fires and rubbish fires
- Increase the number of prosecutions for arson offences
- Work with commercial sector to reduce arson in commercial property.

6. Reducing re-offending

A relatively small number of repeat offenders (around 130 across Cheshire, figure for CE to be included when possible) are responsible for a significant proportion of the crimes. Problem drug use is a factor, both a health and social issue exacerbated by deprivation or social problems. The Cheshire Drug and Alcohol Action Team is responsible for delivery of the national drug strategy. Drug treatment is the intervention with the most developed evidence of effectiveness and key to reducing drug related crime. In addition work focussing on repeat victims and perpetrators of domestic abuse has delivered reductions and increases in criminal justice outcomes. Successful partnerships are in place with a Local Public Sector Agreement (LPSA) stretch target on this issue achieved early.

Current priorities for action:

- Address crime by reducing the proportion of adult offenders who re-offend, with a focus on the most prolific offenders in Cheshire
- Reduce the number of young offenders entering the criminal justice system
- The number of drug users recorded as being in effective treatment
- Increase reporting of domestic abuse, reduce repeat incidents of domestic abuse and increase criminal justice outcomes, with a focus on increasing the safety of repeat victims of domestic abuse.

7. Tackling the adverse impact of alcohol (*health issue AND safer issue*)

The Central & Eastern Cheshire PCT (includes Vale Royal in figures) – Strategic Needs Assessment February 2008 quotes in 2007 5.1% of their adult population were harmful drinkers, i.e. above “sensible levels” and experiencing harm. DOH profiles highlight alcohol as a major issue across Cheshire East area and levels of binge drinking were higher than national average of 18.2%. The 2008 Cheshire Community Survey in Cheshire East found that 85% of people drank alcohol compared with 66% nationally, with 8% drinking more than 22 units per week. The impact of alcohol is stated by the C&EPCT as occurring at all levels from GP, A&E, Ambulance call outs, outpatients and hospital admissions. There is significant variation in ‘age standardised admissions’ with 5 fold

differences in rates between Macclesfield and rural Congleton. The C&EPCT is assessing the financial impact of this. This is a priority area for the C&EPCT requiring a broad range of interventions by partners over a sustained period of time and with serious implications for the health and social care systems. There are also clear links to the issues of anti-social behaviour.

Current priorities for action:

- Reduce the number of people who engage in hazardous levels of alcohol consumption
- Restrict access to alcohol by children and young people
- Reduce the incidents of anti-social behaviour, violent crime (including domestic abuse) and damage to property caused by alcohol.

Map A3 shows model-based data on Binge Drinking.

8. Achieving sustainable management of waste resources

Cheshire generates second highest amount of waste per capita in England. Recycling has increased from 18% in 2002/3 to 36% in 2006/7. In 2006/7 Cheshire produced 401,540 tonnes of household waste (1.4 tonnes per household) and 36% recycled with 64% going to landfill (figures being asked for CE). New legislation sets stringent limits and will result in heavy fines if these are exceeded. On top of this there are environmental impacts. In the 2007 Cheshire Omnibus Survey, 87% said recycling was important to combat climate change and 85% also said waste minimisation was important to combat climate change.

Current priorities for action:

- Increase recycling and composting to 50% by 2020
- Reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill sites
- Reduce waste growth to 1% by 2015.

9. Responding to the challenge of climate change

(Links closely to the former priority issue)

By 2080 it is possible that the North West will experience an average increase in temperature of 4 or 5 degrees C, have 40%-60% less rain in summer and 15%-30% more rain in winter. There are risks and costs, flooding and issues for the farming industry and for

communities living around rivers. Across Cheshire East there are higher rates of emissions of CO2 per capita (across all 6 districts range of 8.0-15.5 tonnes) than average for the North West (7.6 tonnes). (Figures for CE area are to be included when available).

Current priorities for action:

- Adaptation of services to prepare for extreme weather events through Risk Analysis, Emergency Planning, etc
- Reduce CO2 emissions per capita across Cheshire
- Support and build the capacity of local businesses and communities acting against the threats of climate change
- Support the increase use of alternative fuel supplies and renewable energy sources to avoid future fuel poverty and food scarcity
- Ensure new economic growth is innovative and environmentally sustainable
- Reduce the amount of waste we produce and improve re-use and recycling
- Increase the use of transport alternatives to the car.

10. Reducing worklessness and improving skills

In January 2008, 2,670 Cheshire East residents were claiming job seekers allowance, giving an unemployment rate of 1.3% compared with 2.2% for UK and 2.4% for North West. 82% of Cheshire East workers are in service occupations, 17% in manufacturing (higher than national 11%). This masks some important differences. For example Grosvenor Ward in Crewe has a higher rate at 5.6%. There are also many issues flagged in relation to people with particular needs, for example mental health and disability. Demographic information highlights the ageing population but also the rise of numbers of working population in the 45 to 65 age group.

Cheshire East has major strategic significance, economic output (GVA) per head is higher than national average, £18,800 compared to £17,500 for the UK (2008 forecast). There are concerns about maintaining this with priorities flagged in both Macclesfield and Congleton SCSs around making more land available for business use. This is an important connection with the ongoing development of the LDF.

Current priorities for action:

- Reduce the number of working age people with no qualifications and increase the number of adults with Levels 2 and 3 qualifications
- Increase the number of local employers who sign-up to the 'Skills Pledge'

- Reduce worklessness in Cheshire's most disadvantaged wards by delivering high quality partnership services
- Increase the number of economically active older adults
- Increase the number of disabled people in employment
- Tackle worklessness in families where there are children
- Increase the number of new businesses and social enterprises.

Map A11 shows Unemployment Rate.

11. Improving road safety and maintenance

More information may need to be added here when we have figures for Cheshire East.

In 2000, the Government published a safety strategy 'Tomorrow's Roads Safer for Everyone', setting targets to reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured by 40%, children by 50% and slight casualties by 10%. Cheshire's Local Public Service Agreement (LPSA) further stretched the target for people killed or seriously injured to 44%. Good progress has been made in reaching these targets through partnership working but road casualties for Cheshire at 5.6% are above the regional (5.3%) and England (4.8%) averages. One of the highest 'at risk' groups being 30-40 year old male motorcycle or moped riders, with incidents rising from 11 in 2001 to 29 in 2006. This is likely to remain a concern for Cheshire East. A second 'at risk' group is 16-20 year old male car drivers. The infrastructure for the safe and efficient movement of people and freight is vital for the economic success and quality of life for residents. Travel disruption, reduced accessibility and increased congestion continue to be key issues for residents. The reduction of these being underpinned by continued quality maintenance of roads.

Current priorities for action:

- Reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured on Cheshire's roads and motorways
- Reduce the number of children killed or seriously injured on Cheshire's roads and motorways
- Increase awareness of contributing factors that cause road traffic collisions including speeding, impairment (alcohol), distractions (mobile phones) and the not wearing of seatbelts
- Ensure that the road network is maintained in a good condition, in order to reduce and prevent road traffic accidents and improve road safety
- Maintain the highway in a safe and sound condition, suitable for the use of vehicles, cyclists, pedestrians, equestrians and all other road users
- Maintain Cheshire's highways at minimum cost.

12. Improving environmental cleanliness

More information to be added here

The Best Value User Satisfaction Survey 2006 (results from combining County and Districts' Surveys) shows clean streets as the third most important priority with 44% of respondents putting this in their top 5 priorities for making somewhere a good place to live.

There is also strong supporting anecdotal evidence that local residents want improvements in their neighbourhoods and the reduction of graffiti, litter and fly tipping which make places look dilapidated and add to perceptions of anti-social behaviour and feed a fear of crime.

Current priorities for action:

- Improve street and environmental cleanliness
- Ensure that the highway is kept in an acceptable condition environmentally.

13. Maintaining an efficient transport network

More information is to be added here, including reference to and timescales regarding the development of the Local Transport Plan (LTP).

This is an area flagged as important within SCSs with priorities raised ranging from influencing the LTP to 'transport' being key to achieving other outcomes, for example for older people or people with disabilities achieving independence. It is also the subject of important priority actions relating to the challenge of climate change and alternatives to the use of the car. Cheshire East is of strategic regional and national importance and its transport infrastructure reflects this with major rail, road and air links.

There is an opportunity to develop this area further within the future Cheshire East SCS with important connections made to the LTP.

Current priorities for action:

- Maintain highways so that they provide an efficient system for transportation.

14. Reducing the risk of industrial and commercial emergencies

This is currently flagged within the Cheshire Interim SCS rather than the Borough ones, this may be reflecting the way this area of partnership activity is co-ordinated. There are clearly Cheshire wide issues and possibly specific Cheshire East issues which might

bring a change of emphasis, for example the strategic transport networks of road, rail and airport, flood plains, manufacturing activity etc.

More information is being sought to inform this.

Current priorities for action:

- Facilitate a series of exercises to validate, train and test against the multi-agency approach and Chemical Radiation Biological & Nuclear Plan and verify robust arrangements are in place to manage a mobile cloudburst incident
- Review impact of regulation changes in relation to COMAH and develop and deliver a programme for major and standard COMAH off-site testing.

Summary of additional key themes from existing Plans

(Some may be implicit in those above when the detail is explored)

Note: there are examples across Cheshire East of Plans in place at a more local geographic level and it not yet been possible to summarise these but some of the priorities for example in the tackling inequalities section will be being taken forward at the more local level. These are mentioned in the end section of the accompanying draft matrix 2 and include Parish Plans, Neighbourhood Renewal Strategies and Market Towns' Plans.

- Third Sector Development
- Empowerment/ influencing decisions
- Mental health
- Improved business and enterprise development – support for businesses, making land available for employment use, and improvements to infrastructure
- More vibrant Market towns, improve vitality of town and village centres, attracting quality employment, tourism and the visitor economy, Cheshire Year of Gardens 08 Continuity Planning
- Improved amenities and improved access to them – culture, leisure, sport, play, community learning, family learning, extended schools, allotments, green spaces, parks
- Improved protection for designated natural environments, heritage buildings, include local distinctiveness designations
- Rural Issues.

APPENDICES

- **Matrix - priorities from 4 Cheshire East SCSs and LAA targets**
- **Maps**

Background and source documents

People & Places

A Sustainable Community Strategy for Crewe and Nantwich 2006 - 2016

Congleton Sustainable Community Strategy 2007 – 2016

Macclesfield Borough Sustainable Community Strategy 2007 – 2010

Central & Eastern Cheshire PCT – Strategic Needs Assessment February 2008

A Sustainable Community Strategy for Cheshire Interim Document – May 2008

Cheshire LAA 2008 – 2011: Countywide Designated Improvement Targets May 2008

Creating Strong, Safe and Prosperous Communities Statutory Guidance HM Government July 2008

Results for the Cheshire Community Survey 2008

Results for The Best Value User Satisfaction Survey 2006