

# CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

## Cabinet

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**Date of meeting:** 2 December 2008  
**Report of:** **Bernadette Hurst** Director, Cheshire & Warrington Improvement & Efficiency Partnership  
**Title:** **Cheshire & Warrington Improvement & Efficiency Strategy**

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### **1.0 Purpose of Report**

- 1.1** This report explains the background to the development of the Cheshire and Warrington Improvement and Efficiency Partnership and Strategy. Members are asked to consider and approve the Strategy (appended) for adoption. The Council's emerging ambitions and improvement priorities as identified in the interim Corporate Plan will be supported by the implementation of this strategy.

### **2.0 Decision Required**

- 2.1** To consider and adopt the Cheshire and Warrington Improvement and Efficiency Strategy as appended to this report.
- 2.2** To agree to Warrington BC undertaking the role of "accountable body" in relation to CWIEP
- 2.3** To authorise officers to enter into a partnership agreement on behalf of Cheshire East for CWIEP

### **3.0 Financial Implications for Transition Costs**

- 3.1** None

### **4.0 Financial Implications 2009/10 and beyond**

- 4.1** £22 million is being made available to the region over the next 3 years. It has been agreed that for 2008/09, the broad allocation of resources to the sub-regions should be 60%. This will be revised at the end of the first year of the programme, with a view to increasing it, subject to the sub-regions demonstrating achievement of their year 1 objectives. In 2008/09, £680k has been allocated to the Cheshire & Warrington sub-region. If the same formula is applied in Year 2, the funding would be about £781k. If the sub-regional allocation were to increase to say 80%

of available funding, Cheshire and Warrington could receive up to £1,041m p.a. for 2009/10 and 2010/11.

- 4.2 However, the Government has made it clear that this is pump-priming funding and from 2011, the partnership will need to be self-sustaining. Proposals will be brought forward in due course as to how that might be achieved.

## **5.0 Legal Implications**

- 5.1 A legally binding partnership agreement and terms of reference are currently being drawn up by Warrington BC. All partners will have the opportunity to comment and propose any amendments.

## **6.0 Risk Assessment**

- 6.1 The desired outcome is for a Partnership which is owned and operated by the sector with responsibility for managing the development and delivery of a strategy and outputs that secure continuous improvement in and value for money of Cheshire and Warrington's public services.
- 6.2 There will be a significant risk to the success and reputation of Cheshire and Warrington's sub-regional improvement and efficiency partnership if partners do not remain engaged with and responsible for its direction, programme of work and take up of improvement and efficiency outputs and products. Considerable amounts of funding could be at risk and failure could also negatively impact on future Comprehensive Area Assessments.
- 6.3 This risk is being mitigated by firmly positioning the sub-regional strategy and delivery plans to respond to sub-regional priorities.
- 6.4 Central government funding is only available for the first three years of the partnership and that funding is also contingent upon successful delivery. This presents a risk in terms of possible redundancy costs. However, there is a requirement for the partnership to submit proposals as to how funding will be invested to build sustainable collaboration beyond 2011 and this is likely to be on the basis of partner subscription.

## **7.0 Background and Options**

- 7.1 The North West Regional Improvement and Efficiency Strategy sets the vision for and outlines the context in which improvement and efficiency challenge and support will be developed and provided. It builds on the experience and expertise that has been developed in the region over the last three years through the work of the North West Improvement Network (NWIN) and the

North West Centre of Excellence (NWCE). These two have been formally combined as of 1<sup>st</sup> April 2008, to bring together support for improvement and efficiency into one organisation, the new Regional Improvement and Efficiency partnership for the North West (NWRIEP). The strategy sets out a challenging and an ambitious programme for the Partnership to deliver against nine improvement themes:

- Transformational government and the citizen
- Efficiency
- Economic development and regeneration
- Health and social care
- Community safety
- Community empowerment and neighbourhood delivery
- Children's and young people's services
- Environmental quality and climate change
- Cohesion, and equalities and diversity.

7.2 Given the establishment of the NWIEP and the requirements of the regional strategy, the sub-regional landscape has been reviewed. The opportunity was taken to mirror the regional structures in terms of accessing funding streams and support but also the philosophy driving the combining of the improvement and efficiency agendas. Cheshire and Warrington Improvement and Efficiency partnership (CWIEP) brings together the work of the former Cheshire Warrington and Halton Information Consortium (CWHIC), Cheshire Improvement Partnership (CWIP), Cheshire Shared Services Programme, Cheshire Collaborative Services Group and Cheshire Procurement Group, to deliver the Improvement and Efficiency Strategy for Cheshire and Warrington. It is proposed that Warrington BC act as the accountable body for CWIEP and therefore Terms of Reference and a partnership agreement are being drawn up. Proposals as to staffing and financial arrangements are currently being finalised.

- 7.3 In May 2008, Cheshire Chief Executives and Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service approved the submission of the CWIEP Year 1 Delivery Plan to the NWRIEP Management Board. It was considered to be a good submission and projects have since been commissioned in line with that plan. However, CWIEP has to also submit a detailed 3 year strategy demonstrating how the improvement and efficiency programmes commissioned will contribute to achieving improved outcomes across priority areas, and how the pump-priming funding from the partnership will be invested to build sustainable collaboration beyond 2011.

## **7.4 Recommendation**

- 7.4.1 To consider and adopt the Cheshire and Warrington Improvement and Efficiency Strategy as appended to this report.

- 7.4.2 To agree to Warrington BC undertaking the role of “accountable body” in relation to CWIEP
- 7.4.3 To authorise officers to enter into a partnership agreement on behalf of Cheshire East for CWIEP

## **8.0 Reasons for Recommendation**

- 8.1 The delivery of support for improvement and efficiency in the North West will primarily be through the 5 sub-regional partnerships. The aim is now to significantly raise the level of sub-regional collaboration and support political and managerial leaders in implementing radically different solutions to address long-standing challenges. This strategy is the starting point for that journey.

### ***For further information:***

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### ***Background Documents:***

The National Improvement & Efficiency Strategy

The North West Improvement & Efficiency Strategy

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