1.   Community Partnerships

1.1   **Objective:** To promote Community Partnerships and where communities are interested, support them to establish new partnerships in   order to further develop communities with a strong sense of neighbourliness.

Milestones	Date
1. Develop shared understanding of purpose and roles of CPs.	April 2014
2. Adopt a Communications Plan to promote CPs.	May 2014
3. Establish number of communities interested in setting up at CP.	January 2015
4. Support the CPs where communities express interest to take forward.	April 2014 ongoing

1.2   Local Working in Cheshire East includes Community Partnerships, covering our Market Towns and Rural communities. These 'can do' partnerships are independent constituted groups, which are established and led by the local community. They vary to meet local needs, but their overall purpose is to improve the social, economic and environmental well-being of their area.

1.3   There are currently 6 Market Town Partnerships in Cheshire East, are summarised in the table below. As part of new approach to Localism and creating Stronger Communities, we are promoting and plan to establish more community partnerships across the Borough.

1.4   We are working with the Chair of the 5 Market Town Partnerships and Sandbach and Middlewich Town Partnerships to introduce these into other areas. Nantwich has recently started to establish one and its in early stages and both the Council and the other partnerships are sharing their knowledge on how to go about it. We will plan to host a Cheshire Action for Market Towns meeting this year following on from the success of hosting the national conference in 2013. We will invite Nantwich to join the 5 Towns Partnerships Forum. There will be a big push on why we think Community Partnerships are a good idea at the Town and Parish Council Conference on 1 May 2014. There will also be meetings across Cheshire East to discuss and promote Community Partnerships with Town and Parish Councils

Partnership	Established	Driver
Middlewich Vision	2003	Desire of Town Council, following successful community events – rural funding
Sandbach Partnership	2004	NWDA funding opportunity, Market Town Initiative
Congleton Partnership	2006	Market Town Initiative
Alsager Partnership	2007	Market Town Initiative
Holmes Chapel Partnership	2010	The above Partnerships working with the Parish Plan group

Nantwich Partnership	2013	The above Partnerships and to develop and implement a Public Realm Strategy

1.5   Key objectives of a Community Partnership are to:

- Involve the community, encourage community spirit and develop community capacity.
- Provide a sustainable environment which is clean, green, safe, and accessible.
- Increase social, cultural, recreation and sporting activities and event
- Promote a prosperous local economy and support local businesses.
- Build upon local distinctiveness and heritage.
- Attract inward investment and source new funding.

1.6   Key characteristics of a Community Partnership are:

- Independent constituted groups, which are established and led by the local community (volunteers)
- Act as the "umbrella" organisation for community activity, providing a forum through which various volunteer groups share information and ideas.
- Attract volunteers with a wide range of interests.
- Part of Cheshire East's model for Local Working and Stronger Communities, with strong links to partner organisations and service providers.
- Supported by Cheshire East Council, either through grant funding or staff time.
- Have good links with (including representation on management groups) and partly funded by their Town or Parish Council, with some also providing in kind support.
- Research local needs and carry out community consultations.
- Formulate and deliver action plans to address local needs.
- Develop and deliver local projects.
- Set up sub groups to deliver individual projects or longer term to deliver a range of activities relating to a common theme.
- Have good relationships with other groups within their towns and in some cases, existing groups become a sub-group of the partnership.
- Attract external funding to deliver projects.
- Work with other partnerships to share ideas and learning, for example the 5 Towns Partnership Forum which currently covers the 5 within the Congleton local area.
- Co-ordinator to provide administrative and project delivery support – either employed by the Partnership/Town Council, or support provided CEC's Communities Team.
  - A chairman (or chairwoman) who provides effective leadership
  - Steering Group/Management Board/Executive or similar that oversees the development and implementation of the Partnership's action plans.
  - Hold an AGM which is open to all.

1.7   Focus of work / types of projects

- Lead on community initiatives relating to, community events, improving the environment/public realm, heritage and supporting local business.
- Community events – including local consultations, Festivals & Fairs, Senior Voice, Sport, Art & Performing Arts events, retaining community assets, welcome packs.
- Support local voluntary groups – e.g. setting up local networks, promoting local groups, networking events.

- Environmental / public realm – e.g. community orchards, meadows & gardens, eco-schools, commenting on planning applications, cycle routes, In Bloom, signage, walkways, play areas, ponds & wetlands.
- Heritage – e.g. heritage trails, war memorials.
- Supporting local business – e.g. filling vacant shops, shop front improvements, future sustainability of towns, themed markets, business forum, and town centre benchmarking.
- do **not** address initiate or undertake projects relating to issues such as social care services, crime reduction, or work in deprived neighbourhoods.
- do **not** develop integrated service delivery, joint commissioning, or reducing unnecessary demand on public services.