EXISTING CREWE COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

Overview prepared by Chief Executive's and Partnerships Business Manager
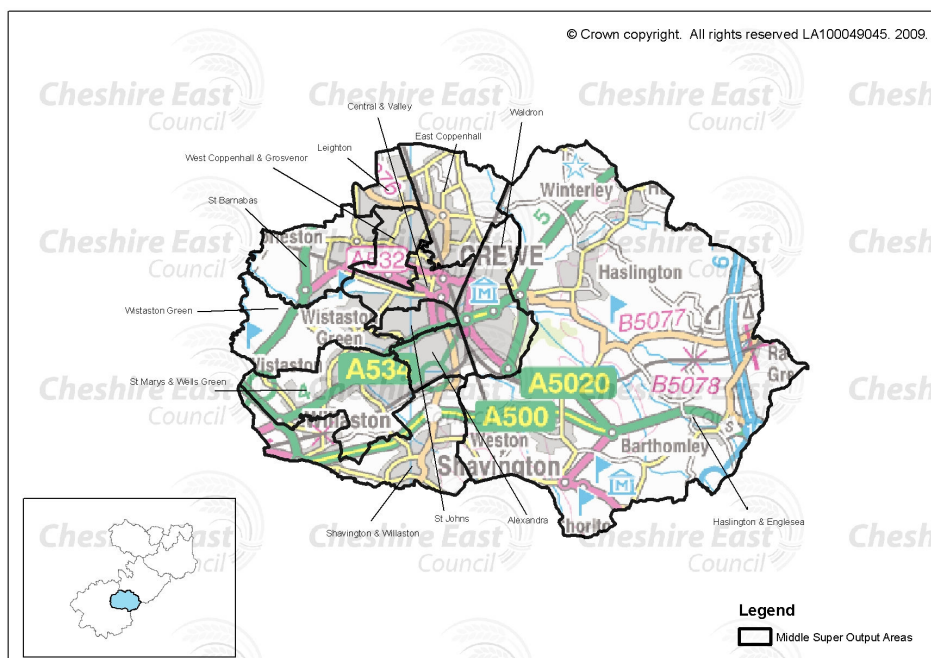
9th October 2009

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1. <u>Introduction</u>

1.1   Community engagement was at the heart of the business case for Local Government Re-organisation, seeking to ensure that services delivered by the new councils are tailored to reflect local circumstances and need.

1.2   In Cheshire East the new approach to community engagement is being centred around 7 Local Areas which, between them, cover the whole Cheshire East area. As set out in the LGR business case, the new approach to community engagement includes town and parish councils as well as community and neighbourhood groups. Partnership groups have been established in each of the 7 areas and their purpose is explained in the following section. Clearly these new arrangements are still in their infancy and will be developed further, reflecting local circumstances, over coming months.

2. <u>Crewe Local Area Partnership (LAP)</u>

2.1 Local Area Partnerships (LAPs) have been established across Cheshire East, to achieve the following outcomes:

- A more effective, co-ordinated approach to tackling local needs and priorities.
- More responsive local management of services.
- Improved engagement with citizens.
- Actual empowerment of citizens.
- Greater citizen satisfaction.
- Enhanced community governance.
- Increased voter turnout.
- Enhanced community leadership role for elected councillors.
- Value of money.

2.2 The LAPs are part of the Cheshire East Partnerships Framework (see Appendix 1) and clearly link and work with the Thematic Groups and Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) Executive. The LAPs are working with neighbourhood and community groups in their area, to engage with local people and address very local issues.

2.3 Crewe LAP brings together people who have an interest and responsibility for delivering improvements in the area. It is an action group, working together to make a difference. It holds regular meetings which are a touchdown point, where LAP members discuss issues and progress on their work in public. The LAP tackles issues through Task and Finish Groups and currently has 5 groups in place. Crewe LAP has also agreed its initial work programme based on evidence and issues identified by the community.

3. Neighbourhood Management Team

3.1   There is a previous Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy (NRS) covering Crewe which is delivered through a Neighbourhood Action Programme and Neighbourhood Management Team which was created under the former Crewe and Nantwich Borough Council. The strategy focused on 7 Crewe and Nantwich Borough Council wards, as identified as suffering from multiple deprivation by the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2004.

3.2   To respond to issues raised by residents, a partnership neighbourhood management team is in place. Neighbourhood Management is an intervention, used to tackle inequalities in deprived neighbourhoods. These areas have complex needs and require an intensive approach to involve communities to improve outcomes for local people. The neighbourhood management team is working to join up local services and develop agreements with service providers to jointly plan and deliver service differently in these areas.

3.3   The team includes senior officers from the local authorities, Wulvern Housing, Manchester and District Housing, Police and Fire. Research shows that to be effective, neighbourhood management involves the co-location of staff in the target neighbourhoods, with a 'shop front' of some kind so that the team is visible and accessible to local residents. Crewe Neighbourhood Management Team has established a number of neighbourhood offices, supported by front line officers working as part of local neighbourhood teams.

4. Neighbourhood Action Programme

4.1   Residents are engaged in delivering the NRS through the Neighbourhood Action (NA) Programme. Neighbourhood Action is a programme of activities, which "identify local issues, look at possible solutions and residents produce

action plans to improve their area." NA is continuing to engage with more people. The database of residents involved now includes 1727 residents. Over time, the scope of the programme has increased, offering a wide range of activities and events. In addition to meetings and consultations, there are now resource centres, regular community events, a number of working groups and regular street audits with residents, which highlight areas for action. Residents have produced Neighbourhood Action Plans (NAPs), which have informed the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy. The plans are continually developed, delivered and reviewed and will be linked into the work of Crewe LAP.

5. Community Groups

5.1 There is a wide range of voluntary and community groups within the Crewe area. Some of these are issue based and there are a number of neighbourhood based community led groups such as Valley Community Action Project and the Wistaston Green Partnership. These neighbourhood partnerships are addressing a range of issues within their neighbourhood.

5.2 The purpose of community engagement work is to build the capacity of our communities to lead partnership working in their area. Therefore Cheshire East LSP and the Crewe LAP are committed to supporting both existing and new community led partnerships. These neighbourhood partnerships produce community led action plans, which are important to the work of the LAP, as they will inform the Area Delivery Plan.

5.3 Two neighbourhoods (Leighton and Waldron) in Crewe currently have no neighbourhood based community group working on a community action plan.

6. Community Activities

6.1 There is a wide range of community activities in Crewe, delivered through both the NA programme and local community groups. These include; litter picks, graffiti removal, road safety promotions, one stop shop events, awareness raising, cookery classes, story sacs, LETS bike/walk, junior wardens, residents speed watch, smart water security marking, alley gate champions, youth activity clubs and community newsletters.

Partnership Working in Cheshire East

Cheshire East Executive

(LSP)

Thematic Groups

Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnership	Children's Trust	Health & Wellbeing	Economic Development, Learning &Skills	Environment & Sustainability

Local Area Partnerships (LAPs)

Nantwich	Crewe	Congleton	Macclesfield	Poynton	Wilmslow	Knutsford

Neighbourhood & Community Partnerships