

Cheshire East Council

Cheshire West and Chester Council

Shared Services Joint Committee

Date of Meeting: 26 November 2021

Report Title: Shared Services Business Plans 2021- 22 – Mid-Year Review

Senior Officer: Jane Burns: Executive Director of Corporate Services, CEC
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1. Report Summary

- 1.1 This report provides a summary of the 2021-22 Quarter 2 position for the Shared Service arrangements between Cheshire East Council (CEC) and Cheshire West and Chester Council (CWC).
- 1.2 The report includes financial and non-financial performance information for the period 01/07/21 to 30/09/21.
- 1.3 The report provides summaries of each of the key areas including the budget position, priorities and objectives, key performance indicators, and risks and issues, across all of the shared services, together with, for each service, a service dashboard with a summary narrative. Full business plans can be found in Appendix 2.
- 1.4 Overall, the position for the mid-year review point is that the performance of most services is meeting expectations in the business plans. However, although most services are forecasting a balanced budget, both ICT and Transactional Services continue to report financial pressures associated with B4B and unachievable income. Work continues to be undertaken on mitigating the shortfalls, but it is unlikely that a balanced year end position can be achieved. The Emergency Planning service is forecasting a very small overspend.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that Members:
 - i) Note the Shared Services Mid-year performance for 2021-22.

ii) Note the financial pressures on IT and TS Shared Services budgets.

3. Reasons for Recommendations

3.1 The Shared Services Administrative Agreement makes provision for the Joint Committee to receive reports to enable the review and monitoring of the performance of the Shared Services to take place. This report provides the 2021-22 mid-year position.

3.2 This report helps to deliver the revised performance management arrangements, agreed at the Shared Service Joint Committee (SSJC) on 25 September 2020. The revised arrangements assist with ensuring that service strategies, together with the resources and budgets required to deliver the service strategies, are in place and being effectively implemented.

4. Background

4.1 Currently there are eight Shared Services (six CWC hosted and two CEC hosted). They are:

- Archaeological Planning and Advisory Services (APAS) - CWC
- Archives and Local Studies - CWC
- Cheshire Rural Touring Arts – (CRTA) - CWC
- Emergency Planning - CWC
- Farms Estate (Management) - CEC
- ICT - CEC
- Libraries Shared Service - CWC
- Transactional Services - CWC

4.2 Day-to-day performance is managed by each shared service manager who reports, through their normal line management arrangements, to a service manager in the host authority and has a relationship with a client manager, in the other authority.

4.3 Shared service business plans provide details of the shared service operation, objectives and resources required. The business plans require a degree of flexibility to enable an appropriate response to the changing needs of each council, especially during the ongoing pandemic.

4.4 This report provides a summary of the 2021-22 performance at the mid-year point for the eight formal Shared Services arrangements between CEC and CWC. An overall summary of performance and business activity all of the shared services is in appendix 1.

5. Overall Summary

5.1 Overall Summary Ratings

The table below provides a judgement on the overall performance for each of the shared services. The judgement takes into account both performance (objectives and KPIs) and the budget position. The judgement criteria are set out below:

- RED – overspend of more than 10% of the budget and/or most objectives and/or KPIs not being met or on target
- AMBER – overspend of less than 10% of the budget and more than two objectives and /or KPIs not on target
- GREEN – on budget or underspent and all objectives and KPIs are on target

Service	Overall Performance 2019-20	Overall Performance 2020-21	Q1 Performance 2021-22	Q2 Performance 2021-22
Archaeology Planning Advisory Service	Green	Amber	Green	Green
Archives and Local Studies	Green	Amber	Green	Green
Cheshire Rural Touring Arts	Green	Green	Green	Green
Emergency Planning	Amber	Amber	Amber	Green
Farms Estate Management	Green	Amber	Green	Green
ICT	Amber	Amber	Amber	Amber
Libraries Shared Service	Green	Amber	Green	Green
Transactional Services	Amber	Red	Amber	Green

Overall Summary Ratings Commentary

- Most services are on track with objectives being achieved. There is one Emergency Planning objective which is impacted by Covid-19. This is set out in the individual business plan in Appendix 1.
- Most services KPIs are on track with four KPIs, one each in APAS, Emergency Planning, ICT and Libraries Shared Service that are impacted by Covid 19. They are set out in the individual business plans in Appendix 1.
- Most services are reporting a balanced budget or underspent financial position with, Emergency Planning forecasting a small overspend.
- The ICT budget has forecast overspend of £1,610k which is 9.2% of the total budget. A proportion of which that relates to staff pay award and Unit 4 ERP has provision already factored into budgets.

- Transactional Services are currently forecasting an overspend of £544,912 which is 10.13% mainly due to the impact of the revised, later, GO Live date for phase 2 of the Unit 4 ERP system. Budget provision for this has been made by two councils.

5.2 Budget Summary

The table below summarises the end of year forecast financial position for the all of the shared services.

Service	Planned Budget £	Q1 Forecast £	Q2 Forecast £	Predicted Variance £
Archaeology Planning Advisory Service	158,817	158,817	158,817	0
Archives and Local Studies	470,616	470,616	470.616	0
Cheshire Rural Touring Arts	84,000	84,000	84,000	0
Emergency Planning	303,716	302,522	307,198	(2,227)
Farms Estate Management	225,938	162,720	157,063	68,875
ICT	17,350,000	17,840,000	18,960,000	(1,610,000)
Libraries Shared Service	330,836	330,836	330.836	0
Transactional Services	5,294,018	5,522,270	5,882,235	(544,912)

Budget Summary Commentary

- Most services are reporting a forecast balanced or an underspend position at year end.
- The Farms Estate Management underspend is due to an ongoing staffing vacancy
- Emergency Planning are forecasting a small overspend of 1% of total budget.
- ICT are currently forecasting an overspend of 9.2%. Budget provision to cover £299k for B4B related costs falling within this overspend has been identified separately by the two councils. A further £167k of the overspend relates to shortfall in growth for the pay award (not yet finalised). Detailed work has been done on the budget. The funding model is predicated on 100,000 hours of income relating to projects . At the start of the financial year, it was anticipated that the figure would be in the region of 75,000 hours. A governance group has been overseeing mitigating actions including vacancy management, a review and reduction of third party contracts and permanent recruitment to replace certain contractor roles. There has been some success in this regard, however, the shortfall in income generating work is unlikely to be recovered this year. There is a

collective commitment to address and further work will be brought back to the Joint Committee at the next meeting. Mitigation work is linked to the ongoing shared services review.

- Transactional Services are currently forecasting an overspend of 10.13% which is the impact of the revised, later, GO Live date for phase 2 of the Unit 4 ERP system as it has been agreed that the costs of staff and consultants working on the project are to be charged to the Transactional Services budget. Budget provision for this has been made by two councils. Additionally there is some loss of income predicted from November due to a loss of schools business which is being mitigated by vacancy management within the service.

5.3 Priorities and Objectives Summary

The table below sets out a summary of all of the services' priorities and objectives at the mid-year point. Full details are in each Services Business Plans in appendix 2.

The assessment criteria is:

Green: On Track

Amber: Behind but expected to be achieved

Red: Not expected to be achieved

Blue: On hold due to Covid-19

Service	Total number of Objectives	Number of Green Objectives	Number of Amber Objectives	Number of Red Objectives	On hold due to Pandemic
Archaeology Planning Advisory Service	5	5	0	0	0
Archives and Local Studies	6	6	0	0	0
Cheshire Rural Touring Arts	3	3	0	0	0
Emergency Planning	8	7	0	0	1
Farms Estate Management	2	2	0	0	0
ICT	23	17	5	1	0
Libraries Shared Service	9	8	1	0	0
Transactional Services	7	5	2	0	0

Priorities and Objectives Commentary

- Most priorities and objectives across all services are on track.
- The Emergency Planning objective which is behind but expected to be achieved by the end of the year, is off track, due to the impacts of Covid-19. The objective is the continued implementation of the off-site planning and exercise regime to ensure that both authorities meet their statutory

emergency planning obligations under the COMAH, REPIR, PSR, and Flood & Water Management legislation. All other COMAH, REPIR and PSR plans were within agreed ONR & HSE timescales as at end of quarter 2.

- There are five ICT objectives which are rated as amber – off track but expected to be achieved by the end of the year. These include:
 1. Service Improvement Plan (SIP) to drive continuous improvement in operations – there is some slippage on dates agreed with Clients due to resource availability.
 2. Review of Technical Debt Register to inform business planning and to assist with simplification and cost optimisation work. Further work to be undertaken with both Councils to identify what can be decommissioned. Governance improvements under review to ensure that when new systems are implemented the legacy applications are appropriately decommissioned.
 3. Support the Councils (Joint Business Design Authority) to enable exploitation of existing ICT investment or design of new services. Core infrastructure components for the Councils continue to be shared. There is no opportunity to share further than core infrastructure as Councils find it difficult to align timescales and requirements, this was highlighted in the recent Shared Services Review.
 4. Agree a new ICT Service Product Catalogue. Value Propositions are being developed.
 5. Recruitment of/New staffing structure for ICT Services. This objective was agreed before the Shared Services Review had been completed. It would make more sense to agree a new structure once the due diligence work has been completed and a decision made on the new model. In the absence of a full restructure, the service continues to review the most appropriate route to resourcing skills/capability and capacity gaps. The service has reduced the number of contractors required in the area of project management and has focussed on bringing through, training and mentoring our own staff to great success. However, pressures in the wider labour market mean have seen a recent increase in turnover and qualified agency staff are more difficult to source.
- One ICT objective is now assessed as red – the development of a sustainable financial strategy. However, good progress made around the

service information, utilisation, cost transparency, demand, contracts and resourcing. Work on the transition to a new model will continue in 21/22 subject to the recommendations from the Shared Service Review.

- The Libraries Shared Service objective which is behind but expected to be back on track by the end of the year is the BookStart initiative which has been impacted due to the absence of the postholder.
- The two Transactional Services objectives which are behind but expected to be achieved by the end of the year are connected to the implementation on the Unit 4 ERP system which is now planned for Autumn 2021. They include:
 1. To review KPI targets, contractual arrangements and SLAs in line with functionality of UNIT4 ERP
 2. To meet service policy options implementing a new structure for the shared service following the implementation of Unit4 ERP

Both will be addressed after Go Live 2.

5.4 Key Performance Indicators Summary

The table below sets out an overview of the key performance indicators (KPIs) , at the mid year point, for each of the shared services. The assessment criteria is:

- Green: On Track
 Amber: Behind but expected to be achieved
 Red: Not expected to be achieved
 Blue: On hold due to Covid-19

Service	Total number of KPIs	Number of Green KPIS	Number of Amber KPIs	Number of Red KPIs	On hold due to Pandemic
Archaeology Planning Advisory Service	5	4	0	0	1
Archives and Local Studies	6	6	0	0	0
Cheshire Rural Touring Arts	3	3	0	0	0
Emergency Planning	5	4	0	0	1
Farms Estate Management	10	9	0	0	0
ICT	3	3	0	0	0
Libraries Shared Service	11	10	0	0	1
Transactional Services	3	3	0	0	0

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Performance Indicators Commentary

- All of the key performance indicators are set out in full in each of the services individual business plans in appendix 2.
- The majority of the KPIs are on track with just three KPIs now deferred due to the pandemic impact. They are:
 - The deferred APAS KPI is in respect of the “% number of records reviewed in the Cheshire Historic Environment Record per annum”. This is because the historic Environment Record System cannot be accessed from home and staff are working from home as part of the Covid-19 arrangements. This KPI will resume, in line with new working arrangements, as part of the pandemic recovery plan.
 - The deferred Emergency Planning KPI relates to the number of statutory plans and exercises delivered within agreed timescales. Some of these are currently delayed, but the KPI is expected to be achieved by the end of the year.
 - The deferred Libraries shared service KPI relates to the increase under 5s membership.
- One ICT KPI regarding project delivery customer satisfaction has now been amalgamated with a wider customer satisfaction KPI and will no longer be reported separately.

5.5 Overview of Risks and issues

Risks are reported by exception. This means that:

- Only risks rated as high risks and scoring 9 or over will be reported
- Risks which increase to 9 will be reported
- New risks of 9 or over added to the risk log will be reported
- Where risks scoring 9 or over have reduced since the last reporting period, they will be reported on to show the risk reduction.

The table below sets out the number of risks and issues for the services at the mid year point.

Service	Number of Risk rated 9>	Number of Issues
Archaeology Planning Advisory Service	0	0
Archives and Local Studies	0	0
Cheshire Rural Touring Arts	0	0
Emergency Planning	3	3
Farms Estate Management	1	0
ICT	1	1
Libraries Shared Service	0	0
Transactional Services	0	0
Total	5	4

Risks and Issues Commentary

- All shared service managers manage identified risks, including listing risks and issues on corporate risk registers as appropriate. Only risks rated as high - scoring 9 or 12 - are reported. In total, this quarter, there are 5 risks rated as 9 or over and 4 issues as follows:
 - Emergency Panning has three risks and issues which have arisen due to the impacts of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, they include:
 - Failure to deliver agreed objectives as a result of team responding to a major incidents.
 - Failure to deliver agreed objectives as a result of team responding to significant number of Major Incidents/ Major Incident Standbys .
 - Statutory requirements of COMAH, REPIIR and PSR legislation. Failure to meet those duties in line with the statutory deadlines.
 - The Farms Estate Management has one risk rated as 9 - the impact of reducing income as a result of disposals. This is a primarily a CWC risk.
 - The ICT risk is - Any lack of clarity in funding, sourcing, skills, inventory, service levels, governance, and operating procedures may result in failure to provide adequate end user support within reasonable time frames with potential loss of credibility. Failure to keep infrastructure, systems, and solutions in a compliant state. Ageing infrastructure which is either end of life and non-compliant or has a significantly greater risk of failure. A further risk workshop is to be held.

- The ICT issue related to the budget overspend is explained in the Budget Commentary above.
- Further details are in the Business Plans in appendix 2.

6. Individual Shared Service Summaries

The individual shared service summaries for quarter two are set out below in a dashboard format, together with supporting commentary. Each dashboard sets out:

- the overall rating, based on the judgement criteria set out in section 5.1.
- the budget position.
- the number of objectives and their RAG rating (blue are deferred due to Covid -19).
- the number of KPIS and their RAG rating (blue are deferred due to Covid -19).
- the number of risks scoring 9 or over.
- the number of live issues.

A collated summary dashboard for all shared services is in appendix 1.

Full details are in the individual service business plans in appendix 2.

The individual service dashboards are set out below.

Archaeology Planning Advisory Service (APAS)

Dashboard

Overall rating	Green			
Budget	Balanced			
Priorities and Objectives	5	0	0	
Key Performance Indicators	4	0	0	1
Number of risks 9>	0			
Number of issues	0			

Commentary

- The APAS service is rated as green as the budget, objectives and KPIs are all on track. There are no risks or issues to report.
- Achievements of note, at the mid-year review, include:
 - APAS continues to be heavily involved in HS2A and HS2B and has recently attended and contributed to a number of seminars designed to develop the archaeological research strategy for HS2B.
 - A report on the excavation of the Bronze Age cemetery investigated in advance of the construction of the A556 has now been published in the Archaeological Journal.
 - Notable discoveries have been made on smaller developments including a site in Bunbury. In addition, work in Middlewich on new water supply infrastructure works during August and September has uncovered further important evidence relating to the Roman period and the salt production industry.
- The APAS KPI which is rated as blue, deferred due to the pandemic, is “the % number of records reviewed in the Cheshire Historic Environment Record per annum”. This is because the historic Environment Record System cannot be accessed from home. This KPI will resume in line with new working arrangements as part of the pandemic recovery plan.

Archives and Local Studies

Dashboard

Overall rating	Green			
Budget	Balanced			
Priorities and Objectives	6	0	0	0
Key Performance Indicators	6	0	0	0
Number of risks 9>	0			
Number of issues	0			

Commentary

- The Archives and Local Studies service is rated as green as the budget, objectives and KPIs are all on track. There are no risks or issues to report.
- Achievements of note, at the mid-year review, include:
 - The Archives and Local Studies onsite volunteer programme restarted in July 2021.
 - Extensive community engagement has been undertaken during the Spring, through to Autumn and feedback from NLHF has been very positive about the extent and nature of this engagement.

Cheshire Rural Touring Arts

Dashboard

Overall rating	Green			
Budget	Balanced			
Priorities and Objectives	3	0	0	0
Key Performance Indicators	3	0	0	0
Number of risks 9>	0			
Number of issues	0			

Commentary

- The CRTA service is rated as green as the budget, objectives and KPIs are all on track. There are no risks or issues to report.
- Achievements of note, at the mid-year point include:
 - Live performances began again in September and there is a work programme for the autumn season.
 - Planning for Spring/Summer 22 is underway.

Emergency Planning

Dashboard

Overall rating	Green			
Budget	(2,227)			
Priorities and Objectives	7	0	1	
Key Performance Indicators	4	0	0	1
Number of risks 9>	3			
Number of issues	3			

Commentary

- The Emergency Planning service has moved from an amber rating in quarter 1 to green at the mid-year point as the priorities, objectives and KPIs are green, except the pandemic deferred ones. The budget is showing a 1% forecast overspend.
- The deferred objective and KPI, and the risks and issues all relate to the the implementation of the off-site planning and exercise regime to ensure that both authorities meet their statutory emergency planning obligations under the COMAH, REPPiR, PSR, and Flood & Water Management legislation. This is a a result of the impacts of Covid 19. However, the KPI regarding the percentage of statutory plans and exercises delivered within agreed timescales, currently this stands at 92% against a target of 100%, which is an improvement on last years actual achievement of 76%.
- Achievements of note, at the mid-year point, include:
 - Between 01/04/2021 and 06/10/2021 the Service has responded to 11 incidents (CWAC: 6; CE: 5) including 2 Major Incidents and 4 Major Incident Standbys including the Major Incident for the C-19 pandemic impacting both Council areas, as well as a roof collapse at Northwich Rail Station, closures of the M6, and a heatwave. The Service continues to provide a high level of support and advice to both Councils' pandemic command structures, and at the multi-agency level – this will likely continue for the remainder of 2021.
 - Excellent feedback is continuing to be achieved in respect of the online training delivered.

Farms Estate Management

Dashboard

Overall rating	Green			
Budget	68,875			
Priorities and Objectives	2	0	0	
Key Performance Indicators	9	0	0	0
Number of risks 9>	1			
Number of issues	0			

Commentary

- Overall, the Farms Estate Management Service is assessed as on track and rated green.
- There is currently an underspend of £68,875 due to a staffing vacancy.
- One risk is rated as 9 and relates to the potential impact of reducing income from df disposals. This risk is applicable to CWC council only.
- Achievements of note at the mid-year point include, in respect of disposals:
 - For CWC council, the Shotwick Park disposal has ben approved
 - For CEC there has been £310,000 in completed sales; £542,750 agreed sales but subject to contract; and, £725,000 worth identified for potential sale in year.

ICT

Dashboard

Overall rating	Amber			
Budget	(1,610,000)			
Priorities and Objectives	17	5	1	
Key Performance Indicators	3	0	0	0
Number of risks 9>	1			
Number of issues	1			

Commentary

- ICT are currently forecasting an overspend of 9.2%. Budget provision to cover £299k for B4B related costs falling within this overspend has been identified separately by the two councils. A further £167k of the overspend

relates to shortfall in growth for the pay award (not yet finalised). Detailed work has been done on the budget.

The funding model is predicated on 100,000 hours of income relating to projects. At the start of the financial year, it was anticipated that the figure would be in the region of 75,000 hours.

A governance group has been overseeing mitigating actions including vacancy management, a review and reduction of third party contracts and permanent recruitment to replace certain contractor roles. There has been some success in this regard, however, the shortfall in income generating work is unlikely to be recovered this year. There is a collective commitment to address and further work will be brought back to the Joint Committee at the next meeting. Mitigation work is linked to the ongoing shared services review.

- Within the overspend there are costs relating to Unit 4 ERP amounting to £299k in the current year which both councils have identified separate budgets for. In addition there is also £167k relating to a shortfall in growth for the pay award for 2021-22.
- The ICT risks is - Any lack of clarity in funding, sourcing, skills, inventory, service levels, governance, and operating procedures may result in failure to provide adequate end user support within reasonable time frames with potential loss of credibility. Failure to keep infrastructure, systems, and solutions in a compliant state. Ageing infrastructure which is either End Of Life (EOL) and non-compliant or has a significantly greater risk of failure. A number of actions to address the risks are set out in the individual ICT service business plan in appendix 2.
- Achievements of note, at the mid-year point, are that:
 - 100% of projects were delivered to time and quality standards. All 10 projects passed each of the three milestones during Q2.
 - Only two major incidents were recorded in Q2.
 - Regular bitesize ICT sessions scheduled monthly and advertised on Centranet.
 - Weekly sessions for Bright Sparks held.
 - Specific training/drop in sessions arranged and successfully delivered for major change activity, e.g. InTune, MFA, Teams PBX Telephony.

Libraries Shared Services

Dashboard

Overall rating	Green			
Budget	Balanced			
Priorities and Objectives	8	1		
Key Performance Indicators	10	0		1
Number of risks 9>	0			
Number of issues	0			

Commentary

- The Libraries Shared Service is rated as green overall – on track. There are no risks or issues to report.
- One objective, relating to the Bookstart Initiative is paused due to staff sickness.
- The KPI of increasing under 5s membership has been severely affected by the restrictions and impact of Covid-19.
- Achievements of note, at the mid-year point, include:
 - 82,911 resources have collated and delivered to schools during quarter 2.
 - Take up on the new digital services has been strong. The team has provided support to the public on setting up access and using the services.
 - Academic year buybacks now complete. There has been no decrease in subscription numbers. Stronger position for forward planning, contracts for this financial year are in place now giving clearer picture for forward planning for 3 year offer.

Transactional Services

Dashboard

Overall rating	Green			
Budget	(£544.912)			
Priorities and Objectives	5	2	0	
Key Performance Indicators	3	0	0	0
Number of risks 9>	0			
Number of issues	0			

Commentary

- Transactional Services are currently forecasting an overspend as a result of the revised date for phase 2 of the Unit 4 ERP go live. A previous agreement that provided for the consultant costs and Transactional Services staff working on the project to be lodged against the Transactional Service budget. No budget was initially allocated to the service to account for these costs however both councils have made separate budget provision for this. Further overspends are due to a forecast loss of income from schools. Mitigation is through vacancy management and is linked to the ongoing shared services review.
- The service has seven objectives of which, two, relating to the Unit4 implementation, have been delayed until the autumn of 2021 and therefore assessed as amber as it is expected that they will be back on track by the end of the year. All other objectives are on track.
- All performance indicators are currently on track.
- There are no high rated risks or issues.
- Achievements of note, at the mid year point, include:
 - Transactional Services is on target to be change ready for Unit4 ERP Go Live 2.
 - An efficient and effective shared service delivering key financial services has been maintained.

7. Implications of the Recommendations

7.1 Legal Implications

7.1.1 The Shared Services Administrative Agreement sets out the overall arrangements in relation to the manner in which the sharing Authorities will work together.

7.1.2 Individual Shared Service Agreements require that Business Plans are regularly refreshed to ensure that they continue to meet the needs of both authorities going forward and that performance is reported on a regular basis. Operationally, this is managed on a day-to-day basis by the service managers and their line managers within each Council as part of the operation and management of each of the services. Additionally, each service has client managers in place who are also consulted in the development and monitoring of business plans.

7.2 Finance Implications

7.2.1 The Financial Implications are set out in main body of the report.

7.3 Policy Implications

7.3.1 There are no direct Policy implications

7.4 Equality Implications

7.4.1 There are no direct Equality implications

7.5 Human Resources Implications

7.5.1 There are no direct Human Resources implications

7.6 Risk Management Implications

7.6.1 Risks are managed by the commissioning client, and service managers within each Council, as part of the operation and management of each of the services. Risks are included in each organisations risk register as appropriate.

7.7 Rural Communities Implications

7.7.1 There are no direct implications for Rural Communities.

7.8 Implications for Children & Young People/Cared for Children

7.8.1 There are no direct implications for Children and Young People/Cared for Children.

7.9 Public Health Implications

7.9.1 There are no direct implications for Public Health.

7.10 Climate Change Implications

7.10.1 There are no direct Climate Change implications.

7.11 Ward Members Affected

7.11.1 This report relates to Shared Services that operate across both CE and CWAC, therefore all wards are affected in both Councils.

8. Access to Information

Documents are available for inspection at:

Cheshire East Democratic Services
Westfields, Middlewich Road
Sandbach
CW11 1HZ

or:

Cheshire West & Chester Democratic Services
HQ Building, Nicholas Street,
Chester,
CH1 2NP

9. Contact Information

9.1 Any questions relating to this report should be directed to the following officers:

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