

Economy & Growth Committee

Date of Meeting:	30th November 2021
Report Title:	Mid-year Performance Review – Growth
Report of:	Peter Skates, Director of Growth & Enterprise
Report Reference No:	EG/17/2021-22
Ward(s) Affected:	All wards

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. This report gives an update on performance across Growth & Enterprise department for the first half of 2021-22.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. That the Committee note the performance of the department;

3. Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1. The Economy & Growth Committee is responsible for reviewing and scrutinising the performance of the Growth & Enterprise department.

4. Other Options Considered

- 4.1. Not applicable.

5. Background

- 5.1. Growth & Enterprise is responsible for delivering Housing and Economic Development which vital elements of developing the 'sense of place' working with local and national partners. We also seek to grow the contribution of our Countryside, with cultural, rural and visitor economies. Recognising the importance of our environment, heritage, culture and visitor offer to the Cheshire East's character.
- 5.2. Management of our property portfolio and property disposal programme, ensures best use and value of the Council's assets while contributing to the strategic aims of the Council , and the Corporate Plan.
- 5.3. The Impact of Covid19 has placed additional challenges and pressures on recovering our Towns and Business network, the Growth & Enterprise Department has been heavily involved over the past year, and going forward

will be progressing Growth Strategies, Recovery Plans and Actions going forward.

5.4. The Cheshire East Council Corporate Plan 2021-25 sets out our vision for an open, fairer, greener Cheshire East with three broad aims to be an open and enabling organisation; a council which empowers and cares about people, and a thriving and sustainable place. The Growth & Enterprise department contributes to a number of the priorities under the aim of a thriving and sustainable place:

- A great place for people to live, work and visit
- Welcoming, safe and clean neighbourhoods
- Thriving urban and Rural economies with opportunities for all
- To be carbon neutral by 2025

6. Housing

Corporate Plan 2021-25: Key priorities	
A great place for people to live, work and visit	<p>Enable access to well designed, affordable and safe homes for all our residents</p> <p>To reduce the number of long-term empty dwellings</p> <p>To make best use of our surplus buildings and assets to support the borough and our partners</p>
Welcoming, safe and clean neighbourhoods	<p>Crime and anti-social activity and anti-social behaviour to be reduced</p> <p>Victims of crime and exploitation to be supported effectively by the council and partners through collaboration</p>
Thriving urban and rural economies with opportunities for all	Thriving and active rural communities
To be carbon neutral by 2025	To have delivered the milestones in becoming a carbon neutral council

Key Performance Indicators	2020/21 Outturn	Mid-year (20/21)	Mid-year (21/22)	Target 2021/22
Home adaptations for older and/or disabled residents	486	214	128	500
Increase the supply of new affordable housing	502	207	303	355
Maintain the number of long-term empty homes in Cheshire East to less than 1%	1.10%	End of year target	End of year target	<1%

Increase number of preventative and relief actions taken in order to reduce levels of homelessness in Cheshire East	1042	492	499	1000
Households helped to achieve affordable warmth	1643	30	188	500
Households are helped to improve their living conditions	283	87	145	200

- 6.1.** During the pandemic Housing staff continued to work hard to provide effective, customer focused frontline services to ensure that our residents were prevented from becoming homeless or were relieved from homelessness. We responded quickly to the call from Government for “Everyone in” and worked hard to provide those in temporary accommodation with a long-term housing solution.
- 6.2.** The ability to enter homes and carry out improvements and adaptations was also hindered by the pandemic, however Housing Standards and Adaptations staff found new innovative ways in which to engage with residents and deal with emergency issues, ensuring we could continue to enforce against poor housing conditions.
- 6.3.** Improving the energy efficiency of our homes and reducing fuel poverty is a priority within the Housing Strategy and we have successfully applied for and been awarded Green Homes Grant funding to improve the energy efficiency of some of our older housing stock. A further bid has also been successful for Sustainable Warmth funding to enable us to improve more homes, and we are working with our Registered Housing Providers to submit a bid for the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund.
- 6.4.** Ensuring we continue to increase the number of affordable homes across the authority is a priority set out within both the Corporate Plan, Local Plan and Housing Strategy. We undertook a comprehensive procurement exercise to establish the Council’s Housing Development Framework, entering into a Framework Agreement with seven organisations who have the specialisms to develop and manage new homes on suitable Council owned land assets. Suitable land assets have now been identified and we are progressing to phase one of the mini competitions, which will enable us to specify our requirements for the sites and select an organisation to take them forward to develop.
- 6.5.** Providing a safe place to stay for the transient Gypsy and Traveller community and dealing effectively with unauthorised encampments, recognising the impact on our settled communities continues to be a priority, and we have moved a step closer with the completion of our preconstruction activity to enable a planning application to be submitted and approved for the development of a Gypsy and Traveller Transit site.

- 6.6.** The formulation of a Homelessness strategy which also sets out how the Council will assist Government to eradicate rough sleeping is a statutory requirement and in September 2021 the Economy and Growth Committee approved the revised Homelessness and Rough Sleeping strategy. The strategy was developed following a period of review and consultation.
- 6.7.** Lessons learnt from the pandemic, demonstrated the need to provide suitable self-contained supported accommodation for those with complex needs, who require more intervention to enable them to sustain long term accommodation. Working in partnership with Plus Dane and P3 we have been able to set up both the Next Steps project and the Fresh Start project which collectively now provides an additional 12 homes with support. In addition to this we have also employed a Link Worker to assist those in our supported accommodation to move onto long term accommodation.
- 6.8.** We continue to support good landlords and avoid unnecessary regulation for those landlords who provide safe, well maintained homes, by demonstrating through our actions that poor standards of property management and letting out substandard accommodation will not be tolerated. We have reviewed our Housing Enforcement Policy to provide clear guidance, which is due to be presented to the Economy and Growth Committee for approval on 30th November 2021.
- 6.9.** Social media campaigns during Gas Safety and Fire Door Safety weeks raised the awareness of our landlords and tenants.
- 6.10.** In addition to the introduction of an Article 4 direction on identified locations within Crewe, the aim of which is to monitor and manage the growth of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) Members would like to see the introduction of Selective Licensing. Before being able to justify the introduction of Selective Licensing, the Council must demonstrate that it has tried alternative interventions to bring about improvements to an area. Due to the pandemic the introduction of interventions has slipped, however we have now established a cross departmental network to enable us to monitor interventions which are now being implemented and outcomes to inform the requirement for Selective Licensing.

7. Estates

Corporate Plan 2021-25: Key priorities	
A financially sustainable council which has increased levels of reserves	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Facilities Management team implement a series of projects and measures to reduce the running cost of the CEC estate The Property Services and Farms teams have a Disposal Programme that aims to deliver capital receipts for the Council. The Property Services and Farms teams manage leases on behalf of the Council and has an annual income target that offsets some costs of the service.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Estates Service completes the implementation and development of its asset management system (Concerto) and corresponding service delivery process adjustments The Estates Service successfully implements a new asset management plan
To make best use of our surplus buildings and assets to support the borough and our partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the community asset transfer policy and provide a clear framework to support effective transfer and further explore 'shared' use with our partners of town centre assets Deliver Disposal Programme, support other Council initiatives, for example Housing Development Framework.
To have delivered the milestones in becoming a carbon neutral council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver actions in the Cheshire East Council Carbon Action Plan Support where appropriate the Introduction of green vehicles across the fleet (including waste and highways) Reduce use of Gas by decarbonising sources of heating for our buildings Promote carbon neutrality and carbon zero development across Cheshire East, providing information, advice and guidance for householders and businesses to reduce their carbon use

Key Performance Indicators	2020/21 Outturn	Mid-year (21/22)	Target 2021/22
Capital receipts across assets and farms disposals	£1,117,000	£870,000	£1,000,000

- 7.1.** The impact of the pandemic and at the time of reporting to a lesser extent, EU Transition, has generated significant uncertainties in the property market and supply chains. In addition to this the Council as a public body has also had to respond to the pandemic, and the Council's property has been a significant factor in its response. The Estates team has been able to progress its work despite these uncertainties and additional activities.
- 7.2.** The Council's operational estate has provided a high assurance covid safe environment for its employees and its residents. This has enabled users of the Council's buildings to be able to continue using them with confidence. The team has also ensured that routine assurance and testing is progressed, in line with the expected target outcomes. The FM team, who have supported other officers to work from the Council's buildings (both front line and offices) – keeping them safe as well as supporting them with print and post services whilst working remotely.
- 7.3.** In addition to the ongoing £3.5m land and property maintenance programme and in line with the Council's Carbon Neutral by 2025 policy, the Estates Team has also progressed works on decarbonising its operational estate in year, utilising grant funding, including an LED lighting replacement programme,

additional solar PV and air source heat pumps into its estate, both in offices and front-line buildings. This has been delivered to a demanding timeline at a point where global supply chains are being tested, with longer lead in times for this category of material, which is in increased demand. During this work the buildings have remained open for residents and users.

- 7.4. The Capital Projects team have continued to deliver a number of property projects in the year, and perhaps the most notable of these has been the delivery of the newly refurbished Crewe market, where the team worked with the Economic Development team to manage the construction aspects of the project. This project has been submitted for a number of property related awards, and has been short listed at the NW Regional Construction Awards 2021 (project of the year category).
- 7.5. A number of significant contracts have been advanced, including the building services contract (including building maintenance and compliance), energy management and MFD devices and security. The Capital Projects team has also been shortlisted for 'Client of the year' at the NW Regional Construction Awards 2021.
- 7.6. It has been an uncertain time for the Council as a property owner. In part this is due to general market uncertainty created by the acceleration of the digitisation of the economy, perhaps felt most notably in the retail sector. The Council has managed its tenants, carefully monitoring their individual positions and where appropriate assuring that they were aware of the supports available to them during the pandemic. This has minimised the impact for the Council as a landlord.
- 7.7. The Estates team has provided support for management of essential supplies, and support to the covid testing and vaccination workstreams. It has also provided support to covid grants, supporting in particular the appeals process. The work on the Grant activity has been nominated for an ACES (Association of Chief Estates Surveyors) award.
- 7.8. The Economy and Growth Committee has also considered the Community Asset Transfer Framework, a revised policy. There has been strong interest in the renewed approach to asset transfers and the team is looking forward to progressing new asset transfers as part of its wider aspiration to rationalise the Council's estate.

8. Rural & Cultural Economy

Corporate Plan 2021-25: Key priorities	
A great place for people to live, work and visit	Continue to grow the Cheshire East visitor economy
Welcoming, safe and clean neighbourhoods	<p>Crime and anti-social activity and anti-social behaviour to be reduced</p> <p>To protect residents and improve our environment</p> <p>Improved green spaces for all. Enabling people to exercise and socialise in our parks and open spaces</p>

To reduce our impact on our environment		To improve biodiversity and natural habitats in the borough		
Key Performance Indicators	2020/21 Outturn	Mid-year (20/21)	Mid-year (21/22)	Target 2021/22
Ease of use of Public Rights of Way network (due to effect of Covid, a proxy source of data has been used which calls upon a greater percentage survey than the previous method although not random in geography across the borough)	93%	n/a	n/a	80%
Audience figures for Lyceum Theatre	0	0	4,390	66,700
Tatton Park visitor numbers	500,000 (impacted by pandemic and lockdowns)	240,000	380,000	750,000
Tatton Park net budget	£1,058,160 due to Covid impact	£683,374	£743,914	£743,914
Value of the Visitor economy (annual retrospective STEAM measure)	2020 £548m (reduced from £994m in 2019 due to impact of pandemic and lockdowns)	n/a	n/a	Annual figure due Sept 2022
% Carbon emissions being offset by the Council	28%	n/a	29.4%	38%

- 8.1. The Rural and Cultural Economy Service seeks to grow the contribution of countryside, cultural and visitor economy assets or opportunities to the Cheshire East economy helping it to be a thriving and sustainable place. The Service recognises the importance of our environment, heritage, culture and visitor offer to the area's character, economy, quality of place and wellbeing.
- 8.2. The Public Rights of Way (PROW) team has once again delivered a very high standard of service to the public despite the high demands and some capacity issues. The Public Rights of Way Sub-Committee has oversight of this statutory service and the annual report is available [online](#) having been presented its meeting on 13th September 2021.
- 8.3. This service continued during the challenging period of the Covid-19 pandemic when usage of the network increased as a result of the lockdowns. Lockdowns highlighted the vital importance of the network for our communities' physical and mental wellbeing, and in doing so, the necessary of resources to maintain the asset, contribute to active travel and provide the benefits of wider access to the rural area and countryside.
- 8.4. Since April 2021 the team has responded to 210 new issue reports about path furniture, signposting, surface and bridges, replacing and repairing where necessary and resolving 220 issues; progressed path diversion cases; processed claims for routes; and responded to enquiries from landowners and users in order to protect and maintain the network for all. Capacity is stretched on the legal orders work, dealing with 8 new diversion applications

(compared to 7 last year), 7 new Definitive Map Order claims received compared to 1 in same period last year and 82 searches undertaken compared to 55 for the same period last year.

- 8.5.** The Countryside Management team works closely with the PROW team to improve access to the wider countryside and is responsible for twenty Country Parks, Nature Reserves, countryside sites and linear routes such as Teggs Nose Country Park, Brereton Heath Nature Reserve, and has seen the recognition with two 'Green Flag' awards for countryside sites.
- 8.6.** The Visitor Economy team supports an important sector for Cheshire East that until the pandemic would have been worth more than 1bn to the local economy in 2020. While sales of event tickets have been impacted by changes to the market through the pandemic, requests for visitor information and sales of local products or gifts are beginning to pick up again as town centre footfall increases.
- 8.7.** As anticipated and reported to Committee in September, the value of visitor economy reduced in 2020 as a result of the pandemic, the lockdowns and impact of associated regulations. The economic value reduced to £548m in 2020 from £994m in 2019 (STEAM data) while direct employment also fell from over 11,000 to around 5000 in the same year.
- 8.8.** Visitor Economy team has worked with Marketing Cheshire and others to develop a series of promotional campaigns to assist businesses as restrictions were removed and to develop a bespoke approach to the significant issues of recruitment, retention, and skills in 2021. The Tourism Recovery Plan was approved by the Economic and Growth Committee on 16th September 2021 to support sector recovery to the benefit of the wider economy.
- 8.9.** The Tourism Skills Academy was launched in September 2021 as part of the recovery plan. A large number of former employees are reluctant to come back into the sector due to finding a better pay or work/life balance in another sector or in response to perceived risk that the sector may close again. This has led to a significant pressure on businesses, with many having reduced menu's, reduced opening times or even closing completely as they just cannot get staff. The project offers targeted support and the opportunity to have a week's long training course into hospitality, along with 1-1's and CV/Interview assessments. At the end of it they are offered a work placement and a guaranteed job interview. The project is fully funded and in partnership with Job Centre Plus & Springboard.
- 8.10.** The Cultural Economy team supports cultural regeneration, commissioning under the Council's Cultural Framework, Creative sector development, museum and heritage organisations and theatre including Rural Touring and the Lyceum.
- 8.11.** The Lyceum Theatre, which is owned by the Council but managed by HQ Theatres, reopened in September following a 17-month closure due to COVID restrictions. Cheshire Rural Touring Arts (CRTA) delivered a Cultural

Recovery programme with arts Council funding, including outdoor performances and audience engagement for home-based activities.

- 8.12.** Plans for History Centre in Crewe continue to progress with National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) mid-point review due in December. The development stage of the project includes building design to RIBA stage 3, activity planning, interpretation, business planning, consultation, and engagement. This will lead to a second stage bid to the NLHF in spring/Summer 2022 to deliver the History Centres (Crewe and Chester) and service developments.
- 8.13.** A Planning application has been submitted for Ly2, in Lyceum Square, Crewe. Working with Economic Development colleagues, the Cultural Economy Team are currently working on the art elements of the project.
- 8.14.** Proposals for 'Powerhouse' in Crewe (a £6million new commercial music venue and creative skills development hub) have been accepted by Crewe Town Board for approval to next stage of Towns Fund process. This would be sited immediately adjacent to and complement Ly2, the Market Hall and the Lyceum Theatre.
- 8.15.** Other work commissioned under the Council's Cultural Framework includes a project that received funding through the Welcome Back fund to allow for street pianos, and light boxes for both Macclesfield and Crewe Town Centres. The MAKO programme of digital and creative engagement for young people is another commissioned programme that continues to deliver in Crewe. It has successfully engaged with over 70 vulnerable young people so far this year.
- 8.16.** Tatton Park, which received another 'Green flag' in October 2021, continues to be an important environmental and community resource as a driver of the local visitor economy. The Tatton Park business plan is being delivered but has been adjusted to take account of the impacts of the pandemic and assist in the recovery phase. Despite the impacts on visits, Tatton Park was identified as the 5th most visited paid-for attraction in England in 2020. Visitor numbers to the Park, Garden and Farm attractions have buoyant although some areas of activity continued to be impacted by Government restrictions until the end of June 2021.
- 8.17.** Events are an important area of activity, which have started again since June 2021. Despite the loss of a few events from the calendar, Tatton has been able to host much of its usual programme, including the RHS Flower show which welcomed 65,000 visitors in July. Some indoor events, such as corporate bookings, are experiencing a slower recovery, but latent demand resulted in a record 38 weddings in the 3 months following restrictions being lifted (Tatton normally averages 43 weddings a year). Filming bookings have continued to be strong with filming and photography bookings increasing on 2019 levels.
- 8.18.** Tatton Park was successful in receiving £180,000 from the Arts Council Cultural Recovery Fund to develop new programmes be introduced as part of a phased approach during the current academic year. It will include a range

of new on-site experiences, outreach workshops and opportunities for digital learning. The funding has allowed the department to significantly diversify the educational opportunities available to visitors and futureproof for the new ways in which people hope to engage with learning venues following the pandemic. In August, it was confirmed that Tatton Park received its ninth consecutive Sandford Award for Excellence in Heritage Education.

- 8.19.** At its meeting on 16th September 2021, the Economy and Growth Committee approved a process to review the plan and prepare a new Rural Action Plan for the period 2022 -25.
- 8.20.** The service is also heading the Natural Capital workstream (including nature-based offsetting) as part of the Council’s Carbon Action Plan, which saw 21,000 trees to date that are now in their establishment period and restoration of a small peat moss at Pastures Wood Farm near Gawsworth. A pipeline of schemes for the 21/22 planting season is being progressed for parks, open spaces, and countryside sites along with tree planting at Leighton Grange to supplement the solar PV scheme.
- 8.21.** The project team is working in partnership with Mersey Forest and Cheshire Wildlife Trust to improve tree planting and biodiversity on other land in the borough. It has also contributed to the development of a Natural Capital Assessment and Investment Plan for Cheshire and Warrington and completed a baseline study of peatlands and mosses in the borough that informed the development of funding bids by Moors for the Future and Cheshire Wildlife Trust under the Nature for Climate Peatland Grant Scheme. The project is also developing a catchment-wide approach to the Bollin Valley with a range of partners (including a pilot Environmental Investment Readiness project) and is supporting the Local Nature Partnership.

9. Economic Development

Corporate Plan 2021-25: Key priorities	
Priority: Thriving urban and rural economies with opportunities for all	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivery of a strategic regeneration plan for Crewe Delivery of a strategic regeneration plan for Macclesfield Successful town centres in our other key towns Maximise the commercial and regeneration opportunities associated with HS2 for the whole borough Thriving and active rural communities
Priority: To be carbon neutral by 2025	To have delivered the milestones in becoming a carbon neutral council

Key Performance Indicators	2020/21 Outturn	Mid-year (21/22)	Target 2021/22
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Key Performance Indicators	2020/21 Outturn	Mid-year (21/22)	Target 2021/22
Delivery of capital programmes and projects on time and to budget	New measure	100% • Crewe Market Hall • Castle St, Macclesfield	100%
Town Centre Footfall	Total footfall recorded across 11 centres as: Macc 11,613,182 Crewe 8,647,156 Wilmslow 8,154,476 Congleton 7,755,567 Knutsford 6,881,790 Sandbach 5,494,644 Poynton 4,073,452 Nantwich 4,011,358 Alsager 3,142,301 Handforth 3,109,622 Middl'ch 2,878,910	Increase from April 21-August 21: Crewe +17% Macc +7.9% Nantwich + 5.6% Knutsford - 2.4% Handforth - 6.1% Sandbach - 8.2% Wilmslow - 8.4% Alsager - 8.9% Congleton - 7.4% Middlewich - 11.2% Poynton - 11.5%	10% increase on 20/21 figures
Deliver Business Growth Support	Distributing Additional Restrictions Grant	All funding in rounds 1 and 2 allocated and distributed in accordance to the Council's Policy	100%

9.1. The Economic Development service comprises three main teams the Regeneration and Development team, the Business Support team and the Projects team – focused on carbon reduction/energy and digital connectivity – all three have been incredibly busy this financial year.

9.2. The Corporate Plan specifically identifies activity in Crewe and Macclesfield as the borough's largest towns as key objectives, and both are at exciting stages of development having established regeneration frameworks and significant funding streams secured. The Regeneration and Development team deliver this activity.

9.3. Crewe regeneration activity this financial year is summarised below:-

9.3.1. It has obtained two significant awards of Funding from the government: Future High Streets Fund (£14.1m), and Town Investment Fund (£22.9m) to revitalise the Town Centre.

9.3.2. Ten projects under the Future High Street fund have already been mobilised while the ten projects under the Towns fund have addressed funding conditions to advance and in October were submitted to the next key government gateway. The development of detailed business cases using HM Treasury's five case business case model have begun. An Accelerated Towns Fund project utilizing £0.75m government grant has been used to develop designs and costings for Ly2 project and a planning application has been submitted.

9.3.3. The Royal Arcade Development, with a new Bus Station and Multi Storey Car Park has developed to RIBA Stage 4 – designs and costings. In September the full scheme including the leisure element secured a hybrid planning consent.

9.3.4. The newly refurbished Market Hall successfully opened in May and the data shows that it is becoming an anchor retail, leisure, and entertainment venue in the town. Early success is supported by footfall data which shows that between April 2021 and August 2021 there were 17% more people in Crewe, to a figure of 983,108.

9.4. Macclesfield regeneration activity has also been at a significant scale:-

9.4.1. A Levelling Up Fund bid was submitted to the government in June 2021 for £14.5m, to redevelop the market hall, upgrade the public realm to enable and encourage outdoor hospitality and to improve the Old Sunday School a grade 2* listed building to enable greater and community and commercial use.

9.4.2. The £1.6m public realm investment on Castle St started and was completed in early October 2021. This council investment in public realm, has stimulated private investment in gateway buildings that were vacant providing new commercial and residential floorspace.

9.4.3. A specialist team of advisors has been appointed to develop an Options and Feasibility Study for the Station Gateway/campus and Churchill Way Corridor. A baseline report has been produced, with final report due to be completed by January 2022.

9.4.4. A brief has also been drafted for the Town Hall Study and shared with external stakeholders, whilst the Market Hall Options and Feasibility Study is ready for procurement of an external team to deliver.

9.4.5. Data shows that between April 2021 and August 2021 foot fall in Macclesfield increased 8% to 1,429,170 people.

9.5. Our Market towns - The Regeneration and Development team also focus on the maximising the vitality of our other nine towns (listed below), addressing another of the key priorities in the corporate plan. Unsurprisingly, covid has impacted these centres more so then Crewe and Macclesfield, as can be seen by the footfall data below April 2021 and August 2021:-

Alsager	decrease of 8.9%	330,540
Congleton	decrease of 7.4%	855,291
Handforth	decrease of 6.1%	362,882
Knutsford	decrease of 2.4%	792,021
Middlewich	decrease of 11.2%	323,273
Nantwich	increase of 5.6%	486,840
Poynton	decrease of 11.5%	430,176
Sandbach	decrease of 8.2%	602,497

Wilmslow decrease of 8.4% to 861,905

- 9.6.** This decrease in footfall in smaller towns is in line with national trends, data shows that between all but one of our key service towns saw a decrease in footfall as people favoured trips to their immediate and smaller centres. Carpark patronage data shows hopeful signs that footfall is increasing again from late summer/autumn.
- 9.7.** The team has produced a series of Town Vitality baseline reports for all nine key service centres. These baselines bring together for each centre an analysis of the town centres as they currently exist. Draft tool kit reports have also been produced, and shared with Town Councils and other stakeholders, showing examples of initiative supporting town centres aligned to Institute of Place Management top 25 factors. Stakeholder engagement meetings are scheduled October - December 2021, to identify key projects.
- 9.8.** The Team has utilised the Welcome Back to The High Street Fund, to launch the Say Hi to the High St campaign with 11 mini videos (one for each town) on social media, adverts in local press and mailshot to 187,000 residential and business premises to advertise safe reopening of local high streets. This and other activity have allowed us to successfully submit a first claim to the Welcome Back Fund for £230,000.
- 9.9.** The Regeneration and Development team is also responsible for delivering three major housing schemes (known as the 'Strategic Sites'), combining land owned by the council with other landowners' sites to provide development of significant scale. This includes a potential 1675 dwellings at Garden Village, Handforth, 1000 dwellings at Leighton, Crewe and 950 in South Macclesfield.
- 9.10.** At Leighton Green, NW Crewe package negotiations are ongoing with other landowners to crystallise s106 to confirm grant of planning consent. This will unlock land parcels and delivery strategy to be agreed. Planning for the Council's development land was approved in xxx 2021.
- 9.11.** At Handforth Garden Village the hybrid planning application has been progressed to its final form, targeted at Committee Date in early 2022. The vegetation clearance procurement is underway and S106/Roof tax mechanisms are being refined. Dialogue with stakeholders and other landowners continues.
- 9.12.** A more detailed update report on the above Strategic Sites will be presented to Committee in the new year.
- 9.13.** Other activity by the Projects team relating to energy and carbon saving has seen;
- The delivery of the ELENA Energy programme which has levered over £30m of investment locally into low carbon projects;
 - Embedding carbon into the council's business planning process;
 - Progressing the Council's first solar farm; and

- Delivering the Vanguard Hydrogen project.

9.14. The team also work with other service colleagues to embed carbon into other workstreams, including Handforth Garden Village, Crewe regeneration (Crewe Heat Network), and Macclesfield (Market Hall and Town Hall decarbonisation). At the Royal Arcade, for example, proposals for a scheme to incorporate increased electric vehicle charging capacity and photovoltaic cells in the bus station and multi-storey car park development have been adapted.

9.15. Coordinating the covid response to Cheshire East businesses, the Business Support team's primary objective over the last 18 months has been the delivery of the COVID-19 discretionary business support grants. This work has been accommodated on top of their normal, at times utilising secondees from across the Council to assist.

9.16. It has set up and delivered:-

9.16.1. the Local Discretionary Grant Scheme – assessing 751 applications and paid out £4.37million in grant to 540 businesses; and

9.16.2. the Additional Restrictions Grant Schemes 1 and 2 (ARG) – Assessed 2: 133 applications and paid out £11.1million in grants to 1,102 businesses. These programmes ended on the 30 June 2021.

9.17. A new £3.4m ARG programme started in August and is will conclude in March 2022. Currently the ARG has three workstreams:

9.17.1. the Extended Restrictions Grant Scheme – Launched in September and to date paid out £322k to 143 businesses;

9.17.2. the Business Interruption Fund – Launched at the beginning of October and to date approved 73 applications; and

9.17.3. the newly launched Recovery & Growth Grant.

10. Implications

10.1. Legal

10.1.1. There are no legal implications arising from this report.

10.2. Finance

10.2.1. The financial implications of changes in performance requirements or responding to current performance levels will be included in the Financial Year Review.

10.3. Policy

10.3.1. The report sets out how the department is contributing to the Cheshire East Council Corporate Plan 2021-25.

10.4. Equality

10.4.1. There are no equalities implications arising from this report.

10.5. Human Resources

10.5.1. There are no human resources implications arising from this report.

10.6. Risk Management

10.6.1. The performance reporting process provides opportunities for the Council to identify and focus on areas for improvement to support achievement of its strategic ambitions. Timely performance reporting mitigates risk of the Council not achieving its outcomes by providing the opportunity to review outputs, identify trends and areas for improvement, and introduce corrective and/or preventative actions wherever necessary to address areas of poor - or under - performance.

10.7. Rural Communities

10.7.1. There are no implications for rural communities arising from this report.

10.8. Children and Young People/Cared for Children

10.8.1. Growth Teams work positively on creating opportunities for Children and Young People in Cheshire East. Two examples would be:

10.8.2. Tatton Park : between September 2020 – July 2021, 44 school visits took place, with 1405 children welcomed to Tatton.

10.8.3. Working with colleagues in the People Directorate , and external organisations , proposals have been advanced for Government Funding under the Towns Fund for projects in Crewe such as Crewe Youth Zone, and Flag Lane Baths.

10.9. Public Health

10.9.1. There are no implications for public health arising from this report.

10.10. Climate Change

10.10.1. The performance report highlights key initiatives and schemes which support and benefit the Councils aims and objectives to reduce impact on climate change.

Access to Information	
Contact Officer:	Peter Skates, Director of Growth & Enterprise peter.skates@cheshireeast.gov.uk
Appendices:	None
Background Papers:	None