

## **Corporate Policy Committee**

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<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	14 July 2022
<b>Report Title:</b>	Performance Outturn 2021/22
<b>Report of:</b>	Jane Burns, Executive Director Corporate Services
<b>Report Reference No:</b>	CP/8/22-23
<b>Ward(s) Affected:</b>	All

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### **1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with an account of performance in 2021/22 against the priorities in the Council's Corporate Plan 2021-25.
- 1.2. Appendix A provides further detail of the priorities and actions that are set to be achieved by 2025, and the progress that has been made against these actions during the last year.

### **2. Executive Summary**

- 2.1 This report gives an update on performance against the priorities in the Council's Corporate Plan. It describes performance over the first year of the Corporate Plan 2021/22. A summary document of performance outturn is provided at Appendix A.
- 2.2 Cheshire East Council is on track to achieve the outcomes set out in the Corporate Plan by 2025. Despite the ongoing challenges of the coronavirus pandemic and having to mobilise new services and support, for example, to Ukrainian refugees, progress has been made against the priorities.
- 2.3 During 2022/23, the performance management framework will continue to be developed. A refreshed approach to consider closer alignment of finance, performance and risk management will be implemented. The Committee will receive the Quarter 1 report for 2022/23 in October 2022.

### 3. Recommendations

- 3.1. That the Committee note performance against the first year of delivery of the Corporate Plan.
- 3.2. That the Committee consider any additional data and intelligence that could and should be included in future performance reports.

### 4. Reasons for Recommendations

- 4.1. The Corporate Policy Committee is responsible for reviewing and scrutinising performance against the strategic aims and objectives in the Council's Corporate Plan 2021-25.
- 4.2. The performance management framework is under development and seeks to provide a robust, customer focussed view of performance. Member input into this development is valued to ensure that the performance management reports are of value.

### 5. Other Options Considered

- 5.1. Not applicable.

### 6. Background

- 6.1. The Council's Corporate Plan 2021-25 outlines 20 priorities for the Council, 6 aligned with the "Open" aim, to be an open and enabling organisation, 8 priorities are aligned to the "Fair" aim, a Council which enables and cares about people and 6 priorities are aligned to the "Green" aim, a thriving and sustainable place. The 20 priorities are as follows:

#### An open and enabling organisation

- Ensure that there is transparency in all aspects of council decision making
- Listen, learn and respond to our residents, promoting opportunities for a two-way conversation
- Support a sustainable financial future for the council, through service development, improvement and transformation
- Look at opportunities to bring more income into the borough
- Support and develop our workforce to be confident, motivated, innovative, resilient and empowered
- Promote and develop the services of the council through regular communication and engagement with all residents

#### A council which empowers and cares about people

- Work together with residents and partners to support people and communities to be strong and resilient
- Reduce health inequalities across the borough
- Protect and support our communities and safeguard children, adults at risk and families from abuse, neglect and exploitation
- Be the best Corporate Parents to our children in care
- Support all children to have the best start in life
- Increase opportunities for all children and young adults with additional needs
- Ensure all children have a high quality, enjoyable education that enables them to achieve their full potential
- Reduce the reliance on long term care by improving services closer to home and providing more extra care facilities, including dementia services

#### A thriving and sustainable place

- A great place for people to live, work and visit
- Welcoming, safe and clean neighbourhoods
- Reduce impact on the environment
- A transport network that is safe and promotes active travel
- Thriving urban and rural economies with opportunities for all
- Be a carbon neutral council by 2025

- 6.2.** Cheshire East Council delivers around 500 services to around 398,800 residents. There are 3,562 staff and just over 3,000 staff in Cheshire East maintained schools. The first data from the Census 2021 has been released and the population of Cheshire East has risen by 28,700 since 2011, now standing at 398,800, this is a 7.7% increase. This compares with an increase of 6.3% for England and Wales and a 5.2% increase for the North West. Cheshire East remains the third largest authority in the North West (behind Manchester and Liverpool) and the fifteenth largest in England.
- 6.3.** This report reviews performance against the priorities in the Corporate Plan and aims to develop a “One Council” approach to performance management. This will include a balance of quantitative and qualitative data. For the 2021/22 year, an outturn performance report is at Appendix A. This details progress made against the Corporate Plan during 2021/22.
- 6.4.** Committees received performance information on a regular basis, specific to the subject of the committee. This performance report offers a general review of progress against the corporate plan and should complement the more detailed performance dashboards considered at Committees.
- 6.5.** For the second year of the Corporate Plan 2022/23, the performance management framework will continue to be reviewed and refined. It is planned to report to Corporate Policy Committee quarterly, with a co-ordinated approach across finance, performance and risk. The report on Quarter 1 will be considered in October, Quarter 2 in December and Quarter 3 in March 2023. Alongside this approach, work is being undertaken with Directorate teams to implement a more consistent approach to performance management, with dashboards and performance information to be produced in a more consistent format.

### **Open – An open and enabling organisation**

<b>Priorities</b>
<b>Ensure that there is transparency in all aspects of council decision making</b>
<b>Listen, learn and respond to our residents, promoting opportunities for a two-way conversation</b>
<b>Support a sustainable financial future for the council, through service development, improvement and transformation</b>
<b>Look at opportunities to bring more income into the borough</b>
<b>Support and develop our workforce to be confident, motivated and empowered</b>
<b>Promote and develop the services of the council through regular communication and engagement with all residents</b>

- 6.6.** Under the “Open” aim of the Corporate Plan, a significant milestone was achieved by the delivery and first review of the Committee System, marking achievement of a key Corporate Plan action. A first review of the

Committee system was considered by Corporate Policy Committee and full Council in April 2022:

[First Annual Review of Committee System \(cheshireeast.gov.uk\)](https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk)

- 6.7.** The second action in relation to this priority was the implementation of open data actions. The committee has previously received a report in relation to Open Data and the plan to achieve further openness and transparency of information. Progress against this action was reviewed by Corporate Policy Committee in April 2022:

[Open Data Report \(cheshireeast.gov.uk\)](https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk)

- 6.8.** The Council continues to exceed the Information Commissioner's expectations of 90% of Freedom of Information Act requests to be responded to within the statutory timescale, achieving 97% for the year. In 2021/22, there were 1,541 requests made under the Freedom of Information Act, this is a decrease compared to the 1,674 requests made during 2019/20 but an increase from the 1,379 requests during 2020/21. Analysis of the requests made show that the most requests are made in relation to Place services (45%), with the least requests made in relation to Adults, Health and Integration (11%). 14% of requests are in relation to Children's Services and 30% in relation to Corporate Services. The outcome of this work should be more information published, resulting in fewer requests under the Freedom of Information Act. Our policy states that requests must be responded to promptly, and no later than 20 working days after receipt. For 2021/22 the percentage of Freedom of Information Act requests completed within the timescales was 97%. This performance has remained consistent over the last 3 years, achieving 96% in 2019/20 and 97% in 2020/21. Performance in this area exceeds the Information Commissioner's expectation of 90% compliance but falls slightly short of the Cheshire East Council aspiration of 100% compliance.
- 6.9.** Good progress has been made in relation to customer experience, with the Customer Experience strategy approved in March 2021, followed by consultation on a new Customer Charter. A new performance measure of "customer effort" has been introduced, with contact centre customers scoring their experience out of 10 in relation to the "effort required to complete their request". During the year this score improved from 5.6/10 to 4.12/10. In 2021/22 customer satisfaction with the corporate contact centre rose to 73%. In 2022/23 work will continue to implement the Customer Experience strategy and to gain performance measures across all customer interactions, not just those through the contact centre.
- 6.10.** The action to work more collaboratively with Town and Parish Councils is ongoing. Discussions have been held with the Cheshire Association of Local Councils about a regular programme of engagement. This is being designed and implemented through a Consultation and Engagement officer working group, which is aiming to complete its work in the second

half of 2022/23. Regular communications are shared with Town and Parish Councils, however there is further work to be undertaken to strengthen the communication and collaboration between Town and Parish Councils and Cheshire East Council.

- 6.11.** Progression of digital transformation, where accessible and appropriate for residents and staff, has continued throughout 2021/22. During the year there were 208,555 online transactions and over 61,000 enquiries were handled by the Chatbot service. Digital accounts with the Council have increased by around 10,000, there were 103,321 online accounts at the end of 2021/22, compared to 93,578 at the end of the previous year. The workforce has also benefited from digital transformation, with new hybrid digital technology installed in council offices in Sandbach, Crewe and Macclesfield.
- 6.12.** The priority to listen, learn and respond to our residents is a key outcome of the cross-council officer Consultation and Engagement officer working group, established in 2022 and due to complete its work during 2022/23. The aim is to achieve a “one council” approach to Consultation and Engagement and ensure that insight and intelligence is shared to improve outcomes.
- 6.13.** A further action under the “listen, learn and respond to our residents” priority was to achieve the Armed Forces Covenant Silver Award and subsequently the Gold Award by 2025. To support this action an Armed Forces Support Officer was recruited in 2021, and the Silver Award was successfully achieved in May 2022. 17 employees have declared that they are veterans or closely involved with the Armed Forces, with 2 being active reservists. Work will continue over the next 2 years to progress towards Gold standard through improving our policies for veterans and reservists.
- 6.14.** Evidence of performance against the priority to support a sustainable financial future for the council is detailed within the financial outturn report and reports in relation to the Medium-Term Financial Strategy. There were 2 key actions outlined in the Corporate Plan against this priority – the Medium-Term Financial Strategy and successful delivery of the Transformation Programme. The Transformation Programme is currently subject to a review and the outcome of this review will be reported to Corporate Policy Committee during the second half of 2022/23.
- 6.15.** The Committee receive six monthly updates on the Workforce Strategy, the most recent of which was on 9 June 2022, ([Report Template v4.0 \(cheshireeast.gov.uk\)](#)).

Our workforce data is used to manage performance against the priority to support and develop our workforce to be confident, motivated, innovative, resilient and empowered. The change of system from Oracle to Unit4/ERP has caused a temporary delay in the availability of some information and reports, and there remains challenges in ensuring the data within the new

system is robust and can be reported on. It is envisaged that performance management in this area will be improved during 2022/23 due to improvements with the Unit 4 best for business system. A new performance development review process through the Council's Learning Lounge system has been upgraded.

- 6.16.** The staff turnover rate outturn position for 2021/22 was 9.7%. Overall, staff turnover has decreased since 2021/22 and meets the annual target of less than 12%. The staff turnover percentage has decreased in Corporate Services, Adults, Health and Integration and Place during 2021/22. The staff turnover in Children's services has increased from 10.5% in quarter 1 to 14.8% in quarter 2. An officer working group is being established to review recruitment, retention, reward and recognition to address current staffing challenges.
- 6.17.** The number of agency staff contracted by Cheshire East Council has increased during 2021/22 and has averaged 225 for the year. This is an increase compared to the last 3 years (165 in 18/19, 173 in 19/20 and 177 in 20/21). Levels of agency staff have remained consistent in Corporate Services and Place but have increased in Children's services and particularly in Adults, Health and Integration. Agency staff have been required due to Covid-19 and for other frontline worker roles such as social workers, occupational therapists, support workers and educational psychologists. Total spend on agency staff during 2021/22 was £2,559,211. There has been a significant rise in spend in Place services (from £13,828 in quarter 3 to £128,559 in quarter 4) due to senior appointments in this area. As new Senior staff become more settled in the organisation and implement service restructures it is envisaged that there will be less use of agency staff. The breakdown of agency staff by directorate, over each quarter of 21/22 is as follows:

	Q1 21/22	Q2 21/22	Q3 21/22	Q4 21/22
Adults, Health and Integration	69	79	83	126
Childrens	35	40	24	36
Corporate	102	113	89	89
Place	3	7	5	6
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>209</b>	<b>239</b>	<b>201</b>	<b>257</b>

## Fair – a Council which empowers and cares about people

Priorities
Work together with residents and partners to support people and communities to be strong and resilient
Reduce health inequalities across the borough
Protect and support our communities and safeguard children, adults at risk and families from abuse, neglect and exploitation
Be the best Corporate parents to our children in care
Support all children to have the best start in life
Increase opportunities for all children and young adults with additional needs
Ensure all children have a high quality, enjoyable education that enables them to achieve their full potential
Reduce the reliance on long term care by improving services closer to home and providing more extra care facilities, including dementia service

- 6.18.** During 2021/22 the Council divided the former “People” directorate into a Children and Families directorate and an Adults, Health and Integration directorate, to enable greater focus in each specialist area. During 2021/22 each area has established the key areas for transformation and improvement and these programmes will be implemented over the next years of the Corporate Plan. There will be significant challenges in this area over the coming years to implement transformation programmes including progression of NHS reforms in relation to Integrated Health and Social Care, and progression of outcomes of the Schools White paper and the SEND and alternative provision green paper, both published in at the end of the year, in March 2022.
- 6.19.** 5 of the 8 priorities within the “Fair” aim are performance managed through Children’s Services and 3 through Adults, Health and Integration.
- 6.20.** The Cheshire East Social Action Partnership has established a Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise Leaders Group for the sector. This is starting to provide a clearer communications channel between the council and the sector.
- 6.21.** A further success under this priority has been the support provided to individuals brought to the UK under the Afghan Relocation and Assistance Programme (ARAP) and the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS). Wrap around support was provided by Cheshire East Council for 263 individuals from 12<sup>th</sup> August 2021 to 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2021. 5 families were resettled into permanent accommodation.
- 6.22.** During 2021/22 Cheshire East Council have also supported Ukrainian refugees under the “Homes for Ukraine” scheme. This support includes safety and safeguarding checks on properties and sponsor households, managing payments and supporting school and early year placements.

- 6.23.** In March 2022 the All Age Carers Strategy 2021-25 was approved. A service model for the retendering of the All Age Carers Hub was approved in March 2022. At the end of 2021/22 5,061 carers were registered with the Cheshire East hub. A Live Well for Longer Plan has been co-produced with residents, which includes addressing loneliness and isolation challenges within communities. The next year will focus on implementing the actions set out in these plans.
- 6.24.** During 2021/22, Adults, Health and Integration have continued to progress NHS reforms in relation to Integrated Care Systems. Cheshire East has implemented a Place Partnership Board and a new Place Director was recruited.
- 6.25.** A network of food poverty providers has been developed to support sustainability and coordination of food related activity. During 2022/23 the network will continue to work on supporting residents, particularly with the impact of cost-of-living increases.
- 6.26.** Children's services are continuing to focus on achieving excellence in social work practice and embedding Signs of Safety. A training programme has been implemented in 2021/22 for social work practitioners and managers. Audits are demonstrating that the quality of practice is improving. Work is taking place with the directorate to develop and embed more qualitative measures of performance to complement the existing data.
- 6.27.** In December 2021, Ofsted commented on the improvements to the quality of social work with children and families in Cheshire East. The media article can be accessed via the following link:

[08/12/2021 - Quality of social work with children and families in Cheshire East has improved says Ofsted](#)

Ofsted summarised that since their last inspection in November 2019 the quality of social work with these children and their families has improved and senior leaders are successfully embedding a child-centred culture.

The letter goes on to say that children in Cheshire East benefit from stable and meaningful relationships with their social workers and they have frequent opportunities to express their wishes and feelings. Social workers also feel supported by managers and leaders, they have a comprehensive training plan, and enjoy working in Cheshire East.

The council's '@ct team' who provide support for children at risk of exploitation or family breakdown were also praised for the positive impact they have on these children to ensure that they remain with their families when possible and when it is appropriate.

- 6.28.** In July 2021 a new Neglect Strategy was launched, which was co-produced with children, young people and partners. A Multi Agency Complex Safeguarding Forum has been established to discuss cases of exploitation and risk management.
- 6.29.** In September 2021 the Council created a new role to coordinate employment support for Care Leavers. The Local Offer for care leavers includes support to apply for apprenticeships, training and funding.
- 6.30.** The take up of the offer for 2,3- and 4-year-olds remains consistently high, ensuring that children are receiving support at the earliest opportunity. The table below shows the take up data:

	Percentage of eligible children taking up 2 year old offer (termly figures)	Percentage of eligible children taking up 3-4 year old offer (termly figures)
<b>Q1</b>	71	93
<b>Q2</b>	71	93
<b>Q3</b>	73	95

- 6.31.** Child health hubs were launched in partnership with the NHS, enabling children to access healthcare within their communities rather than needing to attend hospital. Over the remaining period of the Corporate Plan, work will be progressed to develop the model for Family Hubs within communities.
- 6.32.** The SEND revisit took place in May 2021, conducted by Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission. This visit found that sufficient progress had been made in addressing the two significant areas of weakness that been identified in the previous inspection in 2018. Inspectors found that the timeliness, process and quality of Education, Health and Care Plans had been “transformed”.
- 6.33.** The media reports regarding the SEND inspection are linked below:

[30/06/2021 - Inspection says SEND services have been transformed \(cheshireeast.gov.uk\)](https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/news/30/06/2021-inspection-says-send-services-have-been-transformed)

And [Inspectors report services have been transformed \(cheshireeast.gov.uk\)](https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/news/inspectors-report-services-have-been-transformed)

Inspectors revisited Cheshire East from 24-27 May 2021, with activities carried out virtually and in person. They spoke with children and young people, parents and carers, as well as council and health professionals. They reviewed performance data and evidence and listened to the views of more than 700 parents and carers, who responded to an online survey.

Inspectors found that, since their last visit, the timeliness, process and quality of EHC plans have been transformed, saying that by early 2020,

almost every needs assessment was completed within the 20-week deadline, compared to less than one in six in 2018.

They also found that from the beginning of the process, professionals worked closely with parents, children and young people to accurately reflect their needs, stating that ‘co-production is at the heart of every EHC needs assessment’. In summary, inspectors heard from parents, carers, children and young people about the positive impact these plans have on their lives.

Regarding support for children and young people with autism, inspectors found that more children are starting nursery and school with their needs understood and met. Families have also been offered support and training, so they can better understand and support their child. In terms of waiting times, in 2018 more than 200 children and young people were waiting more than 12 weeks for their first assessment, but by March 2020, this had reduced to two weeks.

- 6.34.** In December 2021, the SEND toolkit was reviewed and updated, this will be subject to an annual review to ensure that it remains best practice and takes into consideration feedback on the service.
- 6.35.** During 2021/22 6 supported living schemes became operational, providing 55 units of accommodation. These consist of 30 units for people with mental health issues and 25 for people with a learning disability transitioning to adulthood.
- 6.36.** The Council’s Journey First project has increased employment support for people with complex needs. In 2021, 10 new Work Placement Officers were embedded into frontline teams in 2021.
- 6.37.** A further priority within the “Fair” aim is to ensure all children have a high quality, enjoyable education that enables them to achieve their full potential. An indicator for the quality of education is the percentage of schools that have been rated good or outstanding following an OFSTED inspection. The percentage of good or outstanding schools in Cheshire East are as follows:

	Primary schools	Secondary schools	Special schools
Q1	No data	No data	90%
Q2	92%	80%	No data
Q3	91%	79%	88%

- 6.38.** The coronavirus pandemic has impacted on educational attainment, and therefore performance in this area is likely to be affected for some time. There are increased attainment gaps between some pupils. Curriculum recovery work is continuing to be delivered across Cheshire East schools.
- 6.39.** A further priority within the “Fair” aim is that “people are cared for and valued by a professional and caring workforce” and for “Care4ce to become an exemplar, high quality trading company”. Care4ce, along with many Health and Social Care providers, continues to experience challenges with the recruitment and retention of frontline care staff. It is envisaged that these challenges will continue to impact on performance in this area. To mitigate this, Care4ce continues to promote adult social care careers and a project has commenced to explore further recruitment and retention options.
- 6.40.** The ongoing impact of recovery from the pandemic and workforce capacity issues have impacted on the Home First approach and the ability to get more people home from hospital. This will continue to be monitored over 2022/23.
- 6.41.** The Adults Safeguarding Board continues to develop. The number of new safeguarding concerns received by Adults, Health and Integration has remained fairly consistent during 2021/22 (1,330 in Q1, 1,310 in Q2 and 1,211 in Q3). This data relates to the numbers of events and not the numbers of individuals. Increased awareness of safeguarding is resulting in more concerns being raised, which is positive as it ensures that more individuals are appropriately supported.

## **Green – A thriving and sustainable place**

<b>Priorities</b>
<b>A great place for people to live, work and visit</b>
<b>Welcoming, safe and clean neighbourhoods</b>
<b>Reduce impact on the environment</b>
<b>A transport network that is safe and promotes active travel</b>
<b>Thriving urban and rural economies with opportunities for all</b>
<b>Be a carbon neutral council by 2025</b>

- 6.42.** There are 6 priorities under the “Green” aim for a thriving and sustainable place. These priorities are mainly led by the Place Directorate.
- 6.43.** The first action in this area of the Corporate Plan is to enable access to well designed, affordable and safe homes for all residents. During 2021/22 a revised structure has been implemented to enhance capacity in the Housing Standards and Adaptations service. The Economic and Growth

Committee has approved two key strategies in this area, a revised Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy in September 2021, and a revised Housing Enforcement Policy in October 2021.

- 6.44.** There have been 684,574 visitors to Cheshire East libraries during 2021/22. Library visitors have not yet returned to pre pandemic levels. In 2021/22 1,528,857 books were borrowed, 782,115 by adults and 735,395 by children. 91,506 e-books, 59,877 e-audio titles and 44,645 magazines were downloaded. Library staff have reported increased numbers of people in crisis requiring low levels of support who are attending at libraries. This will be researched further to gain more specific evidence and will be considered in developing strategy in this area.
- 6.45.** There have been 2,082,213 visitors to leisure centres during 2021/22. Everybody Sport and Recreation (to be renamed Everybody Health and Leisure) are reporting an encouraging position in terms of recovery of memberships. Learn to Swim participation has exceeded pre-pandemic levels and there are 8,884 people currently on the programme. Nantwich swimming pool has been refurbished and renamed Nantwich Leisure Centre. Work has commenced on the refurbishment and new pool at Congleton Leisure Centre, which is due for completion during 2022/23.
- 6.46.** At the beginning of 2021/22 (19 April 2021), full Council approved for submission part 2 of the Local Plan, the revised Publication Draft Site Allocations and Development Policies Document. Work on the Local Plan has continued through the year and the Minerals and Waste Development Plan, part 3 of the Local Plan has been produced in draft.
- 6.47.** A further action under the “Fair” aim and “great place” priority is for “new development to be appropriately controlled to protect and support our borough”. The Planning Service has faced significant challenges over 2021/22. A deep dive review into planning commenced during 2021/22 and continues to develop solutions to improve performance and address the challenges of the service.
- 6.48.** There has been success in preventing 717 residents from becoming homeless and 400 residents have been supported out of homelessness (1,117 in total). In 2021/22 597 new affordable homes have been developed through our Registered Housing provider.
- 6.49.** Funding of £4,853,676 has been secured to improve the energy efficiency of homes and home adaptations have been provided for 362 people with disabilities to support their independence.
- 6.50.** The Cheshire East Visitor economy is starting to recover from the pandemic. The Tatton Park business plan is being delivered. Tatton Park also successfully received its 9<sup>th</sup> consecutive “Sandford Award” for excellence in heritage education in 2021. Capital projects that support cultural development are being progressed including Lyceum Square in Crewe and commissions in Macclesfield.

**6.51.** The Cultural Economy Team Commissioned a mural of one of Macclesfield's finest musicians now has pride of place in the town centre, which was completed in March 2022. The mural of Ian Curtis, the frontman of Joy Division, was a fully funded Cheshire East Council project and was painted by well-known street artist 'Akse'. It adorns a building on Mill Street, across from the bus station. As well as attracting a lot of attention in the town itself, it generated media coverage and positive social media for Macclesfield and Cheshire East.

**6.52.** Progress has been made against the "welcoming, safe and clean neighbourhoods priority". New enforcement policies for Community Enforcement, Anti-Social behaviour and body worn cameras were approved by the Environment and Communities committee in July 2021. The Community Enforcement team has seen an increase in reports of fly tipping over 2021/22, with 4,428 reports cleared during the year. The Cleaner Crewe project, a pilot scheme to make the streets and alleyways in central Crewe cleaner and tidier, has seen several alleyways being cleaned and further enhanced with plants and artwork. Engagement with local residents combined with enforcement when necessary has led to a 49% reduction in fly-tipping. Lessons from the project are now to be shared with other areas with a view to replicating the successful model.

**6.53.** In 2021 the Home Office awarded a top British standard accreditation to Cheshire East Council's CCTV team. The British Standard 7958 means that the service has been independently audited by the Home Office.

The accreditation states the data collected in the form of video images, are gathered '...in the most professional, proportionate and ethical manner.'

It goes on to applaud the service for:

- Its high standard of training and development of staff;
- Operational procedures which are established and followed;
- Camera operations which are all necessary for reducing crime; and
- Making it safe 'for citizens to go about their lawful business'.

**6.54.** Several park improvements projects were completed during the year, including Rotherhead Drive, Macclesfield, South Park, Macclesfield, Lansdowne Road, Crewe and Queens Park, Crewe. Recycling bins have been installed in key parks across the borough alongside existing litter provision. There are approximately 100 volunteers supporting litter picking across the borough. During 2021/22 52 events were attended by community litter picker volunteers.

- 6.55.** In terms of residual household waste collected per household, the outturn figure for 2021/22 was an estimated 477kg. The percentage of all waste collected sent for recycling and reuse was 57.2% (estimated figure). The pandemic has impacted on waste collection in terms of crew shortages and increased tonnages. Ansa is striving to return to normal levels of services to lessen instances of missed bins and rounds not completed. Our recycling levels remain high, and Cheshire East remains the top unitary authority in the northwest and in the top ten nationally.
- 6.56.** In relation to the priority to be carbon neutral by 2025, a progress report was presented to the Environment and Communities Committee in January 2022. The Carbon Neutral Action Plan set a carbon reduction target of 46% and an inseting target of 60% by 2025 from 2019 baseline levels.
- 6.57.** The Council has continued its tree planting as part of its commitment to be carbon neutral by 2025 with 22 hectares of trees now planted since 2019. This includes the seven-hectare tree planting site (equivalent to around 10 football pitches) at Leighton Grange, Crewe delivered in partnership with the Mersey Forest a charity that uses nature-based therapy to help veterans struggling with their mental health into work, helped to plant the large site over five days in March 2022. Planning permission has also been secured to install a large-scale solar farm on the same site.
- 6.58.** As of January 2022, the Council has achieved carbon reduction of 5% and delivered 28% of its inseting target. The January 2022 progress update confirmed that the Council is on track to deliver carbon neutrality by 2025. The progress report is available at [Carbon Neutral Programme Update \(cheshireeast.gov.uk\)](https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/carbon-neutral-programme-update)
- 6.59.** The Council continues to work with Network rail and government to seek necessary investments in Crewe and Macclesfield stations. During 2021/22 the Council expressed an interest in Crewe to be the national headquarters of Great British Railways. The GBR transition team are in the process of assessing the Expressions of Interest to form the shortlist, which is expected to be announced in Summer 2022.
- 6.60.** Work is continuing on the £53 million Poynton Relief Road. In March 2022 a major milestone in the scheme was achieved, with the final five bridge beams being lifted into place for the new Chester Road bridge. The road is due to open to traffic at the end of 2022.
- 6.61.** The Highways Service is implementing a customer satisfaction improvement plan. The “Fix my Street” app went live during 2021/22, offering customers an easy way to report issues and offering improved tracking of defects. Work to stabilise 750 metres of carriageway on the A51 Nantwich Road was completed after a 16-week closure.

- 6.62.** Electric vehicle charging points have been installed in 2021, available in four car parks (Princess Street, Congleton, South Drive, Wilmslow, Love Lane, Nantwich and Civic Centre/ Library, Crewe). Additionally, there are charging points at Macclesfield Town Hall, Westfields, Sandbach and Delamere House, Crewe for council staff and vehicle use.
- 6.63.** Local transport delivery plans were produced in February 2022. Parking services introduced a new pay-by-phone service across the Council's car parks.
- 6.64.** To promote the uptake of cycling, cycling infrastructure schemes are being implemented in accordance with the Local Cycling and Walking Improvement Plans. A new and improved walking and cycle route between Alderley Park and Wilmslow railway station was completed within twelve weeks. This work has improved access to the town centre, railway station, employment and education sites for pedestrians and cyclists, whilst also boosting opportunities for greener and more active travel across the borough and supporting Cheshire East Council's goal of becoming carbon neutral by 2025.
- 6.65.** The Cheshire East Bus Service Improvement Plan was published in October 2021. The Department of Transport unfortunately announced that Cheshire East would not receive Bus Service Improvement Plan funding and therefore the Enhanced Partnership Scheme document produced as part of the plan had to be scaled back to represent what could be achieved without government funding. Consultation on the document is live until 11 July 2022. There has been initial success in relation to a three-year pilot scheme that started in October 2021. The "Go Too" on demand bus service undertook more than 3,500 passenger journeys between October 2021 and March 2022. The two buses operate Monday-Saturday from 7am until 9pm. The pilot is funded via the government's rural mobility fund.
- 6.66.** 2021/22 saw continuation of the Crewe regeneration programme, successfully obtaining Future High Streets Funding (£14.1m) and Towns Fund funding (£22.9m). The bid was overseen by Crewe Town Board. A package of projects is now being progressed focusing on town centre regeneration, culture and heritage, community spaces and connected places. "Ly2" is a transformational improvement scheme which will focus on Lyceum Square and its adjoining areas in Crewe's town centre. The £750,000 funding for the scheme was received as a grant from the Accelerated Towns Fund and is in addition to the package of projects being progressed through the Towns Fund. In May 2021 Crewe Market Hall reopened following a £3m programme of refurbishment. The Market Hall includes 17 permanent stalls, event space and toilet facilities.
- 6.67.** A strategic regeneration framework for Macclesfield was developed in 2019. This was complemented by the Macclesfield Town Centre Recovery Plan which was published in February 2021. In June 2021, a Levelling Up bid was submitted for £14.5 m to redevelop the market hall and other

improvements, however this bid was unsuccessful after the first round. The Castle Street regeneration works were delivered on time and on budget in 2021.

- 6.68.** In 2021/22 work has continued in relation to High-Speed 2 (HS2), the government's proposed new high-speed rail line. Cheshire East is directly impacted by Phase 2a and Phase 2b, with both sections of the route passing through the borough. The council is supportive of the principles of HS2, however his support is dependent on securing key investment for the Crewe Hub station and appropriate mitigation and compensation being provided for negative impacts on environment, landscape, ecology and highway network. The Council's petition against the HS2 Phase 2a Bill (Birmingham to Crewe route) secured a number of assurances, including funding to provide additional environmental and ecological mitigations. In January 2022 the HS2 Phase 2b (Crewe to Manchester) Hybrid Bill was deposited. In February 2022, Cheshire East Full Council passed a resolution to petition against the Phase 2b Hybrid Bill. The petitioning period runs until 4 August 2022. HS2 will remain a key strategic programme for Cheshire East Council over the remainder of the period of the Corporate Plan.
- 6.69.** In conclusion, Cheshire East Council has made good progress against implementation of the Corporate Plan during 2021/22. Despite the ongoing challenges of the coronavirus pandemic and new, emerging challenges, such as supporting Ukrainian refugees, progress has been made in all three areas towards achieving our vision of an Open, Fair and Green Cheshire East.

## **7. Consultation and Engagement**

Not applicable.

## **8. Implications**

### **8.1. Legal**

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

### **8.2. Finance**

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. Financial implications arising from performance requirements are detailed within financial reports aligned with the Medium-Term Financial Strategy.

### **8.3. Policy**

The report demonstrates progress against the achievement of the Cheshire East Council Corporate Plan 2021-25.

#### **8.4. Equality**

The range of Council activities covered in the Corporate Plan aims to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty and the obligations under the Equality Act 2010.

#### **8.5. Human Resources**

The Council's staff have continued to respond to the challenges created by the Coronavirus Pandemic, at the same time as delivering vital services to Cheshire East residents. The staff turnover rate outturn position for 2021/22 was 9.7%. This is covered in more detail in paragraph 6.16. An officer working group is being established to review recruitment, retention, reward and recognition to address current staffing challenges.

The number of agency staff contracted by Cheshire East Council has increased during 2021/22 and has averaged 225 for the year. This is an increase compared to the last 3 years (165 in 18/19, 173 in 19/20 and 177 in 20/21). Total spend on agency staff during 2021/22 was £2,559,211. This is covered in more detail in paragraph 6.17.

#### **8.6 Risk Management**

Performance and risk are intrinsically linked. Where risks are identified, performance data can evidence the likelihood of the risk and can also show if a risk materialises. The performance report identifies areas where performance is strong and areas for development and improvement. This supports the risk management process by providing the opportunity to review progress and identify areas for improvement and any necessary mitigating actions.

#### **8.7 Rural Communities**

There are no implications to rural communities arising from this report. Progression of the Corporate Plan will support rural communities.

#### **8.8 Children and Young People/Cared for Children**

Performance management of the priorities relating to children and young people and cared for children, ensure that there is a focus on children receiving the best start in life and that we deliver on our commitments to children and young people in Cheshire East.

#### **8.9 Public Health**

This report supports our Public Health priorities utilising the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and Tartan rug to ensure that we work with partners to address issues of poor housing, poverty, employment and education across urban and rural communities.

## 8.10 Climate Change

Performance against the Corporate Plan contributes to several of the strategic goals set out in the Council's Environment Strategy, including:

- Cheshire East Council will be carbon neutral by 2025
- Reduce waste
- Improve Air Quality
- Ensure that new development is sustainable
- Protect and enhance our natural environment

<b>Access to Information</b>	
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Appendices:	Appendix A – Performance Outturn 2021/22   APP 1 Corporate Plan Performance 2021/22
Background Papers:	None