

Equality Analysis (EA) Form

(formally known as Equality Impact Assessment)



Appendix D

Cheshire+
Warrington

This is an equality analysis of the proposal for the Cheshire and Warrington Combined Authority and associated devolution deal.

Sections in this form:

Section 1 – Details of the service, service change, decommissioning of the service, strategy, function or procedure

Section 2 - Information – What do you know?

Section 3 – Who will be affected?

Section 4 – Consultation and engagement

Section 5 – Equality analysis

Section 6 – Justification, Mitigation and Actions

Section 7 – Monitoring and review

Section 8 – Help and support

This form has been completed in conjunction with reading the EA Guidance from each Council. For more information on EA's, please see the links below.

- Cheshire East Council - [Equality Analysis Impact Assessments](#)
- Cheshire West and Chester Council - [Equality Analysis | Cheshire West and Chester Council](#)
- Warrington Borough Council - [Equality, diversity and inclusion | warrington.gov.uk](#)

Section 1 – Details of the service, service change, decommissioning of the service, strategy, function, or procedure

Title of the EA	Devolution – The set up of the Cheshire and Warrington Combined Authority
Assessment lead officer	Gemma Davies (Growth Director, Cheshire West and Chester Council)
Councils	Cheshire East Council, Cheshire West and Chester Council & Warrington Borough Council
Date of assessment	August 2025
Details of the service, service change, decommissioning of the service, strategy, function, or procedure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Description of the service, strategy, function, or procedure <p>Cheshire and Warrington has been selected by government as one of six areas in England included within its Devolution Priority Programme (DPP). Part of the government's commitment to expanding devolution to all parts of England – as set out in its 2024 Devolution White Paper – the DPP identifies those areas that could form the next wave of strategic mayoral authorities, benefitting from similar devolved powers and investment to the 15 mayoral authorities already established. Subject to statutory consultation, ratification by individual councils, and the laying of an Order in Parliament, this could see the first Mayor for Cheshire and Warrington elected by residents in May 2027.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purpose or aim. <p>Devolution for Cheshire and Warrington would mean shifting additional powers and funding from central government– enabling local decision-making on various priority areas including transport, business growth, employment and skills and regeneration.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why is the service/strategy/function/procedure being commissioned/changed/decommissioned? <p>Devolution is about national government transferring powers and resources away from central government departments into regions. The establishment of Cheshire and Warrington Combined Authority would be to facilitate this transition. In</p>

	<p>an announcement made on Thursday 17 July 2025, the government confirmed that Cheshire and Warrington had passed the necessary statutory tests for devolution in the area, subject to the Council’s consent.</p>
<p>Links and impact on other services, strategies, functions, or procedures.</p>	<p>Does the proposal link to other areas of the council’s work? Could the proposal impact on other services, functions, or procedures?</p> <p>Cheshire East Council</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Devolution meets Cheshire East’s vision about enabling prosperity and wellbeing for all in Cheshire East. It furthers support to the three commitments made by Cheshire East which include unlocking prosperity for all, improving health and wellbeing and being an effective and enabling council Cheshire East Plan 2025-29 • Devolution supports the delivery of the The Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy for the population of Cheshire East 2023 - 2028 by meeting these visions which include: engaging effectively with the public, enabling people to be happier, healthier, and independent for longer, supporting people to take personal responsibility and make good lifestyle choices, achieving evidence-based outcomes within a holistic vision of health and wellbeing. <p>Cheshire West and Chester Council</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Devolution supports Cheshire West and Chester’s Borough Plan, which has 6 missions: Starting well, Tackling hardship and poverty, Resilient people living their best lives, Opportunity in a fair local economy, Neighbourhood pride & Greener communities. Borough Plan 2024-2028 • Devolution links in with the Place Plan which is also known as the borough’s statutory Health and Wellbeing Strategy. It sets out an ambition to achieve excellence and sustainability in the future to improve the health and wellbeing of residents living in our borough. Cheshire West and Chester Place Plan 2019-2026 (Pubn 1.4.25) • Cheshire West and Chester Council also have the West Cheshire Inclusive Economy Action Plan - https://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/asset-library/west-cheshire-inclusive-economy-prospectus-july2295.pdf <p>Warrington Borough Council</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Devolution aligns with the Council’s Corporate Strategy 2022-2024, supporting priorities such as tackling poverty and helping those in greatest need, building empowered, resilient and independent communities, and creating a place that provides opportunity for all. • Devolution supports the delivery of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2025-2028 by improving equity of access to advice and support and helping address inequalities in areas such as employment and housing.

- Devolution will make a significant contribution to Warrington Borough Council's strategic objectives, particularly in improving health and wellbeing - [Living Well in Warrington Health and Wellbeing Strategy](#)

Further Context and Information

- **English Devolution Bill** - The English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill will deliver on the government's commitment to widen and deepen devolution across England, providing Mayors with unprecedented powers to deliver growth. The Bill will support the government's plan to rebuild and reform local government, as the foundation for devolution, and give communities stronger tools to shape their local areas. [English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill - GOV.UK](#)
- **Joint Committee** - The Cheshire and Warrington Joint Committee is an executive body formed by Cheshire East Council, Cheshire West and Chester Council, and Warrington Borough Council. [Key Documents - Cheshire and Warrington Devolution](#)
- **Cheshire and Warrington: Sustainable and Inclusive Economic Strategy** – Cheshire and Warrington Local Authorities and Enterprise Cheshire and Warrington are working on a strategy which sets out to deliver our ambitions to be the UK's healthiest, most sustainable, inclusive and fastest-growing economy by 2045. [Cheshire and Warrington Sustainable & Inclusive Economic Strategy - Consultation June - early July 2025 - Cheshire and Warrington](#)

Subject to Council's consent, the Cheshire and Warrington Combined Authority would bring additional powers and resources to the local area, which are likely to impact on a broad range of services, strategies, functions, or procedures.

Section 2 - Information – What do you know?

<p>What do you know?</p>	<p>What information (qualitative and quantitative) and/or research have you used to arrive at the decision to commission/ change/ decommission the service, strategy, function, or procedure?</p> <p>Devolution is a priority of National Government, Cheshire and Warrington have worked together successfully as a sub region for many years and were selected to be part of the Devolution Priority Programme in 2025. Much of the research conducted locally has been through significant local engagement (see section 4 below) and the statutory consultation.</p> <p>On 11th June 2025 the Government concluded their multi-year Spending Review. As well as outlining the focus for Government investment for both departmental budgets to 2029 and capital investment to 2030, the Review was also a trigger for key national strategies including the Modern Industrial Strategy and 10-Year Infrastructure Strategy. Together these form a suite of key drivers to deliver on the Government’s ‘Plan for Change’ – with a specific focus on “kick-starting economic growth”. It should be noted that a number of other strategies are due to be released later in the year, including business support and skills.</p> <p>A key mechanism underpinning ‘Plan for Change’ is the Government’s continued commitment to “widen and deepen devolution across England... to deliver growth”. July 2025 saw the introduction of the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill to Parliament.</p>
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Section 3 – Who will be affected?

<p>Include details of all those affected by the proposal, in some cases, this could be all Cheshire and Warrington residents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information on Cheshire East’s population can be found here: Current Facts and Figures and Insight Cheshire East • Information on Cheshire West and Chester’s population can be found Datasets and statistics and Insight and Intelligence Cheshire West and Chester Council • Information on Warrington’s population can be found here: Insight and intelligence, this includes ward demographics. Information by protected characteristic on Warrington’s residents can be found in the Public Sector Equality Duty Report.

<p>Protected characteristics from the Equality Act 2010 and other areas that may be impacted</p>	
<p>Age e.g. children, older people etc</p>	<p><i>Source: Mid-year 2024 population estimates, Office for National Statistics</i></p> <p>Cheshire East</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0-15 years: 73,497 (17.4%) • 16-64 years: 252,888 (60.0%) • 65+ years: 94,913 (22.5%) - higher than England (18.7%). <p>Cheshire West and Chester</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0-15 years: 63,122 (17.0%) • 16-64 years: 228,247 (61.4%) • 65+ years: 80,283 (21.6%) – higher than the England average (18.7%) <p>Warrington</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0-15 years: 39,473 (18.3%) • 16-64 years: 133,233 (61.9%) • 65+ years: 42,685 (19.8%) – higher than the England average (18.4%)
<p>Carers¹</p>	<p><i>Source: ONS Census Data (2021)</i></p> <p>Cheshire East</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 90.9% (344,383) of the population provide no unpaid care • 4.9% (18,703) of the population provide 19 hours or less per week of unpaid care

¹ A **carer** is anyone, including children and adults who provides unpaid care for a family member, partner or friend who needs help because of their illness, frailty, disability, a mental health problem or an addiction and cannot cope without their support. The Equality Act 2010 protects carers against direct discrimination or harassment because of their caring responsibilities this is called “discrimination by association”.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1.6% (6,138) of the population provide 20 to 49 hours per week of unpaid care • 2.5% (9,615) of the population provide 50 or more hours per week of unpaid care <p>Cheshire West and Chester</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 90.4% (306,894) of the population provide no unpaid care • 4.8% (16,421) of the population provide 19 hours or less per week of unpaid care • 1.9% (6,312) of the population provide 20 to 49 hours per week of unpaid care • 2.9% (9,905) of the population provide 50 or more hours per week of unpaid care <p>Warrington</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 90.5% (181,242) of the population provide no unpaid care • 4.9% (9,837) of the population provide 19 hours or less per week of unpaid care • 1.9% (3,801) of the population provide 20 to 49 hours per week of unpaid care • 2.7% (5,461) of the population provide 50 or more hours per week of unpaid care
<p>Care experience as a child or young person and care leavers¹</p>	<p><i>Source: Education statistics at gov.uk</i></p> <p>Cheshire East</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 542 Children in the Council’s care (March 2024) • 187 care leavers aged 22-25 supported by the Council (2024) <p>Cheshire West and Chester</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 570 Children in the Council’s care (March 2024) • 210 care leavers aged 22-25 supported by the Council (2024)

¹ **Experience of the care system as a child or young person** – This refers to people who have spent time living with foster carers under local authority care, in residential care (e.g., a children’s home) or in kinship care with relatives or friends as a child or young person. A **care leaver** is a young person aged 16-25 years old who has been ‘looked after’ at some point since they were 14 years old, were in care on or after their 16th birthday. The [Independent Review of Children’s Social Care](#) highlighted the significant levels of discrimination and disadvantage faced by care experienced people. In January 2024 this Council decided to treat “care experience” as if it were a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010”.

	<p>Warrington</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 345 Children in the Council’s care (March 2024) • 149 care leavers aged 22-25 supported by the Council (2024)
<p>Disability (as defined by the Equality Act - a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person’s ability to carry out normal day- to-day activities)</p>	<p><i>Source: ONS Census Data (2021) – For comparison, England (17.8%), North West at (19.8%)</i></p> <p>Cheshire East</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 17.3% (67,819) of residents have a disability under the Equality Act 2010 <p>Cheshire West and Chester</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 18.5% (65,897) of residents have a disability under the Equality Act 2010 <p>Warrington</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 17.3% (37,266) of residents have a disability under the Equality Act 2010
<p>Gender reassignment</p>	<p><i>Source: ONS Census Data (2021)</i></p> <p>Cheshire East</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 675 (0.2%) of resident’s gender identity is different to that assigned at birth. <p>Cheshire West and Chester</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 389 (0.1%) of resident’s gender identity is different to that assigned at birth. <p>Warrington</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 273 (0.2%) of resident’s gender identity is different to that assigned at birth.
<p>Neurodivergent conditions¹</p>	<p><i>Source: (Year group, by type of SEN provision and type of need - 2016 to 2025 DoFE)</i></p>

¹ **Neuro divergent conditions** include Autism/Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC), Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Dyspraxia Dyslexia, as well as many other conditions.

	<p>Cheshire East</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2024/5 there were 1,293 children with Autistic Spectrum Disorder <p>Cheshire West and Chester</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2024/5 there were 1,383 children with Autistic Spectrum Disorder <p>Warrington</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2024/2025 there were 741 children with Autistic Spectrum disorder
<p>Pregnancy and maternity</p>	<p><i>Source: Live births in England and Wales: birth rates down to local authority areas, ONS Crown Copyright</i></p> <p>Cheshire East</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3,615 live births in 2024 <p>Cheshire West and Chester</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3,032 live births in 2024 <p>Warrington</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1,763 live births in 2024
<p>Race/ethnicity (including Gypsies and Travellers, refugees, asylum seekers etc.)</p>	<p><i>Source: ONS Census Data (2021)</i></p> <p>Cheshire East</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5.66% of people identified their ethnic group as ‘non-white’, this includes 1.8% who identified as ‘mixed or multiple’. <p>Cheshire West and Chester</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.7% of people identified their ethnic group as ‘non-white’, this includes 1.5% who identified as ‘mixed or multiple’.

	<p>Warrington</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6.5% of people identified their ethnic group as ‘non-white’, this includes 1.6% who identified as ‘mixed or multiple’.
<p>Religion or belief (including lack of belief)</p>	<p><i>Source: ONS Census Data (2021)</i></p> <p>Cheshire East</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No religion – 150,257 (37.7% of the population) • Christian -216,629 (54.3% of the population) • Buddhist -1,314 (0.3% of the population) • Hindu -2,046 (0.5% of the population) • Jewish – 640 (0.2% of the population) • Muslim – 4,140 (1.0% of the population) • Sikh – 371, (0.1% of the population) • Other religion –1,558 (0.4% of the population) <p>Cheshire West and Chester</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No religion – 135,025 (37.8% of the population) • Christian -194,705 (54.5% of the population) • Buddhist -1,074 (0.3% of the population) • Hindu -1,551 (0.4% of the population) • Jewish – 288 (0.1% of the population) • Muslim – 3,506 (1.0% of the population) • Sikh - 251 (0.1% of the population) • Other religion –1,238 (0.3% of the population) <p>Warrington</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No religion - 73,042 (34.6% of the population). • Christian - 119,650 (56.7% of the population) • Buddhist - 605 (0.3% of the population)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hindu - 1,495 (0.7% of the population) • Jewish - 190 (0.1% of the population) • Muslim - 3,686 (1.7% of the population) • Sikh - 478 (0.2% of the population) • Other religion – 794 (0.4 of the population)
<p>Sex</p>	<p><i>Source: Mid-Year Population Estimates, England and Wales, June 2024 (ONS)</i></p> <p>Cheshire East</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 49.0% of the population of Cheshire East are male and 51.0% of the population are female. <p>Cheshire West and Chester</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 48.9% of the population of Cheshire West and Chester are male and 51.1% of the population are female. <p>Warrington</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 49.4% of the population of Warrington are male and 50.6% of the population are female.
<p>Sexual orientation</p>	<p><i>Source: ONS Census Data (2021)</i></p> <p>Cheshire East</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •LGB - 8,102 people • Straight or Heterosexual - 301,391 (91.5%) <p>Cheshire West and Chester</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •LGB - 8,313 people • Straight or Heterosexual - 269,319 (91.2%) <p>Warrington</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •LGB - 4,349 people • Straight or Heterosexual - 158,539 (91.8%)

<p>Marriage and civil partnership</p>	<p><i>Source: ONS Census Data (2021)</i></p> <p>Cheshire East</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 31.6% of Cheshire East residents have never married and never registered a civil partnership • 49.7% are married/ civil partnership <p>Cheshire West and Chester</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 34.9% of Cheshire West and Chester residents have never married and never registered a civil partnership • 46.9% are married/ civil partnership <p>Warrington</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 34.9% of Warrington residents have never married and never registered a civil partnership • 46.8% are married/ civil partnership
<p>Rural communities</p>	<p>Rurality is not a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010. In 2001, 23.3% of people lived in rural areas with the combined authority area. In 2025, ONS have re-defined rural areas and categorised this into sub-definitions to take account for proximity to larger centres with services and amenities, as well as taking into account edge of settlement housing developments. An accurate residential count is not available at this time.</p>
<p>Areas of deprivation (include any impact on people living in poverty who may not live in areas identified as deprived)</p>	<p>Areas of Deprivation is not a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010.</p> <p>Cheshire East</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are 34,183 (8%) residents in Cheshire East living in neighbourhoods in Quintile 1 of the IMD 2019. • 9.7% (17,506) of households in the borough are living in fuel poverty • 15.2% (11,024) of children aged under 16 in Cheshire East were living in low-income families in 2023/24. (DWP) <p>Cheshire West and Chester</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are 55,555 (15.4%) residents in Cheshire West and Chester living in neighbourhoods in Quintile 1 of the IMD 2019.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 11.4% (18,147) of households in the borough are living in fuel poverty • 17.8% (11,164) of children aged under 16 in Cheshire West and Chester were living in low-income families in 2023/24. (DWP) <p>Warrington</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are 39,407 (19%) residents in Warrington living in neighbourhoods in Quintile 1 of the IMD. • 9% (8,380) of households in the borough are living in fuel poverty • 17.6% (6,898) of children aged under 16 in Warrington were living in low-income families in 2023/24. (DWP)
<p>Human rights</p>	<p>The key Human Rights principles are: right to life; prohibition of torture; prohibition of slavery and forced labour; right to liberty and security; right to a fair trial; no punishment without law; right to respect for private and family life; freedom of thought, conscience and religion; freedom of expression; freedom of assembly and association; right to marry; prohibition of discrimination; protection of property; right to education; right to free election</p>
<p>Health and wellbeing and Health Inequalities (consider the wider determinants of health such as education, housing, employment, environment, crime and transport, plus impacts on lifestyles and effects on health and care services)</p>	<p>Health and Wellbeing and Health Inequalities is not a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010.</p> <p>Combined Cheshire data (at new combined authority geography)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Male life expectancy at birth 79.5 at birth, (significantly higher than England – 79.1) - Calculated using ONS LA mid-year population estimates 2021-2023 and ONS LA death registrations 2021-2023 • Female life expectancy at birth 83.3 at birth, (Higher but not statistically significantly different to England – 83.0) - Calculated using ONS LA mid-year population estimates 2021-2023 and ONS LA death registrations 2021-2023 • Gap in life expectancy between the most and least deprived communities female 8.8 years -life expectancy between the most and least deprived communities’ (Slope index of inequality) 2021-2023 • Gap in life expectancy between the most and least deprived communities male 11.7 years -life expectancy between the most and least deprived communities’ (Slope index of inequality) 2021-2023 • Adult smoking prevalence 9.6% - Source: Office for National Statistics (ONS), Annual Population survey(APS) (18+) (3-year range)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reception children excess weight and obesity prevalence 21.4% - Source: NHS England (NHSE), National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP) (3-year range) • Year 6 children excess weight and obesity prevalence 33.9% -Source: NHS England (NHSE), National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP) (3-year range)
<p>Procurement/partnership (if project due to be carried out by contractors/partners etc, identify steps taken to ensure equality compliance)</p>	<p>Not Applicable.</p>

Section 4 – Consultation and Engagement?

<p>Details and date of the consultation/s and/or engagement activities</p>	<p>Please include details of all consultation and engagement activities. This should include the date, type of consultation i.e. online survey, focus group, virtual consultation, face to face (please exclude personal information), customer satisfaction surveys etc and the number of respondents. Please include details of any consultation/engagement activities that were carried out with specific groups and/or protected characteristic/s.</p> <p>The government has undertaken a statutory consultation across each of the six areas that are part of the Devolution Priority Programme (DPP), looking at the benefits of establishing a Mayoral Combined Authority in the area. (Cheshire and Warrington devolution consultation - GOV.UK) The consultation asked local people about the potential benefits of devolution. The consultation findings helped to inform the government about whether Cheshire and Warrington met the necessary statutory tests, demonstrating the area’s readiness to deliver a devolution programme.</p> <p>This consultation closed on 13 April 2025 and the government has confirmed that Cheshire and Warrington has passed the statutory tests and can progress with a devolution agreement.</p> <p>To promote awareness of the government consultation, they undertook a series of engagement and promotional activities, including:</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • issuing a press notice at the start and towards the end of the consultation for local and regional media • a visit by the Minister for Local Government and English Devolution to Ellesmere Port on 13 February which included meeting with local leaders • a social media advertising campaign promoted the consultation on Facebook and Instagram. Across these platforms, a collective 1.65 million impressions and 9,213 video views were reported • distributing physical assets (2,000 flyers, 200 posters, and 100 hard copy consultation documents) <p>The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government ran an in-person event on 26 March in Crewe. Officials from MHCLG attended a further 4 stakeholder run events to provide information on the consultation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cheshire and Warrington Business Board • Warrington Annual Property Review • Cheshire Association of Local Councils • Cheshire West Voluntary Action <p>In addition, the three constituent authorities also conducted Community Engagement seeing;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 560 individuals engaged • 453 via community pop-ups • 64 people engaged via community events • 43 young people targeted
<p>Feedback received</p>	<p>Please provide a summary of all feedback received. Please include comments relating to specific protected characteristic/s if this has been received. Feedback from other local and/or external regional/national consultations can also be used to assess the impact of your proposal on different protected groups.</p> <p>The government’s consultation attracted 1,663 responses from individuals and organisations across Cheshire and Warrington (1,574 from members of the public and 89 from organisations). There was no feedback relating to impact on people based on their protected characteristics.</p>

	<p>As part of the government-led statutory consultation, respondents in favour of the proposal cited the potential for better public transport and public services. Some respondents raised concerns about whether an agreement could deliver benefits to market towns and rural areas.</p> <p>The top devolution priorities from community engagement were;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 44% - transport 28% - economy 16% - environment 12% - skills <p>Further information can be found here:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pages 67-90 (Public Pack) Agenda Document for Cheshire and Warrington Joint Committee, 25/07/2025 10:30 • Cheshire and Warrington devolution consultation response - GOV.UK
<p>Gaps in consultation and engagement feedback</p>	<p>Please identify any gaps in consultation/engagement activities and actions to fill these gaps?</p> <p>Who else do you need to engage with?</p> <p>If the proposal is likely to have a significant disproportionate impact, you should ensure that you have engaged with those likely to be affected by your proposal.</p> <p>The Government led on this statutory consultation which included personal data collection relating to protected characteristics under the 2010 Equality Act. They have confirmed that Cheshire and Warrington have met the statutory tests, but have not provided a breakdown of individual responses due to data protection.</p> <p>It is not envisaged that devolution would have any significant disproportionate impact upon any specific group with a protected characteristic. The purpose of devolution is to bring decision making closer to the people being impacted by these decisions and therefore in theory, the principle impacts of devolution are likely to positively enable people with protected characteristics to more equally access services and fully participate in economic opportunities than if those decisions were made by central government departments.</p>

Section 5 – Equality Analysis

Using the information from sections 2 and 3 please assess the impact of your proposal by protected characteristic. In many cases it is likely that your proposal will impact more significantly on some protected characteristics i.e. age, sex, or disability. Your proposal may not impact on some protected characteristics at all i.e. marriage or civil partnership. If this is the case, please state “no impact” on the template.

For each of the areas below, an assessment needs to be made on whether the policy has a positive, negative or neutral impact, and brief details of why this decision was made and notes of any mitigation should be included. Where the impact is negative, this needs to be given a high, medium or low assessment. It is important to rate the impact of the policy based on the current situation (i.e. disregarding any actions planned to be carried out in future).

- High impact – a significant potential impact, risk of exposure, history of complaints, no mitigating measures in place etc.
- Medium impact – some potential impact exists, some mitigating measures are in place, poor evidence
- Low impact – almost no relevancy to the process, e.g. an area that is very much legislation led and where the Council has very little discretion

Protected characteristics from the Equality Act 2010 and other areas that may be impacted	Potential Impact Positive/Negative Not Applicable	Summary of Impact.	Actions and recommendations to mitigate any negative impacts.
Age	Positive	<p>Compliance with the Equality Act 2010 is a core requirement of the Combined Authority.</p> <p>Through local decision making, devolution offers the opportunity for projects and programmes to specifically address age-related challenges in Cheshire and Warrington such as transport, accessibility or skills and employment.</p>	
Carers*	No impact	<p>No negative impact is anticipated, and the Combined Authority has the potential to provide early, targeted support that helps reduce inequalities and improve outcomes for residents with disabilities and their families.</p>	

Protected characteristics from the Equality Act 2010 and other areas that may be impacted	Potential Impact Positive/Negative Not Applicable	Summary of Impact.	Actions and recommendations to mitigate any negative impacts.
Care Experience as a child or young person and Care Leavers*	Positive	Care leavers and care experienced young adults are recognised nationally as a group that may face significant disadvantage, including increased risks of financial hardship, housing insecurity, and poorer mental health and access to the job market. The flexibility of the Combined Authority to support care leavers and NEETs (Not in Employment, Education or Training) means that bespoke programmes could be supported to address local challenges using appropriate funding mechanisms.	
Disability	Positive	<p>No negative impact is anticipated, and the Combined Authority has the potential to provide early, targeted support that helps reduce inequalities and improve outcomes for residents with disabilities and their families.</p> <p>Positive impacts could be further enhanced by continuing to ensure that information remains available in accessible formats and that the Combined Authority remain responsive to a range of needs, including physical, sensory, cognitive, and mental health-related disabilities. The Combined Authority should remain responsive to local intelligence which highlights those most in need. Transport and housing have the potential to deliver significant accessibility improvements.</p>	
Neurodivergent Conditions*	Positive	The Adult Skills budget will be devolved to the Combined Authority, which will then have the ability to adapt	

Protected characteristics from the Equality Act 2010 and other areas that may be impacted	Potential Impact Positive/Negative Not Applicable	Summary of Impact.	Actions and recommendations to mitigate any negative impacts.
		programmes to better support people with neurodivergent conditions to access the labour market.	
Gender reassignment	No impact		
Pregnancy and maternity	No impact		
Race/ethnicity	Positive	<p>Compliance with the Equality Act 2010 is a core requirement, and devolution emphasises the importance of promoting equality, challenging discrimination, and supporting community cohesion.</p> <p>The Adult Skills budget will be devolved to the Combined Authority, which will then have the ability to adapt programmes to better support any specific ethnic or protected group to enable them to access employment and skills.</p> <p>If appropriate, the Combined Authority could seek to address barriers to integration or economic inclusion to further support community cohesion.</p>	

Protected characteristics from the Equality Act 2010 and other areas that may be impacted	Potential Impact Positive/Negative Not Applicable	Summary of Impact.	Actions and recommendations to mitigate any negative impacts.
Religion or belief	No impact		
Sex	Positive	<p>Compliance with the Equality Act 2010 is a core requirement, and devolution emphasises promoting equality, challenging discrimination, and tailoring support to individual needs.</p> <p>Through local decision making, devolution offers the opportunity for projects and programmes to specifically address sex-related challenges in Cheshire and Warrington such as access to high paid jobs in growth sectors and safe public transport.</p>	
Sexual orientation	No impact		
Marriage and civil partnership	No impact		
Rural communities*	Positive	<p>Through local decision making, devolution offers the opportunity for projects and programmes to specifically address rural deprivation and access to services in Cheshire and Warrington.</p>	

Protected characteristics from the Equality Act 2010 and other areas that may be impacted	Potential Impact Positive/Negative Not Applicable	Summary of Impact.	Actions and recommendations to mitigate any negative impacts.
		The powers and funding available could allow the Mayoral Combined Authority to tailor training, support for adults to access jobs available locally and enhance transport connectivity.	
Areas of deprivation* (include any impact on people living in poverty who may not live in areas identified as deprived)	Positive	Through local decision making, devolution offers the opportunity for projects and programmes to specifically address pockets of deprivation or barriers to services in Cheshire and Warrington. The powers and funding available could allow the Mayoral Combined Authority to tailor training, support for adults to access jobs available locally and enhance transport connectivity.	
Human rights*	No impact	Devolution is inclusive of the key Human Rights principles. Compliance with the Equality Act 2010 is a core requirement, and devolution is expected to promote equality, challenge discrimination, and tailor support to individual circumstances.	
Health and wellbeing and Health Inequalities* (consider the wider determinants of health such as education, housing, employment, environment, crime and transport, plus	Positive	Devolution aligns with the Council's Plans and Strategies to address health, wellbeing and inequalities. The Mayoral Combined Authority could play a key role in improving health and wellbeing, underpinned by a new bespoke duty in relation to health improvement and health inequalities. This would mean that the Mayoral Combined Authority would need to have regard to the need to	Positive impacts could be supported by continuing to ensure devolution remains inclusive, accessible, and responsive to the needs of all groups. The Combined Authority should remain responsive to local

Protected characteristics from the Equality Act 2010 and other areas that may be impacted	Potential Impact Positive/Negative Not Applicable	Summary of Impact.	Actions and recommendations to mitigate any negative impacts.
impacts on lifestyles and effects on health and care services)		improve health, and reduce health inequalities, in the exercise of its functions. Combined with an expectation that the Mayor would be appointed to one or more of the relevant Integrated Care Partnerships in the area, this could help strengthen the focus and increase the join-up of action to address issues around ill health and inequalities across the area.	intelligence which highlights those most in need.
Procurement/partnership* (if project due to be carried out by contractors/partners etc, identify steps taken to ensure equality compliance)	Neutral	Devolution and the subsequent set up of the Combined Authority will follow all the procedures and guidance as laid out by the Statutory Instrument.	

* **NOTE: This is not a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010.**

Section 6 – Justification, Mitigation and Actions

Mitigation	What can you do to mitigate any negative impacts or further enhance positive impacts?
<p>Please provide justification for the proposal if negative impacts have been identified? Are there any actions that could be undertaken to mitigate, reduce or remove negative impacts?</p> <p>Have all available options been explored? Please include details of alternative options and why they couldn't be considered? Please include details of how positive impacts could be further enhanced, if possible?</p>	<p>There are no negative impacts identified. The proposed plan and service model for a Combined Authority are principally a devolution of powers and public money from central government departments.</p> <p>Impacts will be regularly monitored once the Combined Authority is in place, as detailed in Section 7 of this form.</p> <p>The alternative is not to progress with devolution via the establishment of Combined Authority. This would mean that the powers and funding will remain with central government departments and there would be no access to some funding streams such as Strategic Investment Fund (SIF) which are restricted to established Combined Authorities. If devolution were not to take place, the status quo would remain but there is a risk that understanding of the needs of protected groups in the local area may not be fully understood in the longer term.</p> <p>The set up of a Combined Authority allows residents to elect a Mayor, with a mandate that can take forward the needs of the sub-region. The Mayor would also take a seat at the Prime Minister's Council of Nations and Regions as well as the Deputy Prime Minister's Mayoral Council, which would give the area a stronger voice with the government. Cheshire and Warrington is currently one of only 3 areas in the North of England not currently represented.</p>

Section 7 - Monitoring and review

<p>How will the impact of the service, service change, decommissioning of the service, strategy, function, or procedure be monitored? How will actions to mitigate negative impacts be monitored? Date for review of the EA</p>	
<p>Details of monitoring activities</p>	<p>Please include details of how the impact of the proposal will be monitored e.g. performance monitoring, analysis of complaints, equality monitoring data etc. Monitoring should include information on whether actions to mitigate negative impacts have achieved their desired outcome.</p> <p>The Cheshire and Warrington Combined Authority will be required to undertake appropriate monitoring to assess quality and impact. This will include performance data, equality monitoring, and other relevant indicators in line with devolved funding streams requirements. All ongoing monitoring activities will be carried out in accordance with the terms agreed once the Combined Authority has been established and will inform ongoing service development.</p>
<p>Date and responsible officer for the review of the EA</p>	<p>Please include the date, responsible officer, and department. It is recommended that the EA be reviewed approximately 12 months after it has been signed off.</p> <p>Date: August 2026 Responsible Officer: Gemma Davies Department: Growth Director, Cheshire West and Chester Council</p>

Section 8 - Help and support.

For support and advice please contact:

Cheshire East Council: equalityandinclusion@cheshireeast.gov.uk

Cheshire West and Chester Council: equalities@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk

Warrington Borough Council: equalities@warrington.gov.uk