

COUNCIL – 14 DECEMBER 2022

NOTICES OF MOTION

Submitted to Council in Accordance with the Council Procedural Rules

1 Sustainable and Inclusive Growth Commission Report

Proposed by Councillor Q Abel

In November 2020 the Sub-regional Leaders' Board of Cheshire and Warrington set up the Cheshire and Warrington Sustainable and Inclusive Growth Commission. The aim of this was to move further and faster towards the Sub-region's ambition to be the most sustainable and inclusive sub-region in the UK, to help address inequality and climate change.

In September 2022 the Commission released their full report, which focussed on four theme areas:

- Inclusive Economy
- Sustainable Transport
- Sustainable Land Use
- Carbon Net Zero

For the actions within the report to be pursued the individual local authorities within the sub-region will need to prioritise the themes as areas to action.

[Sustainable and Inclusive Growth Commission report](#)

Motion

1. Cheshire East Council notes and acknowledges the report and recommendations of the Cheshire and Warrington Sustainable and Inclusive Growth Commission.
2. That the Council's Economy and Growth Committee be asked to consider the report and to determine the Council's response to the recommendations.

2 LGA Campaign "Save Local Services"

Proposed by Councillor M Goldsmith and Seconded by Councillor A Moran

Background

The global pandemic, the Ukrainian war and the impact of Brexit has rocketed inflation to 11.1%, a level not seen for over 40 years. When UK councils set their budgets in February 2022, no one envisaged such high inflation or that its impact would be so quick. In recent months, the price of goods, services and staff wages have all risen at record levels. These increases must be paid NOW but councils have fixed incomes and spending budgets never designed for such high inflation.

For example, the government has now agreed a national pay rise of 6% for all council workers. For decades this had been around 2% and Cheshire East, like most other councils, budgeted for 2%. This 6% wage rise is backdated to April, so it adds £6m to our immediate costs this year. This is about 2% of council tax revenue. It is a cost increase we could not predict, had no control over, did not budget for but must pay immediately.

But this is not the only increase. Councils are not covered by the government's energy cap either. Therefore, we must pay full market rates to heat schools, libraries and leisure centres. Construction costs have also gone up 18% and the care homes for our vulnerable residents want immediate price rises too.

Rampant inflation has added £8.9m to Cheshire East's costs this year. Just to deliver the same services. In February 2022, the day after Russia invaded Ukraine, Full Council debated its latest 4-year spending plan. The Conservatives wanted to use a financial surplus of £2.4m to lower council tax. Instead, the administration put it into the council's reserve funds. Thank goodness we did. It means Cheshire East can remain solvent this year. We are one of the lucky ones though.

Many councils, of all political types, are now talking about imminent bankruptcy. The Conservative councils of Hampshire and Kent have requested emergency government support to avoid Section 114 insolvency notices within months.

In the latest budget, the Chancellor allowed council tax to increase by 5% in April 2023. However, this is far too little and far too late. It does nothing to fix the current financial problems caused by uncontrolled inflation. It also does nothing to fix future problems with inflation either. With inflation at 11.1%, a 5% rise in council tax next April means a 6.1% CUT in council funding. This means Cheshire East will have almost £20m less to spend on local services.

The LGA says Local councils need £2.4 billion of emergency funding NOW to keep vital public services going. On budget day, the Daily Telegraph published how central government wasted £14 billion last year on items such as 'Vegan ice cream, a villa party in Naples, staff training by RADA actors and £6,091 on an amusement park in Sydney, Australia'. The government also spent £9.2bn on failed energy companies like Bulb. Therefore, the £2.4 billion councils need to keep vital services running is a fraction of this waste.

The Chancellor also stated the UK is now officially in recession. So, with rampant inflation, economic recession plus councils' facing bankruptcy or savage cuts, the Chancellors claim to be delivering a plan for "stability, growth and public services" seems rather detached from reality.

Therefore, Cheshire East Council Supports the LGA Campaign to "Save Local Services" AND asks the Government to provide immediate emergency support to address the funding gap for all local councils.

[Save local services | Local Government Association](#)

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Motion

That Cheshire East Supports the LGA Campaign to “Save Local Services” and asks the Government to Provide Emergency Funding for All Local Councils

3 Quality Council Homes for Cheshire East

Proposed by Councillor C Naismith and Seconded by Councillor A Critchley

Background

We are in a cost-of-living crisis on top of a housing crisis. Thousands of people within Cheshire East are struggling with above inflation rent increases in the private sector, which hampers their ability to contribute to the local economy or to save to get on the housing ladder themselves.

Indeed, the Cheshire Homechoice waiting list is growing daily, with families in need having to wait years for an offer of accommodation, and the council having to resort to bed & breakfast accommodation to fulfil its legal duty to help homeless families.

The council recognises that access to high quality, genuinely affordable and decent housing is intrinsically linked to positive health, education and social mobility outcomes. Put simply: if you provide people with a safe, warm and stable place to live they will be healthier and have more opportunity to get on in life.

While the council recognises that "affordable housing" is currently delivered within Cheshire East this is largely by private developers and registered housing providers.

The Government definition of "affordable" is limited because it is linked to market rent rather than local incomes. As such, often housing which meets the definition of "affordable" is not affordable to local people.

The Council notes the success of council's such as Salford, Trafford, Wandsworth and nearby Stoke-on-Trent currently delivering high quality council housing at council rents, below market levels and the positive impact this has had on the living standards of residents in those areas.

The council notes that it does not currently operate a Housing Revenue Account: a requirement of Authorities who wish to build-to-let their own housing stock.

Motion

This Council commits to:

- 1) Creating a Cheshire East Council housing revenue account.
- 2) The development of a long-term strategy for the construction of high-quality, genuinely affordable council housing across the borough, underpinned by long-term secure tenancy agreements, with rents relative to the average wage of the geographical area. Thus Providing residents the security, health, education & social mobility opportunity that they deserve.