

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **Adults and Health Committee**
held on Monday, 23rd June, 2025 in the Council Chamber, Municipal
Buildings, Earle Street, Crewe CW1 2BJ

PRESENT

Councillor J Rhodes (Chair)
Councillor L Anderson (Vice-Chair)

Councillors S Adams, C Bulman, J Clowes, N Cook, S Corcoran, S Gardiner,
R Moreton, H Moss, J Place and L Wardlaw

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

Helen Charlesworth-May, Executive Director of Adults, Health and Integration
Jill Broomhall, Director of Adults Social Care
Nikki Wood-Hill, Lead Finance Business Partner
Roisin Beressi, Principal Lawyer
Dan Coyne, Head Integrated Commissioning
Dan McCabe, Head of Integrated Urgent Care
Alex Jones, Better Care Fund Programme Lead
Professor Rod Thompson, Director of Public Health
Sam Jones, Democratic Services Officer

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence from Members.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

In the interest of openness and transparency, the following declaration
was made:

In relation to Item 13, Councillor Corcoran declared that he was the Chair
of the Health and Wellbeing Board.

3 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Councillor Gardiner requested it be noted that at the meeting of the Adults
and Health Committee on 24 March 2025, Councillor Sewart was present
as substitute for Councillor Clowes.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 24 March 2025 be approved as a
correct record and signed by the Chair.

4 PUBLIC SPEAKING/OPEN SESSION

There were no public speakers registered.

5 FINAL OUTTURN 2024/25

The committee considered a report which provided an overview of the Cheshire East Council final outturn for the financial year 2024/25, from Nikki Wood-Hill, Lead Finance Business Partner.

The Committee were updated that there had been an improvement in the finances, with the Adults and Health Committee having a smaller pressure of £17.6 million; it was highlighted that external care costs continued to be the main driver for the pressure. It was noted that the recommendation for Council is that the full level of exception financial support was to be utilised to support the transformation plan and add to the council's reserves.

Members were updated that in 24/25 the Adults, Health and Integration directorate had not recognised the full year impact of the pressures from 23/24, as these had occurred towards the end of the year, as the council was going through close down process. The bulk of overspend from 24/25 related to the full year effect of 23/24, plus some one off expenditure funding from 23/24 which was not recurrent in 24/25. As a result, in 24/25 the council tracked expenditure closely, and at the end of quarter 3, when approving the 25/26 budget, a "most likely case" scenario was factored in. It was noted that the report stated that during the last three months of 24/25, activity dipped unexpectedly, so for 25/26 the council have recognised all of the recurrent costs from 24/25. In addition, the council had set aside funding for pay inflation in commissioned care costs to a level which it has not done previously.

Members were updated that, at this moment in time, there was no obvious reason as to why there should be an overspend in 25/26; the transformation plan for Adults Social Care was explicitly intended to address the key drivers of the overspend over the last 2-3 years.

It was noted that the first year of the transformation programme would look at how Cheshire East Council could get better control of care packages for working age adults to reduce the costs, and would be looking into the models of care and associated pricing models to identify how the council could better support people with the budgets available in order to reduce costs. In year 2 of transformation plan the council would look to remodel care and housing to deliver it in a more efficient way. Cheshire East Council were comfortable that plans were in place to ensure that that over the next two years the Adults Social Care budget reflects levels that which could be reasonably expected, given the nature of the aging population within the borough.

However, it was noted that there were items over which the council did not have control, such as the budgetary pressures facing the NHS, and it was possible that the council would see the NHS asking local authorities to pick up costs which the council is not responsible for.

Members were updated that Cheshire East Council would not purchase care packages from providers where the quality of care was not appropriate and had developed a set of quality assurance ratings which it used to review care quality; this was done on a routine basis. It was noted that the council only worked with providers which it viewed delivered a quality of care which was acceptable; where the council were worried about quality, it took active steps to support providers.

Members requested details of the Earmarked Reserves. Officers committed to sharing the minutes of the Corporate Policy Committee which took place on the 12 June 2025 concerning the Earmarked Reserves, so that members could see the discussion and the proposed amendments to the recs which took place there. The details were contained within the [Corporate Policy Minutes available here](#) on page 2.

It was noted that there was no capital programme for the Adults and Health Committee at present, and there was a requirement that the Public Health Reserve be kept separate.

Members thanked officers for their work to date in reducing the overspend for the Adults and Health Committee.

It was noted that that recommendation four contained within the report was not associated with the Adults and Health Committee, and Members would not vote on it.

Councillor John Place joined the meeting at 1055.

RESOLVED (Unanimously):

That the Adults and Health Committee:

1. Consider the overall financial performance of the Council in the 2024/25 financial year, as contained within the report, as follows:

- a) A Net Revenue Overspend of £17.6m against a revised budget of £365.8m (4.8% variance) funded by conditional Exceptional Financial Support (Capitalisation Direction) via borrowing.
- b) General Reserves closing balance of £6.3m.
- c) Capital Spending of £88.4m against an approved programme of £215.8m (59% variance).

2. Consider the contents of Annex 1.

3. Approve the new Reserves in the Reserves Section (Annex 1, Section 5, Table 1) which includes proposed movements to reserves.

6 CONNECT TO WORK FUNDING

The committee considered a report which sought approval from the Adults and Health Committee for the Connect to Work delivery proposals, and for a recommendation to be made to Full Council for approval to receive and spend the grant.

The Committee were updated that the Connect to Work programme would be delivered by three neighbouring local authorities (Cheshire East Council, Cheshire West and Chester Council (CWAC) and Warrington Borough Council) who already had strong working relationships and collaborate on skills, employment and growth.

It was noted that the governance arrangements for the programme were not expected to be complete until August 2025.

The committee were updated that CWAC were the lead for programme, and this had been decided by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), and they have lead accountable status. It was noted that the full allocation of the programme, across the three local authorities was in region of £14.3 million over five years. It was noted that CWAC would receive a higher proportion of funding due to the current resourcing levels within their Supported Employment Team, and therefore higher target for job starts, however Cheshire East Council would deliver the same quality of service and would be working closely with colleagues in the Children and Families directorate to ensure beneficial delivery.

Members were updated that officers would be looking to target those individuals in harder to reach rural areas, and this would form part of the action plan. It was noted that several methods would be used to ensure that as many people as possible could be reached with this programme and Members stated the importance of helping those with disabilities to get back into work.

It was noted that CWAC would be responsible for the commissioned element of the programme, and there would be some associated project management and outsourced fees and elements, however benchmarking had taken place in relation to the expected figures. It was noted that the £500,000 received from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund would not need to be paid back, and that the DWP had set the yearly allocations, with the peak being towards the middle of the programme.

Members requested details of the successes the Cheshire East Supported Employment Team had had over recent years, and details of the 55 sustainments in paragraph 7 of the report. Officers committed to provide a written response.

Members requested details of the levels of referrals Cheshire East was taking, and how the investment made by Cheshire East Council differs from that of CWAC and Warrington Borough Council. Officers committed to provide a written response to this.

Councillor Gardiner proposed an amendment to add a fourth recommendation to the report:

“Request officers to bring a further paper to the Adults and Health Committee which sets out performance monitoring and management information to enable the committee to make further decisions on governance.”

This amendment was seconded by Councillor Moss and accepted by the committee as a friendly amendment.

RESOLVED (Unanimously):

That the Adults and Health Committee:

1. Agree that the funding be accepted and approve the proposed spend to use this additional funding as set out in para 20-23.
2. Approve the proposed “Connect to Work Action Plan” as set out in Appendix 1.
3. Recommend to Council the approval of a Supplementary Revenue Estimate (SRE) of the value of £2,090,769 referenced in para 35 over the 2025-2030 financial years.
4. Request officers to bring a further paper to the Adults and Health Committee which sets out performance monitoring and management information to enable the committee to make further decisions on governance.

7 BETTER CARE FUND PLAN 2025-26

The committee considered a report which provided a summary of the Better Care Fund planning guidance for 2025/26 and requested approval from the committee.

The Committee were updated that the objectives of the fund reflected the national targets:

- Provide more care closer to home.
- Increase the focus on prevention so that people can living healthier and more independent lives.
- Harness digital technology to transform care.
- Provide stability through the winter period 2025/26.
- Review our approach to Discharge to assess.

- Ensure that our local programme provides value for money, good outcomes, are impactful and bring about meaningful change to people's lives.

It was noted that the Better Care Fund plan will not be used for the national switchover from analogue to digital telecare provision.

The Disabled Facilities Grants would fund adaptations to people's homes to make it easier for them to remain living at home rather than being moved into residential care. The improvements could be adaptations such as a stairlift or providing a downstairs shower room. It was noted that there was a programme in place to look to recover any equipment which was no longer of use.

Members were updated that due to national and regional timelines which were not within the Council's control, they were being asked to approve a plan for 2025 / 2026 a number of months into the municipal year. Officers acknowledged this and would look into this for the future.

Members were updated that the term "high intensity user" was an individual who was accessing adult health and social care services on a frequent basis, and that the Mental Health Intensive Support Team were an external provider who supported those who had been discharged from hospital, working with individuals for between two and four weeks from their point of discharge on rehabilitation, and how to settle back in to own homes.

Members queried details in the table provided on page 147 of the agenda pack and officers committed to providing a written response.

Councillor Moreton was not present for the vote.

RESOLVED (Unanimously):

That the Adults and Health Committee:

1. Approve the Better Care fund plan for Cheshire East for 2025/26.

8 APPOINTMENTS TO SUB-COMMITTEES, WORKING GROUPS, PANELS, BOARDS AND JOINT COMMITTEES

The committee received a report which sought to appoint members to Sub-Committees, Working Groups, Task and Finish Groups, Panels, Boards and Joint Committees.

The committee considered the report which sought approval from the Adults and Health Committee to appoint the bodies referred to in the report and to nominate members to them. The annual report was presented which all Service Committees receive respective to their sub-committees

and working groups. The committee were asked to make appointments as follows:

- **Cheshire East Health and Wellbeing Board.** This is a joint board to which this Council appoints three councillors as voting members. The terms of reference were set out within the Constitution. The Corporate Policy Committee, Adults and Health Committee and Children and Families Committee are required to appoint x1 nominee each.

Councillor Jill Rhodes had been nominated as the Adults and Health Committee Member for the year 2025-26.

- **Joint Extra Care Housing Management Board.** This is a joint board of Cheshire East Council and Cheshire West and Chester Council, with each Council appointing three Members. The Corporate Policy Committee, Finance Sub Committee and Adults and Health Committee are required to appoint x1 nominee each.

Councillor John Place had been nominated as the Adults and Health Committee Member for the year 2025-26.

Where nominations had been put forward, the committee were asked to approve these nominations as set out, as recommendation 1 of this report, and for any positions which are yet to be filled, nominations should be submitted to the Head of Democratic Services, Brian Reed, as recommendation 2 of this report.

Councillor Moreton was not present for the vote.

RESOLVED (By Majority):

That the Adults and Health Committee:

1. Appoints the sub-committees, working groups, panels, boards and joint committees for 2025-26, and the member appointments to them, as set out within this report.
2. Where appropriate, agrees to submit member nominations to the bodies below to the Head of Democratic Services.

9 RECOMMISSION OF EXTRA CARE HOUSING AND CARE AT HOME CARE AND SUPPORT SERVICES

The committee received a report regarding the merging of the care and support services delivered across Care at Home and Extra Care Housing into one contract and one service offer, which provided details of how the new care model would support the needs of the borough both now and in the next seven years.

The Committee were updated that the Care at Home Recommission was closely linked the Council's Transformation Plan. It was noted that Adult

Social Care Services currently work with 63 commissioned providers and work was underway to assess the recommended number of providers, but the details were not yet ready. It was noted that the current contracts were supporting users and meeting their needs, but there was a need to significantly reshape and redesign the care which the council provided in order to maximise the capacity and ensure that it was operating in the most efficient way; by involving the community and voluntary sectors. The new model would look to ensure that voluntary sector were funded in a way to ensure sustainable and successful delivery.

The committee were updated that officers had engaged with an external organisation which had profiled demand and capacity for Cheshire East to ensure that the eight care communities would have the appropriate resources in place; there was significant planning and scrutiny being undertaken to ensure that the growing demand in the borough, due to the large aging population in Cheshire East, can be managed. It was noted that issues of social isolation would be addressed in connecting individuals to their community to aid their support.

The committee were updated that it was necessary to look at how care could be strategically commissioned to make use of local providers to make a more efficient use of resources throughout the borough. It was noted that officers were currently engaging with local education establishments in the areas, such as Staffordshire University. As well as this, the Council would review individual care packages to ensure that they were still appropriate and look into how assisted technology could help provide the same quality of care with reduced resource.

The committee were updated that the next People Panel Session would be held in August 2025 and feedback had been collated from the previous sessions to build on this.

Members noted the importance of communications to ensure that this does not cause increased anxiety to service users.

Councillor Rhodes proposed an amendment to recommendations 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 to change the wording from “support” to “approve”. This amendment was seconded by Councillor Cook and accepted as a friendly amendment by the committee.

RESOLVED (Unanimously):

That the Adults and Health Committee:

1. Approve the justification for the final extension request and subsequent approval for the Care at Home and Extra Care Housing Contracts.
2. Approve the merging of Care at Home and Extra Care Housing care and support services.

3. Approve the transformational approach of these services over the contracts three – seven year implementation, working in a manner that contributes and works alongside the savings targets associated with this workstream.

4. Approve resident-focused and financially sustainable service design principles.

5. Approve the Council's long term intention to move to a localities-based model of care delivery, reducing the number of home care providers that we are contracted to work with and enhancing the lives of residents by improving access to our services, supporting independence and resilience, reducing the need for services, and promoting community growth.

10 CQC LOCAL AUTHORITY ASSURANCE OUTCOME BRIEFING

The committee received a report which detailed the outcome of the Local Authority assurance visit by the Care Quality Commission during week beginning 20 January 2025.

The Committee were updated that as a result of the CQC Assessment, Cheshire East Council's Adults Social Care department was reviewed as GOOD across all care quality statements; one of the highest ratings currently awarded nationally to local authorities. In comparison to other local authorities who had received a GOOD rating, very few had been rated as high as Cheshire East Council for their "care assessment" process.

It was noted that the CQC assessment report detailed further areas of improvement for the directorate, which were already areas which officers were aware of, and there was now an Improvement Plan and Progress Tracker in place to assist the authority with further progress.

Members and officers praised the hard work of the social care staff and leadership and commended the good result.

RESOLVED:

That the information contained within the report be considered and noted.

11 PREVENT AND CHANNEL PANEL STATUTORY RESPONSIBILITIES

The committee received a report on the changing landscape and statutory responsibilities in relation to PREVENT.

The committee were updated that local authorities were legally required to coordinate Channel Panel and PREVENT across their borders. As a result of missed opportunities prior to recent events, such as the Southport killings in 2024 and the death of David Ames MP in 2021, significant changes had been made to the Channel Panel and PREVENT, and local

strategies and policies had been updated to reflect national changes. Cheshire East Council relied on partners within the Police to provide information on those who hold firearms licenses within the borough.

It was noted that Cheshire East Council was subject to an annual assessment by the Home Office on their PREVENT duties, and Cheshire East had exceeded or met every assessment level.

It was noted that most referrals received were regarding children aged 11 – 17, and since the Southport killings, the referral rate had increased by about 35%.

Cheshire East Council was to submit a funding bid to Home Office to allow for the provision of training in schools and colleges to make students more aware of the risks of accessing extreme content online, and would extend this training to older individuals with learning difficulties in higher educational establishments. It was noted that the Home Office provided training materials which Cheshire East council could access, but the authority also produced their own.

It was noted that if any Members, or a member of the public had concerns, then these could be raised by making a referral to the Police Counter Terrorism Unit.

RESOLVED:

That the information contained within the report be considered and noted.

Councillor Moreton left the meeting at 13:40 and did not return.

12 ADULTS SERVICE SCORE CARD 2024 (QUARTER 4)

The committee received a report which provided the Adults and Health Committee members with an overview of key activity and performance in Adults Social Care Services for Quarter 4 2024.

The Committee were updated on the key figures of the report:

- There were 19 fewer individuals aged 65+ in permanent residential and nursing placements who were being supported compared to the previous year.
- Every week 844 additional hours of domiciliary care were being provided.
- There had been a 35% increase in contacts to the “front door”, however this had not led to a significant rise in those which were going on to receive an assessment, as their needs had been met without formal care and support.
- There had been an increase in individuals completing reablement without requiring ongoing care.

It was noted that the numbers of individuals entering residential care were reducing, but those accessing domiciliary care had gone up, but higher numbers had been expected.

It was noted that there had been an increase in safeguarding concerns and S42 enquiries, which was positive as it showed that issues were being identified at an earlier stage, and work was ongoing to reduce inappropriate referrals.

The committee were updated that work was being undertaken with regards to telecare services and “smart speakers” in order to see if they could be a useful assistant to those who required help at home. The committee were updated that officers were currently working on a new Accommodation Strategy, which would review all forms of care accommodation and would form a source document for planning colleagues to draw on when considering planning applications for care homes. It was noted that this strategy would need to be an addendum to the Local Plan to allow the local authority to be better placed to resist these planning applications where necessary.

It was noted that a project was underway regarding self-funders, where individuals who believed that they required residential care services could come to the Council to ask for advice on the best solution for them. It was noted that to date, none of these individuals had been advised that long term residential care was the best option for them; the Council was looking for solutions to keep people in their own homes for longer where appropriate.

RESOLVED:

That the information contained within the report be considered and noted.

13 MINUTES OF THE CHESHIRE EAST HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Cheshire East Health and Wellbeing Board held on 18 March 2025 be received and noted.

14 WORK PROGRAMME

The committee considered the Work Programme.

Members were asked to review the work programme and contact the Chair or Democratic Services with any suggestions of scrutiny items that they would like to put forward for the Committee.

It was noted that the Work Programme detailed a report for noting, the “Adults Social Care Performance Score Card 2024 (Quarter 4)” which was an error as this report was brought to the committee meeting for scrutiny.

RESOLVED:

Members requested that the following items be added to the Work Programme:

- Connect To Work Governance Report
- CQC Improvement Plan Report
- Extra Care Housing Report

Members requested that officers consider whether the Better Care Fund Report would be received by the Adults and Health Committee or the Health and Wellbeing Board.

The meeting commenced at 10.30 am and concluded at 2.20 pm

Councillor J Rhodes (Chair)