

# Cabinet Agenda

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**Date:** Tuesday, 15th October, 2013  
**Time:** 2.00 pm  
**Venue:** The Assembly Room - Town Hall, Macclesfield SK10 1EA

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The agenda is divided into 2 parts. Part 1 is taken in the presence of the public and press. Part 2 items will be considered in the absence of the public and press for the reasons indicated on the agenda and at the foot of each report.

## **PART 1 – MATTERS TO BE CONSIDERED WITH THE PUBLIC AND PRESS PRESENT**

1. **Apologies for Absence**

2. **Declarations of Interest**

To provide an opportunity for Members and Officers to declare any disclosable pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests in any item on the agenda.

3. **Public Speaking Time/Open Session**

In accordance with Procedure Rules Nos.11 and 35 a period of 10 minutes is allocated for members of the public to address the meeting on any matter relevant to the work of the meeting. Individual members of the public may speak for up to 5 minutes but the Chairman or person presiding will decide how the period of time allocated for public speaking will be apportioned where there are a number of speakers. Members of the public are not required to give notice to use this facility. However, as a matter of courtesy, a period of 24 hours' notice is encouraged.

Members of the public wishing to ask a question at the meeting should provide at least three clear working days' notice in writing and should include the question with that notice. This will enable an informed answer to be given.

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4. **Questions to Cabinet Members**

A period of 20 minutes is allocated for questions to be put to Cabinet Members by members of the Council. Notice of questions need not be given in advance of the meeting. Questions must relate to the powers, duties or responsibilities of the Cabinet. Questions put to Cabinet Members must relate to their portfolio responsibilities.

The Leader will determine how Cabinet question time should be allocated where there are a number of Members wishing to ask questions. Where a question relates to a matter which appears on the agenda, the Leader may allow the question to be asked at the beginning of consideration of that item.

5. **Minutes of Previous Meeting** (Pages 1 - 10)

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 17th September 2013.

6. **Care Leavers: Response to Children and Families Task and Finish Group Report** (Pages 11 - 90)

To consider the final report of the Children and Families Policy Development Group which was invited to review the Children and Families Scrutiny Task and Finish Group's report on Care Leavers.

7. **National Housing Federation Campaign Backed by Central Government** (Pages 91 - 96)

To consider a report on the National Housing Federation's 'Yes to Homes' campaign.

8. **A6 to Manchester Airport Relief Road - Planning Submission and Outcome of Public Consultation Process (Forward Plan Ref: 13/14-56)** (Pages 97 - 146)

To consider a report seeking authority to submit a planning application for the A6 to Manchester Airport Relief Road and to progress the necessary legal agreements.

9. **Strategic Infrastructure - Delivery of Local Pinch Point Funded Schemes (Forward Plan Ref: 13/14-36)** (Pages 147 - 160)

To consider a report on the Council's success in securing Pinch Point funding from the Department for Transport to deliver vital highway infrastructure improvements across the Borough. The report seeks approval to proceed with the development and delivery of the schemes.

10. **Strategic Infrastructure - Development of Cheshire and Warrington Local Transport Body Schemes (Forward Plan Ref: 13/14-35)** (Pages 161 - 164)

To consider a report highlighting the Council's success in securing funding to deliver schemes prioritised by the Cheshire and Warrington Local Transport Body.

11. **Devolution of Bus Service Operator Grant (BSOG) for Council Supported Bus Services (Forward Plan Ref: 13/14-46)** (Pages 165 - 168)

To consider a report on the payment of Bus Service Operator Grant following the Department for Transport's decision to devolve payment of the grant for Council supported bus services to Transport Authorities with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2014.

12. **Supporting Community Transport & Accessibility Initiatives - Grants & Vehicle Donation (Forward Plan Ref: 13/14-45) (Pages 169 - 202)**

To consider a report seeking approval of three complementary policies to allocate resources to communities in Cheshire East to support transport and accessibility initiatives.

13. **Major Change Project 6.4 - Environmental Operations Change Programme (previously known as "Determine future delivery model for waste management services") (Forward Plan Ref: 13/14-48) (Pages 203 - 220)**

To consider a report on the work that has been carried out to further define and scope out the overall Environmental Operations Change Programme and the five major project strands within it.

14. **Future Delivery Model for Bereavement Services (Forward Plan Ref: 13/14-32) (Pages 221 - 226)**

To consider a report seeking approval to progress with the registration of a wholly owned company limited by shares to act as the Council's agent in managing the provision of Bereavement Services.

15. **Domiciliary Care Framework (Forward Plan Ref: 13/14-19) (Pages 227 - 232)**

To consider a report seeking approval for the establishment of a framework agreement through which to purchase future domiciliary care services.

16. **Universal Information and Advice Services (Forward Plan Ref: 13/14-25) (Pages 233 - 238)**

To consider a report recommending that the Council continue to Grant Aid Cheshire East Citizens' Advice Bureau and Cheshire East Citizens' Advice Bureau North for the provision of universal information and advice services across Cheshire East without competition for a period of 12 months from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015.

17. **Exclusion of the Press and Public**

The report relating to the remaining item on the agenda has been withheld from public circulation and deposit pursuant to Section 100(B)(2) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that the matter may be determined with the press and public excluded.

The Committee may decide that the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item pursuant to Section 100(A)4 of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 and public interest would not be served in publishing the information.

## **PART 2 – MATTERS TO BE CONSIDERED WITHOUT THE PUBLIC AND PRESS PRESENT**

18. **Terms of Voluntary Redundancy and Voluntary Early Retirement (Forward Plan Ref: 13/14-24)** (Pages 239 - 244)

To consider a report on the terms that the Council offers to employees volunteering for redundancy or early retirement.



**CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL**

Minutes of a meeting of the **Cabinet**  
held on Tuesday, 17th September, 2013 at Committee Suite 1,2 & 3,  
Westfields, Middlewich Road, Sandbach CW11 1HZ

**PRESENT**

Councillor M Jones (Chairman)  
Councillor D Brown (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors Rachel Bailey, J Clowes, J P Findlow, L Gilbert, B Moran,  
P Raynes, D Stockton and D Topping

**Members in Attendance**

Councillors Rhoda Bailey, D Brickhill, L Brown, K Edwards, R Fletcher,  
D Flude, M Grant, P Groves, S Hogben, L Jeuda, B Livesley, D Marren,  
P Mason, G Merry, A Moran, B Murphy, D Newton, L Smetham, A Thwaite  
and J Weatherill

**Officers in Attendance**

Mike Suarez, Lorraine Butcher, Suki Binjal, Heather Grimbaldston and Paul  
Mountford

**55 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor D Brickhill declared a non-pecuniary interest in Item 7, Notice of  
Motion – Late Night Levy, because his son was a serving police officer  
with Cheshire Constabulary.

Councillor D Brown declared a non-pecuniary interest in Item 8, Devolution  
of Streetscape Services to Congleton Town Council, as a member of  
Congleton Town Council.

**56 PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME/OPEN SESSION**

There were no members of the public wishing to speak.

**57 QUESTIONS TO CABINET MEMBERS**

There were no questions of Cabinet Members from members of the  
Council.

**58 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING****RESOLVED**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> August 2013 be approved as  
a correct record.

**59 NOTICE OF MOTION - FIRE SPRINKLERS**

Cabinet considered a response to the motion submitted to Council on 18<sup>th</sup> July 2013.

Councillor G Merry had proposed, and Councillor J Weatherill had seconded, the following motion:

*“The Council recognises the consequences of fire and the benefits of fitting fire sprinklers in properties.*

*The Council welcomes the decision of Cheshire Fire Authority to assist social landlords by part-funding the retro-fitting of sprinklers in some high-rise buildings.*

*The Council urges social landlords to complete a programme of sprinkler retro-fitting to all of their high-rise buildings and to act as advocates for the fitting of sprinklers.*

*The Council instructs its officers to use whatever powers are available to it to secure the fitting of sprinklers by others, where necessary changing Council’s own policies and its approach to implementation.*

*The Council instructs its officers to investigate the fitting of sprinklers in Council-owned properties.*

*The Council calls on the Secretary of State to legislate for sprinklers as a requirement in all new residential buildings.”*

Councillor G Merry spoke in relation to the motion.

**RESOLVED**

That

1. the Council lobby local Members of Parliament to promote any change to the Building Regulations to consider further the inclusion of sprinklers within new or adapted buildings;
2. consideration be given to the implementation of sprinklers for all new Council-owned development subject to risk and cost; and
3. consideration be given to suitable fire protection measures in areas of higher risk, for example residential care homes.

**60 NOTICE OF MOTION - LATE NIGHT LEVY**

Cabinet considered a response to the motion submitted to Council on 18<sup>th</sup> July 2013.

Councillor D Brickhill had proposed, and Councillor M Jones had seconded, the following motion:

*“That the Cabinet investigate the cost and likely income of imposing a levy on those establishments which sell alcohol after midnight in order to help fund the cost of control of the late night economy.”*

Councillor D Brickhill spoke in relation to the motion.

The introduction of a late night levy was a matter for the Licensing Committee as the Licensing Authority and was a discretionary power for that Committee to exercise.

**RESOLVED**

That the Licensing Committee be asked to consider the introduction of a Late Night Levy.

**61 DEVOLUTION OF STREETSCAPE SERVICES TO CONGLETON TOWN COUNCIL**

Cabinet considered a report setting out the proposed arrangements for the devolution of streetscape services to Congleton Town Council in accordance with Cheshire East Council’s policy on the transfer and devolution of services.

**RESOLVED**

That

1. delegated authority be given to the Head of Environmental Protection and Improvement (SRO for the project), the Monitoring Officer and the Section 151 Officer (or the officers that are devolved those powers) to conclude negotiations for the devolution of streetscape services to Congleton Town Council and award the contract in consultation with the Portfolio Holder and Leader of the Council by the proposed date for transfer of staff on 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2014; and
2. the negotiations are to be concluded on a cost-neutral basis.

**62 ALL CHANGE FOR CREWE: HIGH GROWTH CITY**

Cabinet considered a report which sought endorsement for an updated high growth strategy for Crewe, building on the 2010 strategy document and the work of the ‘All Change for Crewe’ programme.

The report detailed how the Council and its partners were committed to releasing the massive potential and delivering the vision for ‘Crewe: High Growth City’. It set out five key commitments to the future of Crewe which

would form the focus of the Council's (and LEPs') priorities for interventions and development within Crewe:

1. A world class automotive and rail hub
2. A UK centre of excellence for employer-led skills
3. A market leader in renewable energy
4. Connecting Crewe: delivering a £500 million investment programme to improve road and rail infrastructure
5. Achievable and sustainable growth

**RESOLVED**

That the report and the accompanying document "All Change for Crewe: High Growth City" be received and endorsed.

**63 CONNECTING CHESHIRE PROJECT UPDATE**

Cabinet considered a progress report on the development and delivery of the Cheshire, Halton and Warrington Local Broadband Plan.

The Connecting Cheshire Partnership was ahead of schedule to deliver fibre broadband with speeds in excess of 24Mbps to a further 80,000 homes and businesses by the summer of 2015, increasing high speed broadband coverage to 96% of premises.

The survey work would be completed in December, with an announcement of which localities would be included in the first phase of the roll-out. The telecommunications partner, BT, anticipated that the first of five deployment phases would commence in late 2013.

Peninsula Enterprise (working with Groundwork Cheshire) had been selected as a partner to deliver a tailored programme of business support for eligible Small and Medium sized Enterprises (SMEs) to help them exploit the benefits of faster broadband and digital technology.

**RESOLVED**

That the project update be noted and the appointment of Peninsula Enterprise to deliver the Connecting Cheshire Superfast Business Support Programme be endorsed.

**64 INTEGRATED CARE AND SUPPORT - ACHIEVING BETTER OUTCOMES FOR RESIDENTS**

Cabinet considered a progress report on work underway to address the opportunities presented by the Health and Social Care Act 2012 which had given Local Authorities and reformed NHS organisations leverage to improve the outcomes for those individuals who used health and social care services through a better deployment of resources.

The legislation enabled local organisations to improve their collaborative work across the health and social care arena through a more focussed approach to commissioning critically with local practitioners, specifically General Practitioners, who now had a strengthened role at a local level in determining the deployment of health resources.

## **RESOLVED**

That Cabinet

1. notes the work underway locally working collaboratively with partners including, CWAC, 4 Clinical Commissioning Groups, the Acute Trusts and NHS England and specifically the effort to become a Pioneer Site for integration across Cheshire;
2. supports the ongoing work of the Caring Together Programme to redesign models of care and gives delegated authority to the Executive Director for Strategic Commissioning to jointly commission health and social care services that secure improved outcomes for residents, returning to Cabinet as appropriate when Key Decisions are required;
3. endorses the ongoing work with the South and Vale Royal Partnership Board and again gives delegated authority to the Executive Director Strategic Commissioning to jointly commission health and social care services that secure improved outcomes for residents, returning to Cabinet as appropriate when Key Decisions are required;
4. supports the development of Member Development sessions to more fully understand the reshaping of the health and social care landscape within the sub-region;
5. notes the financial strain associated with the current arrangements for providing health and social care services, the efforts being taken to reshape services to be safe and sustainable into the longer term, and the shifts in resourcing announced in the recent Spending Round to support integration in 2014/15; and
6. gives delegated authority to the Executive Director, Strategic Commissioning, in consultation with the Lead Member for Adults and Health, to consider additional investments in temporary capacity to secure key work streams, funded from the Cost of Investment Budget as appropriate.

## **65 COMPLEX NEEDS CARE PLACEMENTS**

Cabinet considered a report on the establishment of a Framework Agreement through which to purchase future specialist care placements for adults with complex needs.

To support the management of costs the Council had piloted the use of the Care Funding Calculator developed by the Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnerships. By piloting the Calculator, significant savings had been negotiated in 2013/14. To embed this approach into the Council's future procurement and contracts it was proposed that the Council establish a Framework Agreement through which it would purchase future specialist care placements for adults with complex needs.

**RESOLVED**

That Cabinet

1. note the savings already achieved by Cheshire East Council through the piloting of the Care Funding Calculator;
2. support the mandatory use of the tool to review all existing placements and any new complex needs care placements on an invest to save basis;
3. approve the establishment of a Framework Agreement through which it will purchase future specialist care placements for adults with complex needs;
4. delegate authority to the Director of Adult Social Care and Independent Living (Brenda Smith) to award contracts to providers meeting the requirements of the framework; and
5. delegate authority to the Director of Adult Social Care and Independent Living to award individual call offs under the framework contracts to provide support for individual service users.

**66 LEVEL ACCESS SHOWER FRAMEWORK**

Cabinet considered a report seeking authorisation to award and implement a framework contract for level access shower facilities and associated works for disabled persons.

Level access showers were provided in the discharge of the Council's statutory duty to meet the needs of disabled persons. Adaptations were designed to enable disabled persons to live independently in the home of their choice, reducing or delaying the need for formal care.

The Framework Agreement was for a total value of between £900,000 and £1,100,000 over the period of the contract, which was two years, with the option to extend for up to a further two years.

**RESOLVED**

That the Director of Economic Growth and Prosperity be given delegated authority to award the contract for level access shower facilities and associated works for disabled persons.

**67 HIGHWAYS PERMIT SCHEME FOR CHESHIRE EAST**

Cabinet considered a report on the implementation of a highways permit scheme in Cheshire East.

The Traffic Management Act 2004 made provision for Highways Authorities to introduce a permit scheme in order to manage disruption on the network more effectively for all road users. Permit schemes provided an alternative to the current notification system, requiring a permit to be issued in advance of any works. There would be a charge to the external works promoter aimed at allowing the Authority to resource the administration of the scheme.

It was proposed that Cheshire East Council would join the West and Shires Permit Scheme (WaSP) which was a common scheme, thereby expediting the programme for implementation with an anticipated start date of October 2014.

**RESOLVED**

That

1. the Council implement a Permit Scheme, as described in the report, under Part 3 of the Traffic Management Act (TMA) 2004; and
2. the Council work in partnership with Shropshire Council and join the common scheme being developed named the West and Shire Permit (WaSP) Scheme.

**68 A556 KNUTSFORD TO BOWDON IMPROVEMENT SCHEME - LOCAL IMPACT REPORT AND STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND**

Cabinet considered a report seeking approval to submit a Local Impact Report and Statement of Common Ground for the A556 Knutsford to Bowdon Improvement Scheme to the Planning Inspectorate.

The officers had prepared a Local Impact Report (LIR) and a Statement of Common Ground (SOCG), summaries of which were included at Appendix A of the report and contained in full at Appendix B.

Commuted sums for initial maintenance costs, potential mitigation measures for unforeseen issues on the wider CEC network and for addressing wider environmental impacts on the A556 south of the M6

had been agreed in principle by the Highways Agency and negotiations on the exact values were continuing.

**RESOLVED**

That

1. the Council in principle supports the Highways Agency's proposals for the A556 Knutsford to Bowdon improvement scheme;
2. the LIR and SOCG as presented be submitted to the planning inspectorate as an accurate representation of CEC's position, including the principle of the revised junction designs at the following junctions, as listed in Appendix B:
  - a. A50 / de-trunked A556 (Mere Crossroads)
  - b. A5034 / de-trunked A556 (Bucklow Hill)
  - c. A50 / new A556
3. the acceptance of the road safety departures report as attached at Appendix C be approved;
4. any variations to the LIR or SOCG required during or before the inspection process be delegated to the Head of Environmental Protection and Enhancement in consultation with the Portfolio Holder and local ward members;
5. any minor amendments to the scheme details from those shown in the LIR/SOCG, such as junction designs, be delegated to Head of Environmental Protection and Enhancement, with local ward members and the Portfolio Holder being informed;
6. if necessary, officers formally represent and evidence the views contained within both the report and the SOCG and LIR at the Examination in Public;
7. in principle, the Cheshire East Council is content to take over the management of the de-trunked sections of the former A556 and be responsible for their maintenance as part of its highway network subject to the agreement of a commuted sum to cover additional costs;
8. the agreement of the commuted sum from the Highways Agency for maintenance of the de-trunked A556 be delegated to the Head of Environmental Protection and Enhancement in consultation with the Portfolio Holder;
9. the agreement of the commuted sum from the Highways Agency for off-site mitigation work for "unforeseen" issues be delegated to the Head of Environmental Protection and Enhancement in consultation with the Portfolio Holder;



10. the agreement of the commuted sum from the Highways Agency for off-site mitigation work for wider environmental impacts be delegated to the Head of Environmental Protection and Enhancement in consultation with the Portfolio Holder;
11. the Corporate Manager for Resources be authorised to collect and administer the commuted sums as necessary; and
12. the Head of Environmental Protection and Enhancement in consultation with the Portfolio Holder be authorised to respond to queries and questions that may arise as part of the Examination process in relation to the LIR and SOCG.

Before closing the meeting, the Leader referred to the tragic death of an 11 year old boy from Sandbach following a traffic accident on the Alderley Edge Bypass on 16<sup>th</sup> September. The boy's brother and mother had both sustained injuries. The Leader asked that the Council's condolences be conveyed to the family together with the wish that those injured made a speedy recovery.

The meeting commenced at 2.00 pm and concluded at 4.03 pm

M Jones (Chairman)

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## CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

### Cabinet

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**Date of Meeting:** 15 October 2013  
**Report of:** Children and Families Policy Development Group  
**Subject/Title:** Care Leavers: Response to Children and Families Task and Finish Group Report

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#### **1.0 Report Summary**

- 1.1 This report encloses the final report of the Children and Families Policy Development Group which was invited to review the Children and Families Scrutiny Task and Finish Group's report on Care Leavers.

#### **2.0 Recommendations**

- 2.1 That:
- a) the report of the Policy Development Group be submitted to the Cabinet for consideration;
  - b) Cabinet be invited initially to comment on the details of the recommendations; and
  - c) The Director of Children's Services be asked to consider the next steps and advise on what work (if any) should now be undertaken by officers to develop the recommendations further.

#### **3.0 Reasons for Recommendations**

- 3.1 To progress the findings of the Scrutiny Review into 16 plus service for cared for children.

#### **4.0 Wards Affected**

- 4.1 All

#### **5.0 Local Ward Members**

- 5.1 Not applicable.

#### **6.0 Policy Implications**

- 6.1 Not known at this stage.

**7.0 Financial Implications**

7.1 Not known at this stage.

**8.0 Legal Implications**

8.1 Not known at this stage.

**9.0 Risk Management**

9.1 There are no identifiable risks.

**10.0 Background**

10.1 In 2012, the Children and Families Scrutiny Task and Finish Group completed its review into the 16 plus service for cared for children, the aim of the review being to look at how to improve the outcomes of some of the Borough's most vulnerable young adults.

10.2 The Task and Finish Group was due to report back to Cabinet having completed its review but, at this time the Policy Development Groups (PDG's) were being established by Council. As a result, the Portfolio Holder for Children and Families invited the Children and Families PDG to consider the report.

10.3 The findings and recommendations of the Task and Finish Group and the findings and recommendations of the Policy Development Group are contained within the report.

**11.0 Access to Information**

11.1 The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer:

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Designation: Democratic Services Officer  
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April 2013 – July 2013

Children and Families Policy Development Group

# Response to Children and Families Scrutiny Committee Task and Finish Group's Care Leavers Report

For further information, please contact  
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- 4.0 PDG's Recommendations for Future Policy Direction**
- 5.0 Task and Finish Group Recommendations/PDG Findings**

## **1.0 Executive Summary**

- 1.1 The Children and Families Scrutiny Committee established a Task and Finish Group in 2012 for the purpose of carrying out a comprehensive review of the processes which supported care leavers at Cheshire East. The Task and Finish Group made a number of recommendations in respect of improvements to the service for consideration by Cabinet in its report of November 2012 (Appendix 1).
- 1.2 At that time, Council established a number of Policy Development Groups whose remit was to -  
  
*i) develop new, and review existing policies with a cross-service approach wherever possible; ii) make reports and recommendations to the Portfolio Holder and/or Cabinet; and iii) make recommendations for service improvement.*
- 1.3 The Portfolio Holder for Children and Families invited the Children and Families Policy Development Group ('the PDG') to comment on the Task Group's recommendations prior to consideration of the paper by Cabinet. This report sets out the findings of the PDG in response to the Task and Finish Group's recommendations and submits a set of recommendations of its own for Cabinet to consider.

## **2. Outline of Review**

- 2.1 The Children and Families Policy Development Group initially considered the Care Leavers report at its meeting on 23 April 2013 at which it agreed to convene a special meeting to consider in detail the recommendations contained therein.
- 2.2 Two meetings were eventually held for this purpose on 13 and 29 May 2013 at which time the PDG debated the proposals put forward, having mind to the improvement work already been undertaken by the Children and Families Service.
- 2.3 The Chairman of the Scrutiny Task and Finish Group Councillor David Neilson, together with other members of the T&F Group (Councillor Bebbington, Councillor Livesley, Councillor Mahon and Councillor Silvester attended the first meeting, together with Julie Lewis (Principal Manager Cared for Children) and Sandra Slater (Group Manager Cared for Children). Councillor Neilson and the Principal Manager also attended the meeting on the 29 May.

### **3. Care Leavers Review: Outcome**

- 3.1 The Task and Finish Group focused on what improvements could be achieved on a practical basis whereas the PDG's discussions had taken a more aspirational stance, making suggestions which it accepted, were desirable, but may not be achievable in the present climate as a consequence of the implications on resources.
- 3.2 Its initial findings from the May meetings were submitted for final approval by the PDG on 1 July 2013 and subject to some minor amendments were approved.
- 3.3 Paragraph 5 of the report sets out in the first column the original recommendations of the Task and Finish Group, whilst the third column lists the PDG's conclusions in response to the issues raised. It should be noted that the legal and financial matters associated with the recommendations/findings have not been yet been considered.

### **4. PDG's Recommendations for Future Policy Direction**

- 4.1 The role of the Policy Development Group is to i) develop new, and review existing policies with a cross-service approach wherever possible; ii) make reports and recommendations to the Portfolio Holder and/or Cabinet; and iii) make recommendations for service improvement.
- 4.2 Having considered the Task Group's report, the Chairman of the PDG, Councillor Philip Hoyland tabled a paper at the May meetings for consideration entitled 'Questions, principles and policies' which looked at the issues raised from a more creative perspective without applying current restrictions.
- 4.3 Having considered the points raised, the PDG approved its own set of recommendations for Cabinet to consider i.e.
  - a) Cheshire East Council lobbies government to amend legislation where necessary to enable local authorities to continue providing the level and type of care required for all the young people in its care, up to the age of 25 if they require it;
  - b) Cheshire East Council aspires to continue providing the level and type of care required for all the young people in its care up to the age of 25 if they require it;
  - c) Cheshire East Council liaises with partner agencies, government and charities to secure the required resources;
  - d) Within 12 months, Cheshire East Council adopts as policy that it will continue providing the level and type of care required for all the young people in its care up to the age of 25, if the young person requires it and it is in their best interest;



- e) If adopted and it is not possible to achieve this policy for any individual an explanation is provided within their Care/Pathway plan; and
- f) Cabinet note that the Children and Families Policy Development Group has established a Task and Finish group to assist with any research, lobbying or additional background work required to facilitate the implementation of this proposal.

## 5. Task and Finish Group Recommendations/PDG's Findings

Care Leavers Review			
No	SCRUTINY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION	RESPONSE FROM POLICY DEVELOPMENT GROUP	PDG FINDINGS
13.1	<i>Changes to the processes that support care leavers</i>		
13.1.2	That the Council make attempts to delay the changing of the young person's Social Worker until after their exams have been completed and that an 'overlap' period be initiated in order to maintain a smooth transition. (p18 – para 6.8)	The Group acknowledged that changing Social Workers caused difficulties for the child, although occasionally it could be beneficial. It was suggested that Line Managers should take an overview of any change over to ensure adequate linkages. Noted that Agency workers often left without prior notice.	This is a pinch-point which creates work later if not addressed.
13.1.3	That the Council take steps to ensure that the Pathway Plan is an easy to use, easily understood and meaningful document for the young person. (p.19 – para 6.15).	The issue for young people was that Care Plans changed into Pathway Plans at 16, which was essentially the same thing. The PDG considered that the Care Plan and Pathway Plan would benefit from better linkage and should be renamed e.g. 'Pathway to Independence Plan'.	Care Plan and Pathway Plan could be amalgamated to improve transition.
13.1.4	That young people become more engaged in the leaving care process with more opportunities provided for them to engage with and question the process that affects their lives. To support this, the Council should look to appoint a Participation Officer. (p20 – para 6.16).	Noted that the Scrutiny Committee's description of a Participation Officer was, in the opinion of officers, the fundamental role of the Social Worker and Personal Advisor and that the introduction of a new structure and access to the Barnardos Advocacy Services would address concerns.	Social Workers and Personal Advisors need training and time to manage the Pathway to Independence Plan in order to involve the young person effectively in construction of the plan.

13.1.5	That Foster Carers be given a key role in the leaving care and pathway planning process. (p20 – para 6.17).	Noted that Foster Care Forums were now a regular event whereby issues were raised on a regular basis	PDG was supportive of this approach.
13.1.6	That the Council ensure that the policy to provide adequate luggage to move a young person's belongings is being fully adhered to and continued until the age of 25. (p45 – para 10.35).	The Group discussed this issue in detail. Sought reassurances from officers that steps had been put in place to purchase suitable luggage, which were given.	It is important that a young person can move with dignity. PDG is satisfied that the service is compliant.
13.1.7	That the Council ensure that the young person's voice is fully listened to in the spending of the 'Leaving Care Grant'. (p45 – para 10.36).		The PDG agreed with the recommendation.
13.1.8	That a comprehensive but easy to use information pack be developed and given to every young person leaving care – to include; information on what they are entitled to, how to complete administration (setting up direct debits etc) and contact details of various agencies who they can turn to for help/advice. (p45 – para 10.37).	A leaflet had been produced and was to be taken to CSMT. Members considered that a leaflet on its own was not adequate and that a pack of information was preferable as it showed a greater level of care. It was requested that a copy of the pack be provided to the PDG.	Consideration to be given to producing an e-version/app of the pack.

13.2	<i>Changes to how the support the Council provides to care leavers is structured</i>		
13.2.2	That alongside the Lead Member for Corporate Parenting, a non-Executive Councillor, with no Chairmanship duties, be appointed as a 'Cared for Children' champion to liaise with cared for children and to drive through the Corporate Parenting agenda and to monitor the outcomes of the Task Group reports on cared for children. (p21 – para 7.4).	The Scrutiny Committee viewed this role as a person who would be an advocate for/monitor children in care, liaise with the Children in Care Council and be a point of contact for a child. The Group considered that this would not be an easy role to deliver and that the behaviours highlighted should be embedded in all elected members as part of their corporate parenting role.	That this matter be referred to the PDG for further discussion and consideration.
13.2.3	That opportunities be provided for cared for children/care leavers to engage directly and informally with officers so that positive relationships can be established. Ideally, small satellite bases be made available in the North (Macclesfield) and in the South (Crewe) of the Borough enabling access to kitchen facilities and to Personal Advisors/youth support staff/careers advice. Consideration be given to increasing access to these teams through utilising Skype facilities. (p21 – para 7.4).	There were costs involved with this approach but work was underway to establish two centres in Crewe and Macclesfield utilising existing resources.	PDG was supportive of this approach.  Consider the use of technologies such as skype to reach rural communities.
13.2.4	That the Council explore recruiting more Personal Advisors to bring down high caseloads (p22 – para 7.7).	Service needs and budgets were being reviewed to improve the position which was caused by the amount of travel a Personal Adviser had to undertake to reach the young person.	Make more use of technologies as a means of communication to reduce travel times.

13.2.5	That the Council recruit a specialist Personal Advisor who is qualified to work with disabled young people. (p22 – para 7.10).	A gap had been identified in the service which would avoid a number of people having to replicate the role. The PDG considered that the recommendation was reflective of the aspiration to give whole life care and considered that further work was needed in this area	That this matter be referred to the PDG for further discussion and consideration.
13.2.6	That the Council explore the appointment of a funding co-ordinator to have a strategic and practical lead in maximising income for children and adults coming through social care and health systems, including GPs and hospitals. (p28 – para 8.16).	Noted that the issues highlighted would be considered by the Health and Wellbeing Board.	
13.3	<i>Training and support</i>		
13.3.2	That the Council provide easy to read and accessible guidance explaining the benefits entitlements of care leavers and current employability schemes offered under New Deal and Flexible New Deal. That this be developed with the support of the DWP and distributed to care leavers, leaving care teams, benefit and Jobcentre Plus Offices. (p28 – para 8.16).	Members acknowledged that whilst there was a need to ensure that young people were aware of their entitlements, it should not be at the expense of making them dependent on them.	

13.3.3	That the Council provide budget management training for cared for children. (p29 – para 8.16).	The Council relied on Foster Carers and schools to teach these skills to young people. Members suggested that providing links to sites such as moneysavingexpert.com may also be of assistance. It was also considered important to confirm that a young person was competent in this area.	That budget management training be embedded in the Pathway to Independence Plan.
13.3.4	That the Council explore initiating a mentoring scheme which would pair care leavers/young people with cared for children (p33 para 9.23).	Investigations were taking place to establish what schemes other authorities had access to. A member drew officers' attention to the 'Big Sister' campaign, run by the Crewe Local Area Partnership which might be a suitable starting point.	Investigations to continue into what mentoring schemes may be available.
13.3.5	That the Council explore initiating a mentoring scheme for foster carers with other experienced foster carers. (p38 – para 9.41).	It was noted that this initiative was already in existence having established the Forster Carers' Forum in the last 12 months. Carers who had resigned or retired were being approached with a view to continuing their involvement as mentors.	PDG was supportive of this approach.
13.3.6	That foster carers be strongly encouraged to attend at least one education based training event a year. (p38 – para 9.41).	Both the Foster Panel and the Foster Carers had accepted this recommendation would be highlighted during the appointment process and annual review.	
13.3.7	That training events be made available for agency foster carers for a small charge. (p38 – para 9.41).	Foster agencies were responsible for ensuring that staff were trained as part of the fee paid by the Council.	Agencies must ensure that training is addressed and that it meets the expectations of Cheshire East.

13.3.8	That the Council provide a range of tenancy workshops for those care leavers due to move into social housing – focusing on developing life skills, budgeting skills and information on good neighbour behaviour. (p44 – para 10.31).	The Foster Care Forum provided information through their tenancy support officers, whose responsibilities in this area would be widened as part of a new contract.	PDG was supportive of this approach.
13.3.9	That the Council provide 'practical' life skills training for cared for children e.g., cooking, cleaning, minor DIY tasks, prior to the pathway plan process. (p44 – para 10.33).	Whilst this was considered to be a role for Foster Carers, some did not provide such support. Members suggested that volunteer groups such as Wishing Well would be willing to get involved which would also be beneficial for the volunteers.	Would support the use of voluntary organisations to provide this support.
13.4	<b>Benefits</b>		
13.4.2	That the Council explore paying landlords directly for those care leavers who are deemed unable to manage their budgets. (p28 – para 8.16).	It was important to ensure that young people were not at threat of eviction whilst they took responsibility for their own budgets. This could be improved by ensuring that they were given their independence at the right time and not at a set age. The ability to budget was a particular skill required by children who had been in residential care and who may need additional support. The impact of the introduction of the Universal Benefit would need to be monitored.	<p>Personal Advisors should work with cared for children to encourage budget skills.</p> <p>Review of the impact of the Universal Benefit should be undertaken by Personal Advisers, their findings to be reported to Corporate Scrutiny Committee.</p>

13.4.3	That the Council encourage the Department for Work and Pensions to enable 'jam jar' accounts for Universal Credit Payments in order to help facilitate budget management. (p29 – para 8.16).	Both 4.3 & 4.4 were matters outside of the Council's control and would require the Council to lobby the DWP to make the changes suggested.	PDG was supportive of this approach.
13.4.4	That the Council work with the Department of Work and Pensions to enable young people to register for social housing at 17 years 6 months of age rather than at 18 to reduce pressure on the pathway planning process and double payment. (p28 – para 8.16).	The proposal at 4.4 was acknowledged as a major piece of work which would require political support to come to fruition; the PDG considered that the Portfolio Holder would be best placed to move this forward.	
13.5	Housing		
13.5.2	That the Council explore how to implement a policy so that a young person can remain in their foster placement to complete any training or qualification that they have started prior to their 18 <sup>th</sup> birthday. (p42 – para 10.20).	The Principal Manager Cared for Children updated members on changes to procedures which had already been put in place. The PDG was in favour of having a range of available options in respect of housing but wished to explore this issue in more detail.	That the Strategic Housing Manager be invited to discuss the Housing block of the report with the PDG.
13.5.3	That the Council explore extending the number of supported lodging placements that are available. (p42 – para 10.22).		Representatives of Housing Associations to be invited to attend the meeting, the Portfolio Holder for Prosperity and Economic Regeneration to also be informed.
13.5.4	That the Council explore providing semi-independent accommodation options for care leavers based on the following two models. (p43 – para 10.24): <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Small 3-4 bed units (staffed) with support available</li></ul>		That temporary accommodation (e.g. a flat) be provided for use as emergency accommodation for older care leavers, such matters to be dealt with by Cared for Children staff and not Adult Services.



	<p>24 hours a day.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In agreement with social housing associations, a small number of single bed tenancies be provided to accommodate 16 – 18 year old cared for young people with floating support being provided by Residential Service Care Staff.</li> </ul>		
13.5.5	That the Council explore how foster carers and supported lodging hosts can retain meaningful relationships with a young person once they move into independent accommodation. (p43 – para 10.25).	See previous page	Monitoring of 13.3.5 should fall to the Fostering 16+ service, progress to be reviewed in 12 months and reported to Corporate Scrutiny Committee
13.5.6	That the Council ensure that care leavers in university can return to a foster/supported lodging placement during the vacation period. (p43 – para 10.27).	See previous page	See previous page
13.5.7	That the Council open discussions with the three housing associations that operate in the Borough with the aim of re-establishing a joint protocol to prioritise a quota of social housing for care leavers. (p44 – para 10.30).		

13.5.8	That the Council explore either appointing or seconding a housing officer to generate supported lodging/semi-independent placements, build relationships with housing associations and facilitate workshops for care leavers. (p45 – para 10.38).		
13.5.9	That the Council take steps to reduce the chance of loneliness for when a young person moves into independent accommodation, e.g. ensuring that housing placements are close to friends when appropriate and that social networks are facilitated. (p44 – para 10.34).		
<b>13.6</b>	<b><i>Education, Employment and Training</i></b>		
13.6.2	That the Council explore increasing the allowance that is paid to those care leavers who go to university to encourage increased applications. (p33 – para 9.23).	The PDG considered that it was important for a distinction to be drawn for young people between grants and loans. Questions were raised as to whether the amount of £2000 was realistic and it was suggested that enquiries be made of the National Students Union as per its recommendations in respect of reasonable living expenses.	Recommendations (6.2–6.7) be linked into the work of the Virtual School to provide support at key transitional stages.

13.6.4	That targets are set to demonstrate a year on year decrease in the numbers of cared for children aged 19 who are not in education, employment or training (NEET).	See previous page	See previous page
13.6.5	That the Council extend the remit of the Virtual School from 19 to 25. (p33 – para 9.24).		
13.6.6	That the Council encourage secondary schools to retain a link with a young person in care once they enter further education. (p34 – para 9.24).		
13.6.7	That the Council encourage secondary schools and sites of further education to apply for the Buttle UK Quality Mark. (p34)		
13.6.8	<p>That the Council initiate a programme of support to better prepare cared for children for the demands of work. That this include (p34 – 35):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An incremental approach to work experience – beginning with taster days and ending with increasingly tailored and intensive work experience placements. Working with the Government's 'From Care2Work'</li> </ul>	<p>Apprenticeships offered to Children in Care had not been successful as i) the participants had not been prepared for the commitment required; and ii) supervisors had lacked sufficient understanding of the young person's needs.</p> <p>The PDG suggested that, because places were reserved, the young people may not have felt their place had value as it had not been earned. The following improvements were suggested -</p> <p>i) Approach Cheshire Fire and Rescue (who ran experience days</p>	PDG endorsed the proposals.

	<p>programme to support this.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Council adopting a policy in which a work experience placement would be available to a cared for child every week of the year.</li> <li>The Council strongly encouraging cared for children to participate and complete life skill development courses with existing (Prince's Trust) and newly developed partnerships.</li> </ul>	<p>for young people) to draw on their expertise;</p> <p>ii) Improve career advice in schools to help match expectations with experience;</p> <p>iii) Embed the work discipline in personal care plans;</p> <p>iv) Explore opportunities for the PDG to provided interview experience for young people in care;</p> <p>v) Explore options for work experience with Rotary Club/Town Councils.</p>	<p>Bullet point iii); should be built into Regulation 33 visits.</p>
13.6.9	<p>That the Council initiate the business case for Care Leavers accessing apprenticeships as set out in Appendix 1 to the report.</p>	<p>See above</p>	<p>See above.</p>
13.6.10	<p>That the Council ensure that Personal Advisors are provided with sufficient training so that there is a consistency of service across the team. That this includes training on care leavers' entitlements and need. (p22 – para 7.8).</p>	<p>Work was underway to redraft the job descriptions of Personal Advisors. The role would also be evaluated to establish if it was better suited to work with young people of 16+ than social workers.</p>	<p>PDG was supportive of this approach</p>



## Care Leavers

*"I hope to go to prison for Christmas for  
somewhere warm"*

*(former Cheshire East Care leaver)*

## Review

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## 1.0 Foreword



**Councillor D Neilson – Chairman of the Task and Finish Group**

- 1.1 Moving into adulthood and independence can be a daunting time for anyone. A number of social and economic changes in recent years have influenced the transitions that people make into independence with families having an increasing role in supporting children into adulthood by providing ongoing social, practical (financial) and emotional support. In contrast, care leavers are expected to make the transition from childhood to adult independence in one leap, assuming adult responsibilities at a much younger age than their peers. This is despite having to cope with a troubled upbringing and a myriad of disadvantages.
- 1.2 This presents the young person with a large amount of risk and for too long the gap between the outcomes of care leavers compared with their peers has been too wide. Whilst the risks are great, leaving care can also be seen as a time of great opportunity. *In loco parentis* the Council has the responsibility to ensure that the young people in its care are best equipped to take advantage of this opportunity and to do anything less would be a failure. It is clear after carrying out this review that the Council has made some important strides in improving outcomes for care leavers and it is hoped that the recommendations from this report will help the Council to continue to improve.
- 1.3 This report is the summary of discussions between Councillors with a genuine interest in the subject matter and I would like to thank Councillors Derek Bebbington, Brian Silvester, Gill Merry, Bill Livesley and Dennis Mahon for their time, diligence and hard work in shaping this report.
- 1.4 We commend this report to Cabinet.

## **2.0 Acknowledgements**

- 2.1 The group Members would like to thank all the witnesses who gave evidence to the review. A full list of witnesses is given in the body of the report.
- 2.2 In particular, Members would like to thank the Children in Care Council for their invaluable contribution and the respective Council's at Ealing and Haringey for hosting site visits.
- 2.3 The scrutiny support was provided by Mark Grimshaw from Overview and Scrutiny. Many thanks to Mark for his help in putting together the evidence and formatting the report. The Group also thanks Denise French for finalising the review following Mark's departure from the Council.

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### 3.0 Outline of Review

“To deliver the best for looked after children, the state must be a confident parent ...”<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> ‘In Loco Parentis’ – Demos (2011)

### **3.1 Background**

- 3.2 Following a previous Task and Finish Review which looked at Fostering in Cheshire East, a recommendation was made that –

“A Task and Finish Review be established to examine the 16 plus service for cared for children.”

As a result, the Children and Families Scrutiny Committee at a meeting on the 12 July 2011 agreed that a review which looked in more detail at how to improve the outcomes of some of the Borough’s most vulnerable young adults would be appropriate. Unfortunately due to resource issues, this review was deferred but recognising the importance of the work, the Committee resolved to reconvene the group in February 2012.

### **3.3 Membership**

- 3.4 The Members of the Task and Finish Group were:

**Councillor David Neilson (Chairman)**  
**Councillor Brian Silvester**  
**Councillor Dennis Mahon**  
**Councillor Gill Merry**  
**Councillor Derek Bebbington**  
**Councillor Bill Livesley**

### **3.5 Terms of Reference**

- To examine the assessment, preparation and planning for leaving care
- To examine providing personal support for young people after leaving care (particularly in terms of housing)
- To examine the financial arrangements for care leavers
- To gain a comprehensive understanding of the current and historical outcomes for Cheshire East care leavers and the reasons underpinning these.

## **4.0 Methodology**

### **4.1 Witnesses:**

Members met with the following people during the review:

- Julie Lewis – Principal Care for Children Manager
- James Treacy – 16+ Team Manager
- Liz Smith – Commissioning and Contracts Officer
- Jo Moss – Housing Options Team Leader

- Karen Bowdler – Senior Accountant
- Ben Whitter – Senior Organisational Development Officer
- Liz Rimmer – Benefits Manager
- Suzanne James – Operations Manager, Care4CE
- Sarah Webb – Resource Manager, Care4CE
- Trish Farrington – Operations Manager, Care4CE
- Phil Mellen – Head of the Virtual School
- Rt. Hon. Mr Edward Timpson MP
- Jacqui Evans – Head of Local Delivery/Independent Living Services
- Penelope Kay - Head of Cheshire Youth Offending Service
- Denise Stafford, Pathway Plan Coordinator
- Michelle McPherson, Independent Safeguarding Chair
- Nick Evans, Youth Engagement Manager – Cheshire Fire & Rescue
- David Lamb – Practice Consultant (16+ team)
- Leanne Hewer – Personal Advisor
- Andrew May – Personal Advisor
- Sandra Perry – Social Worker (16+ team)
- Debra Hall – Foster Carer
- Bryan Lowe – Foster Carer
- Children in Care Council

#### 4.2 Timeline:

Date	Meeting / Site Visit
12 March 2012	Initial Scoping Meeting
16 April 2012	Background Information Session and finalising the Scoping Document <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Julie Lewis – Principal Care for Children Manager</li> <li>• James Treacy – 16+ Team Manager</li> </ul>
3 May 2012	Further background information session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• James Treacy – 16+ Team Manager</li> </ul>
21 May 2012	Information on the 16+ budget and housing options for care leavers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• James Treacy – 16+ Team Manager</li> <li>• Liz Smith – Commissioning and Contracts Officer</li> <li>• Jo Moss – Housing Options Team Leader</li> <li>• Karen Bowdler – Senior Accountant</li> </ul>
18 June 2012	Information on employment outcomes, Welfare and the Shared Lives service. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ben Whitter – Senior Organisational Development Officer</li> <li>• Liz Rimmer – Benefits Manager</li> <li>• Suzanne James – Operations Manager, Care4CE</li> </ul>
9 July 2012	Information on Re-ablement Services and educational outcomes for care leavers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sarah Webb – Resource Manager, Care4CE</li> <li>• Trish Farrington – Operations Manager, Care4CE</li> <li>• Phil Mellen – Head of the Virtual School</li> </ul>

13 July 2012	Meeting with the Rt. Hon. Mr Edward Timpson MP
13 August 2012	Meeting with the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jacqui Evans – Head of Local Delivery/Independent Living Services</li> <li>• Penelope Kay - Head of Cheshire Youth Offending Service</li> <li>• Denise Stafford, Pathway Plan Coordinator</li> <li>• Michelle McPherson, Independent Safeguarding Chair</li> <li>• Nick Evans, Youth Engagement Manager – Cheshire Fire &amp; Rescue</li> <li>• David Lamb – Practice Consultant (16+ team)</li> <li>• Leanne Hewer – Personal Advisor</li> <li>• Andrew May – Personal Advisor</li> <li>• Sandra Perry – Social Worker (16+ team)</li> <li>• Debra Hall – Foster Carer</li> <li>• Bryan Lowe – Foster Carer</li> </ul>
27 September 2012	Meeting with the Children in Care Council
15 October 2012	Site visit to Ealing Council and Haringey Council
6 November 2012	Meeting to review draft
10 December 2012	Final review of draft
? January 2013	Submitted to Scrutiny Committee/PDG

## 5.0 Introduction

5.1 Children in the care of a local authority are one of the most vulnerable groups in society. The majority of children in care have suffered abuse or neglect and at any one time around 60,000 children are cared for in England. Unfortunately, this is a trend which continues to be on an upward curve with cases becoming ever more complex and resource intensive.

5.2 It is for these reasons that the Children and Families Scrutiny Committee has made Cared for Children a priority when commissioning task and finish reviews. This began with the review into Residential Placements and continued with an in-depth exploration into the fostering service. Part of this review touched upon care leavers; investigating whether the Council was doing all it could to help young people make a successful transition into adulthood. In the process of this review, the Group came across some disconcerting facts about care leavers in the UK<sup>2</sup>:

- Young care leavers show significantly lower academic achievement than their peers – just 11 per cent of children in care gain five GCSEs compared to the national average of over 60 per cent.
- Care leavers are more likely to be unemployed, to become homeless and to spend time in prison.
- One in seven young women leaving care are pregnant or already mothers.

5.3 The Group also spoke to the Children in Care Council and it became clear that for many young people, leaving care can be a daunting and confusing time. As these young people are the responsibility of the Council as ‘corporate parents’ the review recommended that a further Task Group be established. The aim of such a review would be to explore in more detail how best to help care leavers to make a successful and adjusted transition from care into independent living and wherever possible, financial independence; an outcome that any parent would want for their child.

5.4 Prior to starting the research process it was deemed vital that the Group fully understood the situation and context with regards to Care Leavers in Cheshire East. Indeed, it was felt important that the Group had a good understanding of the following issues:

- Defining a Care Leaver
- Policy and Legislative Framework for Care Leavers
- Number of Care Leavers in Cheshire East (and their outcomes?)
- How the team supporting Care Leavers is structured
- The budget that is available for supporting Care Leavers

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<sup>2</sup> [http://www.barnardos.org.uk/what\\_we\\_do/our\\_projects/leaving\\_care.htm](http://www.barnardos.org.uk/what_we_do/our_projects/leaving_care.htm)

**5.5 Defining a Care Leaver**

- 5.6 Whilst scoping the review a discussion was held within the Group with regards to the remit of the report. It was suggested that some children/young people not only left care because they had reached a certain age but for other reasons too – such as being adopted or returning home. Having considered this point, it was agreed to maintain a focus on care leavers as defined by the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000, in order to prevent the review from overreaching. With this in mind, ‘Care Leavers’ in respect of this report can be defined as follows:

*A young person between the ages of 16-18 who is leaving the care system having spent at least three months (continuously or in aggregate since the age of 14) being looked after by the local authority. This includes disabled young people but excludes those disabled young people who live permanently with their parents and have regular respite within the care system away from home.*

**5.7 Policy and Legislative Framework**

- 5.8 When embarking on this review, the Group was informed that Local Authorities have clear legal responsibilities towards the support of care leavers.
- 5.9 The Children Act 1989 provides the general legal framework for meeting the needs of children in care and young people leaving care. Since its implementation two further Acts have been introduced, which build on the duties laid out in the Children Act. These are the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 and the Children and Young Person’s Act 2008, which have further extended the duties of local authorities to young people in care and care leavers.
- 5.10 The main purpose of the Children (Leaving Care) Act is to improve the life chances of children and young people leaving local authority care by:
- Delaying their discharge from care until they are prepared and ready to leave;
  - Improving the assessment, preparation and planning for leaving care;
  - Providing better personal support for children and young people after leaving care;
  - Improving the financial arrangements for care leavers.

This Act defines those young people entitled to receive care leaving support into three categories:

'Eligible'	Defined in paragraph 19B of Schedule 2 to the Children Act 1989, and regulation 40 of the Care Planning Regulations as a child who is: (a) looked after, (b) aged 16 or 17, and (c) has been looked after by a local authority for a period of 13 weeks, or periods amounting in total to 13 weeks, which began after he reached 14 and ended after he reached 16.
'Relevant'	Defined in section 23A(2) of the Children Act 1989 as a child who is: (a) not looked after, (b) aged 16 or 17, and (c) was, before he last ceased to be looked after, an eligible child.
'Former Relevant'	Defined in section 23C(1) of the Children Act 1989 as a young person who is: (a) aged 18 or above, and either (b) has been a relevant child and would be one if he were under 18, or (c) immediately before he ceased to be looked after at age 18, was an eligible child.

5.11 'Eligible', 'relevant' or 'former relevant' - however put, care leavers are simply those who have been in the care of the local authority for at least 13 weeks since the age of 14 spanning their 16<sup>th</sup> birthday. The Council is expected to retain a level of responsibility for care leavers until the age of 21, or 25 if they are in full time education.

5.13 The Act gives duties to local authorities in terms of carrying out assessments before leaving care, preparing what is known as a 'pathway plan' by the time that young person is 16, ensuring financial support is in place, allocating a personal advisor and arranging accommodation:

#### 5.14 The Pathway Plan

5.15 Around the age of 15 years, 9 months an assessment is carried out which leads to the preparation of a Pathway Plan which should be in place 3 months after the 16<sup>th</sup> birthday. At this time a 'personal advisor' is appointed to provide advice and counselling – acting as an advocate for the young person.

5.16 The plan is expected to focus on how the young person's need for support and assistance will be met until the age of 21 (or longer when the young person is in education or training). It should set out the manner in which the Council proposes to meet the needs of the care leaver and the date by which, and by whom, any action required to implement any aspect of the plan will be carried out.

5.17 The young person should be fully involved in the development of the Pathway Plan. It is their plan and they receive copies of the plan and the subsequent reviews. It is expected practice for the Pathway Plan to be

drafted and available for consideration by the statutory review meeting, chaired by the young person's Independent Safeguarding Chair (ICS), which must take place before making a decision to confirm that a young person is ready to leave care. Pathway Plans usually cover the following areas:

- Accommodation
- Practical Life / Independent Living Skills
- Education and training
- Employment
- Health
- Financial Support / Budgeting
- Specific Support needs
- Contingency planning for support if independent living breaks down

5.18 A Young Person's pathway plan must remain a 'live document', setting out the different services required to meet the full range of the child's needs. In order for each pathway plan to be effective it should be based on an up to date needs assessment, setting out the support that will be offered to achieve their aspirations.

5.19 Personal Advisors

5.20 Local authorities must appoint a personal advisor to each young person covered by the Act. This statutory requirement emphasises the importance of the role and reflects the belief that children and young people leaving care should be able to identify someone committed to their well-being and continuing development on a long-term basis. The Personal Advisor does not have to be social work qualified and should be independent of the responsible social worker. Key Functions:

- To provide advice (including practical advice) and support;
- To participate in the assessment and preparation of the Pathway Plan;
- To participate in the review of the Pathway Plan;
- To liaise with the responsible authority in the implementation of the Pathway Plan;
- To co-ordinate the provision of services and to take reasonable steps to ensure that the child or young person makes use of such services;
- To keep informed about the child or young person's progress and well-being;
- To keep written records of contact with the child or young person;
- To maintain regular contact with the young person

5.21 Financial Support and Claiming Benefits

5.22 The Act requires authorities to provide financial support. As 16/17 year old care leavers are not be able to claim benefits, the Council is their primary source of income. Financial support will include the cost of:



- Accommodation
- Income Maintenance
- Transport costs for education and training
- Clothing
- Childcare costs

5.23 The support is co-ordinated by the young person's social worker and Personal Advisor until the age of 18 when the Personal Advisor takes sole responsibility. One of the responsibilities of the Personal Advisor is to ensure that those who leave care at 18 and are entitled to claim benefits received their full entitlement. However the Council must assist with the expenses associated with education, employment and training.

5.24 Accommodation

5.25 The Act requires that 16/17 year old relevant children are provided with or maintained in suitable accommodation, and given support to sustain their tenancy.

5.26 There is no duty for social services to provide accommodation to a care leaver once they reach 18, unless the young person is in full time higher or residential further education. In which case social services must provide accommodation during vacations or pay the young person enough to secure such accommodation. This duty remains until the care leaver's 25<sup>th</sup> birthday.

5.27 **Numbers of Care Leavers and Outcomes**

5.28 In order to make any robust recommendations on care leavers' policy, the Group felt it was important to gain an understanding of the numbers of Care Leavers (16+) in Cheshire East:

Potentially Eligible	3
Eligible	60
Relevant	7
Former Relevant	135
Total	205

**\*At September 2012.**

**(see paragraph 5.10 above for definitions)**

5.29 The structure of the team supporting Care Leavers is structured as follows:

**UNIT ONE, BASED IN THE HUB IN CREWE.**

Staffing is ; one Practice Consultant, 37 hours; three social workers, two 37 hrs , one 30 hours.

Three Personal advisors; one 37 hours, two 30 hours.

One Unit Coordinator, 37 hours

**UNIT TWO, BASED IN BRADSHAW HOUSE, CONGLETON.**

Staffing is; one Practice Consultant, 37 hours; two social workers, 37 hours; six Personal Advisors, three 37 hours, one 15 hours, one 30 hours and one 18.5 hours. One Unit Coordinator, 30 hours.

5.30 The budget that is available for supporting Care Leavers

**Analysis of the 2012/13 Budget**  
**(those in post in parentheses)**

16 Plus Team			
	FTE	Grade	£
Practice Consultants	2	11	
Social Workers	2.81(2.5)	9	
Social Workers	2(2.5)	8	
Care Leaving Personal Advisors	8(6.6)	7	
Unit Coordinators	2	4	
			555,547
Travel @ 200/FTE/month	15		34,560
<b>Total Budget</b>			<b>590,107</b>
16+ Allowances			393,600
16+ Placements			2,112,000
<b>Total 2012/13 Budget</b>			<b>3,095,707</b>

5.31 A Senior Accountant from the Children's Directorate attended one of the Group's meetings to provide some background information to the 16+ team budget. It was noted that at that point in time (21 May 2012) the service had already overspent on the £2,112,000 16+ placements budget by allocating

£2,450,775 for 2012/13 (overspend of £338,775). This overspend, it was explained, is illustrative of the pressure that the 16+ budget is under.

### 5.32 Summary

5.33 Following gathering this background information, the Group designed a wide-ranging and comprehensive research programme which attempted to cover all of the stakeholders relevant to improving outcomes for Care Leavers. After this process, the Group's findings fell naturally into the following main themes:

- **Journey to successful independence starts before leaving care**
- **Whether the 16+ service and the wider Council structured and staffed adequately to deliver quality outcomes for care leavers?**
- **Benefits**
- **Employment, Education and Training**
- **Housing**
- **Reducing offending**

5.34 At this point, it is important to make clear that in conducting the research, the Group found a number of instances of good practice. It is apparent that the guidance set out in the legislation is largely being adhered to and indeed, in some instances, Cheshire East is leading the way in good practice and innovation. However, as with all services, there is always room for improvement. One striking finding in this review was that there are a number of services across the Council not currently being utilised for the benefit of care leavers that could really make a difference in helping them to adjust to life outside of care. One of the outcomes that the Group hopes this report will produce is to join up services so that the Council is truly working to its maximum capacity as a corporate parent.

6.0 Journey to successful independence starts before leaving care

“It’s good when people stay through the system with you (having the same social worker or at least having contact with the same social worker throughout)”<sup>3</sup>  
Care Leaver

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<sup>3</sup> ‘After care: Young People’s views on leaving care’ Reported by the Children’s Rights Director for England – Ofsted (2012)

- 6.1 Whilst the main focus of this review is on those young people who have left care or are getting ready to leave care and the services that support this process, it is clear that work to better prepare young people at an earlier stage would improve the transition to independent living. According to Emily Munro<sup>4</sup>, Assistant Director at the Centre for Child and Family Research at Loughborough University, poor outcomes for care leavers is not just a reflection of leaving care services but the experience of young people and the service whilst in care, whether in foster care or residential care.
- 6.2 One of the common themes to emerge from this review, and in particular following the evidence gathered from foster carers, is the view that the preparation for life after care needs to begin at an earlier stage. It appears that it is not unusual for the preparation process only to begin properly once the young person reaches 16 as they engage with the pathway plan process. As some of the Council's young people leave care at 16 (and most at 18), the Group feels that this leaves insufficient time to fully prepare a young person for adulthood.
- 6.3 This was in contrast to the situation in Ealing Council, which the Group heard about on a site visit held on 15 October 2012. They described how they began the conversation about leaving care with the young person at 15. This avoided beginning the process at 16 as this was deemed a difficult time with commitments to exams. It was also made clear to the young person that they would not be expected to fully leave care until they were 21 (or 24 if in education). They asserted that by extending the amount of time that the young person was in 'preparation' for leaving care, this had improved their outcomes for care leavers considerably.
- 6.4 Placement stability
- 6.5 Understanding what factors help a young person make a successful transition into adulthood once they have left care is a complex and multifaceted area. It is likely that it is a mix of the attributes and characteristics of the young person themselves; their family relationships; and the characteristics of their wider social environment. It is important to remember why young people come into care in the first place. Many of them will have experienced familial abuse and most if not all, to varying degrees, will have experienced some form of rejection, disruption and loss in their lives.
- 6.6 In this context, the most fundamental requirement from care for these young people will be for stability in their lives. Stability is the foundation stone. Young people who experience stable placements providing good quality care are more likely to succeed educationally, be in work, settle in and manage their accommodation after leaving care, feel better about themselves and

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<sup>4</sup> <http://www.lboro.ac.uk/research/ccfr/Publications/R2BCared4%20research%20report.pdf>

achieve satisfactory social integration in adulthood than young people who have experienced further movement and disruption during their time in care<sup>5</sup>

- 6.7 Whilst the issue of placement stability was not within the remit of this review, the Group would wish to reiterate the importance of this within Cared for Children policy.
- 6.8 The Group was made aware that occasionally young people change their social worker at 16. This is after the views of the young person, foster carer and Independent Reviewing officer are taken into consideration but the Group would strongly suggest that all attempts be made to delay this change until after the young person has finished their exams and that a smooth transition between social workers is aspired to. This would hopefully help the young person to retain stability at a challenging stage in their life.
- 6.9 Effective Pathway Planning
- 6.10 A pathway plan is a vital document for care leavers as it effectively acts as a roadmap for the young person's life after care. It is meant to capture the needs and aspirations of the young person and detail operational objectives so that care leavers can identify the steps that they need to take (and the help available) in order to achieve their goals.
- 6.11 This is an important process. Most young people in and leaving care do not have the benefit of parental support to guide them. For these young people, the local authority should be fulfilling the parental role, and providing for the young person as if it were the natural parent. Many young people leave care without the support to which they are entitled, unable to find suitable housing, education and employment. If pathway plans are as detailed as they should be, then the young person will, at the very least, be able to identify the steps that they need to take in order to achieve their goals. They will have named people to turn to, people who are able to help them to complete application forms, and are aware of the different support providers available and can arrange access to them. The difference to a young person between having no pathway plan or a bad pathway plan, to having a lawful, detailed plan, is enormous and, as was recently made apparent from the reported story of the death of care leaver, Andrea Adams, the lack of support and planning can lead to tragic consequences<sup>6</sup>.
- 6.12 The Group was pleased to discover that the Council has some robust processes in place for ensuring that lawful and detailed plans are implemented for the Borough's care leavers. After speaking to both the Pathway Plan Coordinator and the Independent Safeguarding Chair, the Group was informed that a new process had been implemented for the

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<sup>5</sup> Barn et al., 2005; Biehal et al., 1995; Dumaret et al., 1997; Jackson, 2002

<sup>6</sup> The Guardian, Thursday 8 July 2010 <http://www.guardian.co.uk/society/2010/jul/08/andrea-adams-care-leaver-death-inquest>

drafting of the Plan. Indeed, responsibility for writing the plan had moved to the Personal Advisor with the Pathway Plan Co-ordinator having a reviewing role.

- 6.13 It is also clear that Pathway Plan Co-ordinator and Independent Safeguarding Chair have an important role in ensuring that the Pathway Plans are of sufficient quality and that all young people who are entitled to a Plan have one. The Group was informed that there was currently 200 care leavers aged 16-25. Of these only 6 did not have a pathway plan and this was due to the fact that they had just entered the service past their 16<sup>th</sup> birthday.
- 6.14 Regular conversations are also held between the Pathway Plan Co-ordinator/Independent Safeguarding Chair with both Senior Management Team and the Personal Advisors. This enables a good flow of information throughout the service on how to make improvements to the Pathway Plan process.
- 6.15 Whilst it is clear that a lot of progress has been made around the Pathway Plan process, the Group has concluded that a number of improvements could be made. Firstly, it is the general consensus of the Group that the new format for the Pathway Plan did not go far enough to present the content in a 'user friendly' and logical way, making use of plain English. The Group understands that the service is somewhat limited in how it formats the plan due to legislative requirements but more work could be done to think about how the young person would like to use the document and to ensure that they were meaningful to them. Indeed, the Children in care Council expressed that they felt the Pathway Plans were written to meet the Council's own system rather than for them.
- 6.16 It is therefore important to ensure that young people are engaged in the Pathway Plan and the leaving care process in general. Whilst all staff involved with young people in care work to engage them in the leaving care process, it is suggested that the Council follow the example of Haringey Council and look to employ a participation officer (or extend an existing role) to pull this work together in a co-ordinated way.
- 6.17 After speaking to foster carers it is also clear that they feel detached from the Pathway Plan process. As foster carers often understand the characteristics, strengths and limitations of the young person better than any other professional it is felt that they should have an increased role in the writing of the plan.

## **7.0 Is the Council structured and staffed adequately to deliver quality outcomes for care leavers?**

- 7.1 In the process of gathering evidence for this review, the Group visited two local authorities in London (Ealing and Haringey) after they had been identified by Edward Timpson MP as being good examples of producing quality outcomes for Care Leavers.
- 7.2 The most striking finding from both of these visits was how coherent each Council was in their approach to improving outcomes for Care Leavers. Using the example of Ealing, they had recognised a number of problems with their care leaver's service in the late 1990's and as a result they had undertaken a number of initiatives driven forward by strong political leadership. An articulation of this was the formation of a Corporate Parenting Committee, chaired by the Leader of the Council, which aimed to ensure that all elements of the Council took consideration of their corporate parenting responsibilities.
- 7.3 When asked what the main factor behind their success was, the officers at Ealing Council identified that having a central base from which a multi-disciplinary team operated from had been vitally important. This central base was known as the Horizons Centre, opened in 2007, which provides a site for both the young people (recreational room, education/study rooms and a trainer kitchen) and for a broad range of teams. This includes Youth Workers, the Semi Independent Outreach Team, Virtual School, Connexions Workers and the Looked after Children Nurse. They explained that the Horizons Centre had helped to engender good working relationships not only between the various teams but also with the young people. Everyone there appeared united behind the same ethos and working towards the same goal – producing quality outcomes for care leavers.
- 7.4 The Group would like to make a recommendation that the Council attempt to replicate the Ealing model. However, since Cheshire East is a largely rural borough without one central urban area, it would be challenging to replicate the Ealing model. As a result, it would be unrealistic to have a central base for the Council. Having said this, there are some important lessons that can be taken from the Ealing example:
  - That strong political leadership is required to ensure that all areas of the Council are adhering to their Corporate Parenting responsibilities. In addition to the Cabinet Members role as lead corporate parent, it is suggested that a non-executive Councillor, with no Chairmanship duties, be appointed as a 'Cared for Children' champion to liaise with Cared for children and to provide independent challenge to the Council to drive through the corporate parenting agenda.



- That it is ensured that strong, tangible and demonstrable working relationships are in place for all teams involved in working to improve outcomes for Cared for Children.
- That opportunities be provided for Cared for Children/Care Leavers to engage directly and informally with officers so that positive relationships can be established. Ideally, small bases would be established in the North and in the South of the Borough which would have kitchen facilities and access to Personal Advisors/Youth Support staff/Careers advice. This has already occurred to some extent in Crewe with the formation of the hub which has successfully joined services together from the Youth Support Team, 16+ team and Forum Housing. Remote access to these teams could also be made available to young people by utilising Skype facilities.

- 7.5 Another key finding from our visits was the importance that they place on the relationship between the personal advisor and the young person. The care leavers from Haringey that presented to the Group noted how they often saw their personal advisor every week and how they were the one person that the young person went to first if they had any issues. Haringey Council also had a policy which stated that a Personal Advisor needed to visit the young person no less than at the minimum intervals (2 months).
- 7.6 This was in contrast to the evidence heard at the Children in Care Council. A number of the young people stated that they had had a poor experience with their Personal Advisor. This was mainly as a result of communication issues e.g. not answering queries or dealing with administration promptly and turning up to a flat without an appointment. When the young people were asked who had the most helpful person to them as they moved out of care, they identified the floating support workers from the housing associations.
- 7.7 The Group believes there are two issues behind this. Firstly, it is clear that Personal Advisors have high case loads (average 27) which are affecting their ability to provide sufficient attention to each young person. This high number is exacerbated by the fact that Personal Advisors have to travel considerable distances to meet with young people, not only throughout the Borough but also to external locations. As the role of Personal Advisor is of paramount importance in ensuring that quality outcomes for care leavers are achieved, the Group would strongly suggest that the Council explore recruiting more Personal Advisors. Creating hubs and utilising technology such as Skype as suggested above could also have the effect of reducing the travel time of Personal Advisors.
- 7.8 Secondly, it is important to ensure that personal advisors are provided with sufficient training so that there is a consistency of service across the team.
- 7.9 Whilst not in the remit of this review, it is important to note that strengthening the 'front door' for social care referrals would reduce the

number of children entering the care system and as a result this would reduce the pressure on the Personal Advisor case loads.

- 7.10 It was also brought to the Group's attention that there are a number of young people with disabilities leaving care that require the support of a Personal Advisor. This is an issue as Personal Advisors are not trained for such cases and therefore it is suggested that the Council recruit a specialist Personal Advisor who is qualified to work with disabled young people.

## 8.0 Benefits

“You don’t know  
if you are even  
receiving the  
right benefit”.  
Care leaver<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Morgan R., Lindsay, M. (2006) Young People’s Views on Leaving Care: What young people in, and formerly in, residential and foster care think about leaving care, A Children’s Rights Director Report, February 2006, p.13 and 27

- 8.1 Whilst it would be ideal if care leavers never had to access the benefits system, the reality is that most young people leaving care will have to engage with it at some point. Indeed, it is vital that care leavers have a good understanding of the system and their various entitlements so that they do not unnecessarily incur further disadvantages. It is also essential for the Council to ensure that care leavers fully maximise their income from benefits in order to reduce pressure on an already stretched 16+ team budget (see p. 14 )
- 8.2 A small example of how the Council could save money is to follow the example of Haringey Council who have worked with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to enable care leavers to register for social housing at 17 ½ rather than at 18. This means that the young person's housing benefit has been processed and is ready to access when they reach 18. In Cheshire East, the Council continues to pay the young person a maintenance allowance until 4/5 weeks after their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday whilst the benefits application is processed. The young person is then able to claim the money back from the DWP but the Council is unable to claim any money back. It is therefore suggested that the Council ensure that consistency is achieved from the DWP with Cheshire East being allowed the same privileges. By adopting such a practice, the pressure on the Pathway Plan process will also be reduced.
- 8.3 It is important to state however, that whilst the Council must make young people aware of what they are entitled to and what is available to them, a dependency on benefits should not be created nor encouraged. What needs to be made clear is the idea that benefits are there to support the individual as they move through a transitional stage but this is a stage that they always should strive to move on from.
- 8.4 The Group interviewed the Council's Benefits Manager, with regards to welfare reform and the potential impact that this might have on care leavers.
- 8.5 *Care Leavers and Housing Benefit*
- 8.6 The Group was informed that formerly, under the Housing Benefit rules, single claimants under 25 were expected to live in shared accommodation (own bedroom, communal kitchen/bathroom e.g. bedsit) when renting in the private sector. Care Leavers were exempt from this until the age of 22 and could claim Housing Benefit up to the level of self-contained accommodation. There is no such restriction if renting in the social sector, although Housing Benefit could be restricted still if the person is over-accommodated or in expensive accommodation.

## *Definition of Single Room*

The SRR reflects the cost of very basic accommodation. In making a determination the rent officer will consider if the tenant

- has exclusive use of one bedroom
- does not have the use of any other bedroom, and
- has shared use of
  - a living room
  - a bathroom and toilet
  - a kitchen, without the exclusive use of cooking facilities

## *Exempt from the shared accommodation*

Young people under 22 years old and previously

- subject to a care order under Section 31(1)(a) of the Children Act 1989 made either after they were 16 years old, or before they were 16 years old and which remains in force once they reach age 16. Note: This exclusion does not apply to a young person who was subject to a supervision order under Section 31(1)(b)
- accommodated by an authority under Section 20 of the Children Act 1989. The young person does not have to have been housed in LA owned or run property – they only need to have been provided with their accommodation by the LA under this section of the Children Act
- subject to a supervision requirement ended by a children’s hearing under Section 70 of the Children (Scotland) Act 1995 which was made in respect of them and which continues after reaching 16 years old. Note: This exemption does not apply where the sole condition for the need for compulsory measures of supervision was that the child had committed an offence or the supervision requirement meant that they had to reside with a parent or guardian, or with a friend or relative of their parent or guardian
- accommodated by an LA under Section 25 of the 1995 Act when they were 16 or 17 years old

8.7 From January 2012, the shared accommodation rate was extended to single claimants aged **under 35**. As care leavers are often placed in self-contained accommodation they now face a large reduction in their Housing Benefit from the ages of 22-35 rather than between the ages of 22-25.

8.8 The Group was also informed of the recent changes to housing benefit and in particular the levels of Local Housing Allowance (LHA) payable to the private Rented Sector. From April 2011 the level of LHA was reduced from the median levels in the area to the 30<sup>th</sup> percentile. Whilst some protection was provided to existing claimants, it had reduced the number of affordable properties from 5 in 10 to 3 in 10 thereby placing extra pressure on care leavers.

8.9 Due to fluctuations in the private rented market the impact varies on the area as illustrated below:

Example rates from April 2010 (£)

Weekly figures

BRMA	1 bed shared	1 bed self-contained
East Cheshire	78.94	97.81
West Cheshire	65.00	104.71
South Cheshire	55.69	90.00
South Manchester	63.50	103.56
Staffordshire North	54.60	80.55

Example rates from April 2012 (£)

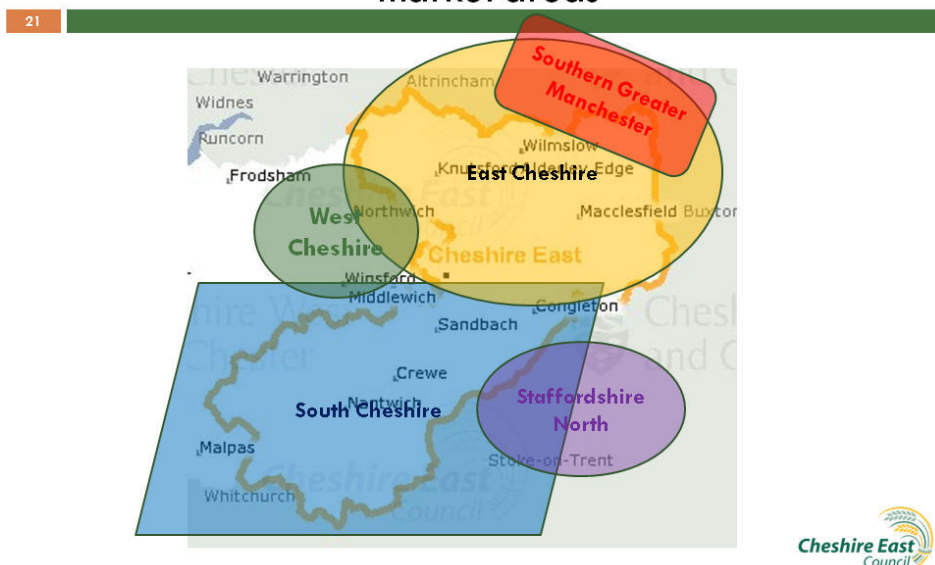
Weekly figures

BRMA	1 bed shared	1 bed self-contained
East Cheshire	80.77	102.69
West Cheshire	62.31	101.54
South Cheshire	52.00	80.77
South Manchester	59.08	98.08
Staffordshire North	47.06	78.46

\*BRMA – Broad Rental Market Areas

Rough guide as to where each area is:

## Local Housing Allowance – broad rental market areas



### 8.10 Universal Benefit changes

8.11 The Group was informed that a number of benefit streams (Income support, Job Seekers Allowance IB, Employment and Support Allowance IR, Tax credits and housing benefit) were being brought under one umbrella payment. This would be known as the Universal Credit.

8.12 The Universal Credit is due to be implemented in October 2013 for new out of work claims, with it being applied to new in work claimants from April 2014. It is expected that all people will be under the new benefit system by

2017. It was confirmed by the Benefits Manager that whilst no one would lose out in terms of the total amount of money received by getting a Universal Credit, it would provide less clarity on how much money should be spent on certain goods. For instance, by receiving benefits in one lump sum, there will be no direction on what proportion should be spent on housing rent or other goods. The Group feel that this could potentially create budgeting and debt management issues, particularly for care leavers who may have little to no experience of managing a budget.

- 8.13 The Group queried therefore whether there would be any exceptions to those receiving the universal credit. The Benefits Manager reported that whilst there is no current legislation for exemptions, Councils might be able to pay landlords directly for vulnerable people. Indeed, it was noted that this currently occurred under a Council safeguarding policy for those people who had been referred by a professional as being unable to manage their own budget. It was also added that the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) were looking at setting up 'jam jar' accounts which would split up individual's budgets under a single account.

#### 8.14 *Summary*

- 8.15 Benefits and welfare are tricky issues to navigate not only for Council staff but for the young people whose quality of life could depend on them. The forthcoming welfare reforms create further challenges but is vital that the Council gets it right in order to help young people leaving care to make a positive start to their adult life.
- 8.16 The Group firmly believes that benefits should be a means to independent living and not an end in itself.
- 8.17 The following are some suggestions that the Group believes would help care leavers to maximise their income from benefits and manage their budgets most effectively:

- **Guidance on entitlements for young people and workers**

Easy to read and accessible guidance explaining the benefits entitlements of care leavers and current employability schemes offered under New Deal and Flexible New Deal should be developed with the support of the DWP and distributed to care leavers, leaving care teams, benefit and Jobcentre plus offices. This would provide a reference point for care leavers, leaving care services and jobcentre plus workers and would address the confusion that currently exists within the system.

- **Specialist training for personal advisors on care leaver's entitlements and need**

As part of their extended role, personal advisers taking on the responsibility for dealing with care leavers should be trained on care leavers specific benefits entitlements and needs.

- **Employing a funding co-ordinator**

The individual appointed would have a strategic and practical lead in maximising income for children and adults coming through social care and health systems, including GPs and hospitals.

- **That the Council explore paying landlords directly for those care leavers who are deemed unable to manage their budget.**

During our visit to Haringey Council, the Group was informed that their Welfare Benefits Officer completed the application form for Housing and Council tax benefit with the individual rather than by doing it over the phone. This meant that the money went directly to the provider than to the young person.

- **That the Council encourage the Department for Work and Pensions to enable 'jam jar' accounts for Universal Credit payments in order to help facilitate budget management.**
- **That the Council work with the Department for Work and Pensions to enable claims forms to be issued and completed 4/5 weeks before the young person's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.**
- **Budget Management training for cared for children.**



9.0 Employment, Education and Training

“I wouldn’t have even been able to think about staying on at college or going to university eventually. Being in care means that I get the support, encouragement and financial support”<sup>8</sup>

Care Leaver

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<sup>8</sup> ‘After care: Young People’s views on leaving care’ Reported by the Children’s Rights Director for England – Ofsted (2012)

- 9.1 Securing employment is an important step for any young person as they try to make the transition into adulthood. It not only helps to achieve financial independence but also provides self confidence and an all important sense of self worth. For young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET), life chances are poorer than those of their peers. For example, young men who are NEET are three times more likely to suffer from depression than their peers<sup>9</sup>. Therefore, a successful transition to employment is an important element of overall well-being.
- 9.2 For young people leaving care, gaining employment could be seen as more crucial than it is for many of their peers. Care leavers are expected to make a leap into adulthood at much earlier stage than most other young people. The age that most people leave care is 16-18 whereas the average age that a young person leaves home is 24. For many young people outside of the care system, even when they have left home, they are still able to draw on support from their family throughout life. The family home usually remains open to them should they need to return. Most care leavers do not have this type of family support to fall back on.
- 9.3 Finding and maintaining a job can be difficult for many young people in care. Young people from care are much more likely than their peers to experience unemployment, both when first leaving school and throughout life. Government statistics for the year ending 31st March 2009 reveal that 37% of young people aged 19, who were formerly in care, are not in education, employment or training.
- 9.4 *Factors influencing the ability of Care Leavers to access and maintain employment and further education and training*
- 9.7 Lack of stability**
- 9.8 A lack of stability also impacts on care leavers' chances of securing or maintaining employment in other ways. Young people may not have a stable address or their living environment may be disruptive to their work life. On leaving care, many young people are placed in inappropriate accommodation, for example in hostels or in lodgings with vulnerable adults. Having to cope with so many facets of becoming independent at once and not always with a great deal of support can make it difficult for young people to gain and maintain work.

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<sup>9</sup> 'Against the odds: Re-engaging young people in education, employment or training' Local government, July 2010 - <http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk/SiteCollectionDocuments/AuditCommissionReports/NationalStudies/NEETsAgainsttheodds.pdf>

## **9.9 Lack of preparedness for work**

- 9.10 The Group interviewed the Senior Organisational Development Officer, who manages the Council's Apprenticeship scheme (A-Team). The Group was informed that the Council had implemented a policy decision in December 2010 to ring fence 5 corporate apprenticeship placements for care leavers. A further placement was agreed for another young person as a result of conversations with a Head of Service who was mentoring a young person within the Council's care.
- 9.11 After some good initial progress with regard to adapting to the working environment things quickly changed for the cohort of apprentices and issues began to surface for apprentices and the Cared For apprenticeship programme as a whole. In summary, across the cohort there were issues around attitude, and in particular attendance, motivation and punctuality. As a result, none of the cohort completed the apprenticeship programme. To put this in some context, the A Team has a 100% successful completion rate.
- 9.12 After analysing the experiences with this initial cohort, the Senior Organisational Development Officer identified the general theme that the care leavers who had engaged with the Apprenticeship scheme had issues around attendance, punctuality and motivation. Very simply, the cohort had been unprepared for work and this had resulted in non-completion for all six of the care leavers. This is in contrast to the schemes usual 100% completion rate.

## **9.13 Low Aspirations**

- 9.14 According to extensive research carried out by Professor Bob Broad<sup>10</sup>, Visiting Professor at the Weeks Centre for Social and Policy Research, cared for children generally have low aspirations of what they will achieve in life, especially in the education sector.

### **Educational Attainment**

- 9.6 Young people from care, as a group, have a much lower educational attainment than their peers. In 2009, 68% of looked after children achieved at least one GCSE, or equivalent qualification, compared with 99% of all children. Children in care have often experienced trauma and a lack of stability, both prior to care and whilst in care, this can lead to disruption in their education and has a visible affect on academic achievement. The resulting lack of qualifications then impacts on their chances of employment.

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<sup>10</sup>[http://www.tactcare.org.uk/data/files/resources/3/tact143\\_aspirations\\_bobbroad\\_research\\_summary\\_100709.pdf](http://www.tactcare.org.uk/data/files/resources/3/tact143_aspirations_bobbroad_research_summary_100709.pdf)

9.15 Potential Solutions

**9.16 Improving Educational Outcomes**

9.17 The Group was pleased to discover that the Council is very much at the forefront of good practice for improving educational outcomes for cared for children and care leavers.

9.18 The Group spoke to the Head of the Virtual School, which had been taking a lead on improving educational outcomes for cared for children since it was established in September 2010. Working across the 0-19 age group, the Virtual School and its nine staff has achieved some considerable improvements since its inception. For instance, the Key Stage 2 results for cared for children are the best of any local authority nationally over the last two years. Additionally, the Borough has the second best attendance figures out of the 152 local authorities.

9.19 In terms of GCSE results, the statistics for the 2011 cohort of cared for children are as follows, the figures in brackets relate to those children who have been in care for more than a year which is the nationally accepted cohort:

- 95% (96%) took at least one GCSE (up from 70% in the previous year)
- 92% (96%) achieved at least one A-G grade
- 65% (69%) achieved 5 A\* - G grades
- 36% (39%) achieved 5 A\* - C grades
- 11% (19%) achieved 5 A\* - C grades including English and Maths

This compares with the figures for non Cared for Children in Cheshire East in 2011:

- 96% of pupils were took a GCSE or equivalent examination
- 99% achieved at least one A\*-G grade
- 97% achieved 5+ A\* - G grades
- 83% achieved 5+ A\* to C grades
- 64% achieved 5+ A\* to C grades including English and maths

9.20 This meant that the Council was ranked 25<sup>th</sup> out of all local authorities in England.

9.21 As only 7% of cared for children go to university as compared to 40% of the general population, the Virtual School has forged strong links with local universities such as Manchester Metropolitan Cheshire in order to encourage young people in care to think about higher education. Part of this included communicating the availability of bursaries and other support available to cared for children.

9.22 The Virtual School has clearly been a huge success for the Cared for population of Cheshire East. This was reaffirmed when the Group interviewed foster carers who agreed that the Virtual School had been very useful in supporting them in communicating with and challenging schools. Having said this, there is always room for improvement and the Group feels that in particular steps could be taken to increase the number of care leavers going on to further and higher education.

9.23 It is likely that this will happen naturally as the success achieved with the earlier years filters through with each cohort but there are some immediate lessons that can be learned from Ealing Council. The Group visited Ealing Council after being alerted by Edward Timpson MP that they had 17% of Care Leavers at University (34 undergraduates and 7 pursuing Masters Degree programmes). The Group was interested to explore how Ealing had achieved such impressive outcomes – the key success factors were identified as follows:

- Mentoring Scheme – This is a scheme where older young people (some ex care leavers) who are in employment or higher education act as accredited and trained peer mentors for young people in care. These provide excellent role models to younger children and such an initiative was suggested by the Cheshire East Children in Care Council.
- Education Rooms – These are teaching spaces or self study areas from which ‘education study support’ sessions are facilitated with the teaching staff based in the Virtual School. Printing and Computer facilities are also available in these spaces.
- An allowance of £5,500 is paid to those care leavers in university (substantially higher than the recommended £2,000). The rationale for providing such a considerable sum is that it amounts to the same as a supported placement and it has a demonstrable effect on increasing applications.

9.24 In addition to these initiatives the Group believes the following suggestions would help the Virtual School to continue to go from strength to strength:

- **Extending the remit of the Virtual School from 19 to 25.**

The Group was informed that the Virtual School had improved the number of care leavers not in education, employment or training (NEETs) from 28% to 10%. Whilst this is an excellent achievement, it was also noted that the figures were less impressive once the young person was in their early 20’s. Other Virtual Schools around the country have a remit up to the age of 25 which helps them to track and measure outcomes at 21/22/23 which gives a better indication of life trajectory.

- **That secondary schools be encouraged to retain a link with the young person once they enter further education.**

The Head of the Virtual School reported that the more informal nature of further education as compared to the structured environment found in secondary schools occasionally did not suit some care leavers. It is therefore suggested that secondary schools could be encouraged to maintain a link with the young person once they leave compulsory education and enter further education in order to continue some form of structured support.

- **That secondary schools and sites of further education be encouraged to apply for the Buttle UK Quality Mark.**

The Buttle UK Quality Mark is awarded to further and higher education providers who demonstrate their commitment to young people in and leaving care. The award provides a framework for validating the quality of support that the institution offers for this cohort and a basis for the assessment of their retention and progression strategies. Gaining the Buttle UK Quality Mark and displaying the logo is a clear way to demonstrate the institutions credentials to their partners, funders, inspectorates, and the wider community, but most importantly to the young people from care themselves.

The Group would encourage all of the further education sites in the Borough to apply for the Quality Mark. Additionally, whilst the Mark is currently only available for sites of further and higher education, when speaking to Mr. Edward Timpson MP he suggested that it would be useful for secondary schools to apply for it. If Cheshire East schools could work with the Buttle Trust in order to gain accreditation they would be the first secondary schools to achieve the quality mark – further underlining that Cheshire East is at the forefront of providing quality educational outcomes for cared for children and care leavers.

## **9.25 Better preparing Cared for Children for the demands of work**

9.26 A number of witnesses that the Group interviewed including the Virtual Head, Social Workers, Personal Advisors and Organisational Development officers, made the same point that cared for children and as a corollary care leavers are poorly prepared for the demands of being in full time employment.

9.27 It is clear that better attempts need to be made to help a young person in care to start planning for the world of work prior to them reaching 16 or 18, at which age the preparation often resembles a rushed afterthought. Indeed, as the cohort that first engaged with the A Team scheme demonstrated, a full time yearly programme was too much too soon.

- 9.28 The Group is therefore much in favour of an incremental approach in which the young person is introduced to work and the potential options available to them through ‘taster days’. Through this process, the young person will discover what excites or motivates them and this will help the Council to tailor increasingly intensive work experience placements as they move towards adulthood. To make this work, the Council needs to start using its influence in the local community to open doors for young people requiring work experience. Similarly the Council, as such a large and diverse employer, has the capability to cater for a wide range of tastes and abilities. A good start would be for the Council to adopt a policy in which there would be a work experience placement filled by a young person in care for every week of the year (excluding Christmas). To support this idea, it is suggested that the Council explore engaging with the Government’s ‘From Care2Work’<sup>11</sup> programme.
- 9.29 In addition to incrementally demanding work experience placements, the Group also feels that there would be a real benefit in utilising life skill development courses such as the Prince’s Trust 12 week team course. This course involves team building activities, a residential week, a community project and a work placement, and it aims to raise self-esteem, build confidence and develop personal skills.
- 9.30 The programme is delivered from permanent bases in Crewe, Macclesfield and Congleton and the Fire authority, as the delivery partner, is fully funded by the Learning and Skills Council. The Youth Engagement Manager at Cheshire Fire & Rescue informed the Group that the programme had a 79-80% success rate in terms of getting young people into education, employment and training.
- 9.31 The Head of the Virtual School, also drew attention to the ‘Chances’ programme which the Council was part of alongside Stockport and Trafford Councils. This is a 16 week programme with the aim of developing self esteem, life skills and a positive attitude for young people in care. The Council is also a part of a North West bid to work with Lancashire Cricket Club to develop life skills through journalistic experience at sporting events.
- 9.32 The Group encountered an excellent programme ran in partnership between Haringey Council and Tottenham Hotspur Football Club. The ‘E18hteen Project’ provides support for 160 care leavers enabling them to access opportunities and a mentor to sustain engagement in education through sports, volunteering courses and activities. A young mentor who presented to the Group explained that the aim of the project was to ‘gradually remove the

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<sup>11</sup> Since its launch in 2009 From Care2Work has offered support to local authorities to help place employability on the corporate parenting agenda and enable local and national employer engagement.

scaffolding’ from the individual so that they gained the confidence to move into independence.

- 9.33 The Group feels that these types of programmes are vital for helping young people to ready themselves for the world of work. The Head of the Virtual School explained that in his experience life in care often taught young people that good things didn’t last and for them to expect rejection. He asserted that by building resilience and demonstrating that they can achieve something worthwhile when they put their mind to it, such initiatives will help them to take a positive attitude into the workplace. It is suggested that the Council in addition to existing partnerships attempt to build relationships with community organisations and businesses to provide opportunities for cared for children to develop.

#### **9.34 Support needs to continue once the young person is in the workplace**

- 9.35 The ultimate aim of providing work experience and development courses is to ensure that once the young person reaches 16 or 18 years old, they are ready to flourish in full time or part time employment. However, once the young person has gained employment – there is a danger that this could be seen as ‘case closed’ by the Council. Indeed, if anything can be learned from the initial care leaver A-Team cohort is that continued support inside and outside of the work place is vital for ensuring that employment is sustainable.

- 9.36 In terms of providing support outside of the work placement, The Group was interested to learn about the Council’s ‘Shared Lives’ service. The Operations Manager from Care4CE, explained to the Group that Shared Lives is an adult placement scheme that provides three different types of support following referrals from other teams within the Council:

- **Intermediate support** – This is where a service user lives with a Shared Lives Carer/s as a member of their family for a sustained period of time. The Operations Manager made it clear that this is termed ‘intermediate’ support as it is not meant to be a permanent solution but rather a transition support stage to help guide individuals towards independence.
- **Respite Support** – This is where a service user stays with a Shared Lives Carer/s for a short period
- **Sessional Support** – This is where a service user is supported by a Shared Lives Carer either in their own home, the Approved Carer’s home or out in the community. Sessions last for 3, 6 or 9 hours. Suzanne added that there are significant numbers of service users who receive sessional support. The placements are set up to achieve specific outcomes including improved health and emotional wellbeing, improved quality of life and to increase choice and control for service users etc.



- 9.37 The Group feels that there is a strong case to be made for referring care leavers who are on the Council's A Team scheme to the Shared Lives initiative. A business case for this proposal can be found in appendix 1 to this report.

### **9.38 Raising Aspiration**

- 9.39 It is vital that cared for children have the confidence and belief that they can achieve whatever they put their mind to. It is significant to note that high aspirations aren't just about educational achievement, although important. It's about life achievements, seemingly small to some but significant to the young person. It's about having dreams and hopes about life and the self belief that they can be achieved.
- 9.40 The Group was impressed by Ealing Council and the way that they concentrate their approach on positive reinforcement. To this end, they hold Cared for Children Education awards and these provide recognition not only to high achievers but also to those young people who had made improvements. The Group was informed that the Council hold a similar event, called the 'CARE' Awards. This is held at Tatton Park and is attended by high numbers of young people as well as foster carers, local dignitaries and those who support young people.
- 9.41 Foster carers also have a central role in raising the aspirations of the young person in their care. The Head at the Virtual School noted that some foster carers were naturally better than others at challenging schools on their performance and the provisions they were making available for the young person. Additionally, some foster carers also have a better knowledge of the university system and routes into particular professions. It is important for the Council to ensure that there is a basic level of knowledge on these issues and therefore a comprehensive training programme is made available. Unfortunately it has proved difficult to ensure a high attendance of foster carers at the training events. It is therefore suggested that at least one of the education training sessions a year be made mandatory. It is also worth noting that a number of Cheshire East children are placed in agency foster placements. With this in mind, it is suggested that training events be made available for agency foster carers for a small charge.

## 10.0 Housing

“When you’re in care you don’t have to worry about bills and cooking or meals. All of a sudden when you leave it’s harder to manage and [it] stresses you out”<sup>12</sup>  
Care Leaver

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<sup>12</sup> ‘After care: Young People’s views on leaving care’ Reported by the Children’s Rights Director for England – Ofsted (2012)

- 10.1 Housing is an issue that affects us all. A home is not just bricks and mortar but a place where people relax, rejuvenate, entertain and gain a sense of belonging. Therefore issues relating to housing can be vital to the stability of people's everyday lives. A good home can have a positive impact on health, emotional well being, safety, security, educational attainment, childhood-adult aspirations and income-occupation.
- 10.2 It is well documented in the media how young people in the UK are struggling to enter the housing market as high rents make it difficult to save and a lack of available credit has reduced the chances of getting a mortgage. For most young people however, there is the opportunity to stay at home until their mid to late twenties and the family network is there to provide support when eventually the time to move out comes.
- 10.3 A group that does not have access to such support are Care Leavers who are expected to reach independence at a much earlier age and without the help of a family network. It is vital therefore, that the Council as corporate parent supports young people leaving care in order to access settled, secure and suitable accommodation. Indeed, gaining access to suitable accommodation was one of the main concerns expressed by the Children in Care Council when asked about their thoughts regarding moving into independence.

#### **10.4 Housing Options for Care Leavers**

The Council has a legal duty to provide 'suitable accommodation' for young people leaving care but the paths that care leavers take out of care can be varied due to differences in circumstances and preferences.

- 10.5 At the current time the Council provides the following options:
- 10.6 *For 16-17 Year olds*
- 10.7 Whilst it is strongly discouraged by the 16+ team, care leavers are able to legally leave care at 16. As they are unable to sign up for tenancy agreements until their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, other options for accommodation must be found. The Council has a 16-17 year old housing protocol for when a young person presents as homeless or under the threat of homelessness<sup>13</sup>. The first step is to attempt to maintain the young person in their present accommodation if it is suitable. If the accommodation is deemed unsuitable or disagreeable to the young person then other options must be provided. This would include the use of independent social housing, supported lodging or hostels. Bed and Breakfasts are only used as a short term emergency measure.

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<sup>13</sup> As defined by part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002) – 'a person is threatened with homelessness if they are to be without accommodation in 28 days.'

## 10.8 *Social Housing*

10.9 After a recent review of the allocations policy, additional priority for social housing has been awarded to care leavers. Cheshire Homechoice, the team that manages the housing register for social housing, works to a 5 level banding system (A – E) which is based on need and the length of time in the system. Those people with a direct threat of homelessness are placed in band A with care leavers automatically placed in band B. Care Leavers are able to express their interest in available social rented properties through Cheshire Homechoice.

## 10.10 *Supported Lodging*

10.11 Supported lodging schemes provide accommodation for a young person within a family home. The young person has their own room and shares the kitchen and bathroom facilities with the family or householder - or 'host'. Hosts can be families, couples or single people and they are paid a fee by the Council for their room (subsidised by 'Supporting People' money).

10.12 Supported lodgings schemes may also be called:

- **Nightstop Schemes** - offer young people a bed in a room of their own for one night at a time.

10.13 In terms of its suitability the provision is usually for younger young people who are not ready to live independently and require support to develop independent living skills. The model is not generally suitable for young people who have few boundaries to their behaviour or who want the freedom and anonymity of other settings.

## 10.14 **A potential future model of housing for care leavers**

10.15 As previously stated it is important for the Council to provide a range of suitable accommodation options for care leavers. Not one young person is the same and they all have different needs and preferences. One care leaver at 16 might be ready to live independently but another at 18 might still require considerable support and assistance.

10.16 The Group feels that no young person should feel forced to leave care if they do not feel ready and this sentiment is backed by Section 1.11 in the Leaving Care Regulations 2010. It was therefore concerning for the Group to hear accounts from foster carers that some young people had been made to move out of foster placements and into hostels with the explanation that it was a more cost effective solution. Whilst it is understood that this is likely to be an example of the exception rather than the rule, the Group does feel that there are a number of gaps in the current housing provision for care leavers.

*10.17 Increasing the number of Supported Lodging Placement and Semi-Independent Provision*

10.18 The Group was informed by officers, foster carers and the Children in Care Council that the lack of alternative housing options beyond independent accommodation once a young person reaches 18 is a high priority issue. For the young people interviewed, this arbitrary cut off point creates a 'cliff edge'; a point from which all support appears to be removed. Care Leavers are then expected to either sink or swim in social housing with a minimal amount of support available.

10.19 This issue was partly resolved when the Council participated in the Government's 'Staying Put' pilot. This aimed to enable young people to build on and nurture their attachments to their foster carers, so that they could move to independence at their own pace and be supported to make the transition to adulthood in a more gradual way. It also aimed to provide the stability and support necessary for young people to achieve in education, training and employment. One of the foster carers who had participated in the Cheshire East pilot noted how it had removed the sense of an impending 'cliff edge' and therefore allowed the young person to move towards independence in their own time and at their own pace. She noted that it was unusual for the young person to stay until they were 21 and very often they moved into independent accommodation soon after their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. What was important was the fact that a deadline had been removed.

10.20 To some extent the Council has continued with the principles of the 'Staying Put' pilot as the Head of Service makes decisions to allow a young person to stay in their placement post their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday whilst they complete any training or qualifications. This is done on an ad hoc basis and the removal of the 'official' pilot has somewhat left a policy vacuum. It is therefore suggested that it be made policy that a young person can remain in their foster placement to complete any training or qualification that they started prior to their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.

10.21 The Group understands why the Council has been unable to continue with the 'Staying Put' pilot, in its original format – mainly due to the cost of maintaining placements in a challenging funding environment. The Council is also under pressure to provide more foster care placements and by keeping existing young people in placements, this only adds to the challenge.

10.22 With this in mind, it is suggested that a focus on providing more supported lodging places could provide a useful solution. There would be a cost implication to providing more places but this would be less than it would cost to extend existing foster placements. There would also be an issue, similar to that of the 'Staying Put' pilot, of potentially reducing the pool of foster carers but it is suggested that retired or retiring foster carers be targeted for recruitment.

- 10.23 It is also worth noting that an increased number of supported lodging placements would reduce the Council's dependency on using hostels for those care leavers aged 16-17. This is important as some hostels do not provide the requisite level of security for young vulnerable adults.
- 10.24 Whilst supported lodging placements are an excellent solution for those young people who want to maintain relatively extensive support, it may not be appropriate for those who are seeking a bit more independence. A good intermediary option is semi-independent accommodation. This has a number of incarnations articulated in varying ways across the country but the Group would endorse the following model:
- Small 3-4 bed units (staffed) with support available 24 hours a day. These could be provided by the Council or a tendering process could be undertaken to encourage independent providers of semi independent accommodation to locate within Cheshire East.
  - That the Council seek agreement with local social housing associations for a small number of single bed tenancies, identified to accommodate 16 -18 year old Cared For young people with floating support being provided by Residential Service care staff.
- 10.25 This provision would be used as a short term placement option to provide experience of independent living for young people who are considering a move on from foster care or residential settings. The Council should also look to explore how to facilitate the retention of meaningful relationships between care leavers and their former foster carers/supported lodging hosts. This is in recognition that the path to adulthood is rarely linear. Most if not all people stumble and fall as they try and negotiate their way to being independent and young people in care must feel as though they have the same safety net as their peers.
- 10.26 Some of the placements could be explicitly short term and temporary (weekend, week etc) and used as taster/training weeks for those young people nearing independence.
- 10.27 Along these lines, it is also worth noting that a number of the Council's care leavers attend universities around the country. The questions arises therefore as to where these young people go during the relatively extensive vacation periods. Nearly all universities allow cared for children to stay in university accommodation during vacation periods and whilst this is helpful it is not entirely satisfactory. Most, if not all of their peers, return home following the break of term and this is an option that should be made available to young people in care.
- 10.28 *Social Housing*
- 10.29 Whilst the Group was pleased to find out that care leavers are assigned to high priority band B when registering for social housing, it is felt that this does not go far enough. During the visit to Haringey Council, the Group was

informed that they have an agreement with local housing associations to prioritise 60 units per year for care leavers. This is despite the fact that Haringey Council has one of the highest demands for social housing in the country. When asked how this was achieved, the Group was informed that Haringey Council has a close working relationship with housing associations and the quota of housing for care leavers had been established in a joint protocol.

10.30 The Group was informed that the former Cheshire County Council used to have a similar joint protocol to prioritise housing to care leavers but this had been disbanded during Local Government Reorganisation and not re-established. The Group would call for the Council to open discussions with the three housing associations that operate in the Borough with the aim of re-establishing a joint protocol that prioritised a quota of social housing for care leavers.

10.31 The Group was also impressed by Haringey Council in the way that they provide compulsory tenancy workshops for those care leavers due to move into social housing. These workshops look at developing life skills, budgeting skills and provide information on good neighbour behaviour.

### *10.32 Support when leaving care and moving into new accommodation*

10.33 Life skill training has been referenced above with respect to compulsory tenancy workshops for those young people already committed to moving into independent accommodation. Whilst this is important, this training should begin at an earlier stage. When interviewing the Children in Care Council, they made it clear that they felt unprepared to live independently in the sense that they had limited knowledge of how to cook, operate a washing machine and perform minor DIY tasks such as changing a light bulb. Whilst it is hoped that foster carers take a lead in preparing cared for children in these basic skills, it was clear from the conversation with the young people that their experiences varied greatly. It is suggested therefore that the Council take a more proactive role in providing life skill training. Both Ealing and Haringey Councils have training kitchens for their young people from which a number of domestic skills workshops were ran from. Whilst it would be difficult for the Council to replicate such a model, having no central base, a creative solution would be to work with schools around the Borough to provide classes after school.

10.34 It is also important to note that it is likely that the young person will be moving out of a busy home; either familial or residential and into accommodation where they are likely to be on their own. This will be a shock and consequently there is a significant risk of loneliness and possibly depression. It is therefore important that in addition to 'practical life skills', the Council helps young people to build the resilience and mental tools required to live on their own. The Council already has built good relationships between the 16+ team and the leisure team as free memberships to the

Council's sports facilities are available for care leavers. It is also suggested that the Council make attempts to facilitate social networks and take steps to ensure that housing placements are close to friends.

- 10.35 Moving out of care and into new accommodation can be a stressful time for a young person. What can help a move is ensuring that the correct luggage is in place to ensure that the move is made efficiently and with dignity. It was therefore a concern to hear from the Children in Care Council that some young people had been asked to move their items in black bin bags. After exploring this claim, the Group was reassured that the Council's policy was to ensure that the appropriate luggage was provided so that young people did not have to move their items in bin bags. In the particular case that was highlighted, bin bags had been used for a couple of items that would not fit anywhere else. However, the Group feels that there is a conflict between what is regularly reported at the Children in Care Council and what is reported by Children's Services Officers.
- 10.36 Young people that leave the care system are provided with a leaving care grant to help them set up a home. The amount of grant is based on the individual's need and this can be up to £2,250<sup>14</sup>. A number of comments were made by the Children in Care Council that there was a lack of flexibility in how the grant could be used. The example provided was that a particular kettle could not be purchased as it had been deemed a 'luxury item' by a Personal Advisor. Whilst the Group recognises that limits need to be placed on how the grant can be spent so that core items are covered, some flexibility should be retained and the young person's voice listened to.
- 10.37 As can be seen from this report, a large number of agencies and services are involved when a young person leaves care. This can be confusing and there is a risk that a young person becomes lost in a sea of bureaucracy and therefore does not engage with all the services that could help them. The Group suggests therefore that a comprehensive but vitally, easy to use information pack be developed which would provide information on what they are entitled to, how to complete administration (setting up direct debits etc) and contact details of various agencies who they can turn to for help/advice.
- 10.38 It is also suggested that the Council look to either appoint or second a housing officer for the 16+ team. This role would involve working to increase the number of supported lodging/semi-independent placements, building relationships with housing associations and facilitating workshops for care leavers.

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<sup>14</sup> This does compare favourably with other authorities although Haringey pay up to £5000 depending on income. However, The Care Leavers Foundation completed a survey and it was suggested that £2500 is the minimum for setting up home re essential furniture and equipment, although this obviously depends on local resources.



*10.39 Summary*

- 10.40 The Group realises that the suggestions in this section are extensive and ambitious. Whilst it might be difficult to implement all of these suggestions in the context of funding challenges facing the Council the Group would reassert the absolute importance of ensuring that safe and suitable accommodation is available for our Care Leavers. If the Council gets this right, the chances of getting good outcomes for care leavers will be dramatically improved.

**11.0 Reducing the Offending Rates of Cared for Children and Care Leavers**

“My behaviour  
towards others has  
improved and  
believing in myself to  
achieve what I set  
out to do”<sup>15</sup>

Care Leaver

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<sup>15</sup> ‘After care: Young People’s views on leaving care’ Reported by the Children’s Rights Director for England – Ofsted (2012)

- 11.1 Relatively few studies have addressed the relationship between care and criminalisation, and they are inconclusive about whether cared for children are at greater risk of criminalisation. However, respondents to a recent survey<sup>16</sup> (carried out by The Adolescent and Children's Trust [TACT]), who have direct contact with these children, had a clear view that cared for children are at greater risk. 74% of respondents thought this was the case. This assertion is also backed up by the following table:

**Table 1 - Offending by children who had been looked after continuously for at least twelve months by gender, England 31 March 2011**

	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of Looked after Children aged 10-17 years	17,510	12,720	30,230
Number of Looked after Children convicted or subject to a final warning or reprimand during the year	1,550	660	2,210
Percentage of Looked after Children convicted or subject to a final warning or reprimand during the year	8.9	5.2	7.3
Percentage of all children aged 10-17 convicted or subject to a final warning or reprimand during the year	3.7	1.1	2.4

**Source – Department for Education. Outcomes for Children looked after by Local Authorities in England as at 31 March 2011**

- 11.2 The respondents felt that the key factors putting cared for children at increased risk of criminalisation were:
- Mixing with offending peers
  - Poor management of challenging behaviour
  - Lack of stability of care placements.
- 11.3 Residential care was highlighted in both the literature and in the practitioner survey as the care setting which posed by far the greatest risk to young people in terms of criminalisation. Over four in five respondents felt that looked after children were more likely to be prosecuted than were children living at home.
- 11.4 Practitioners indicated that it was not uncommon for carers (and in some cases other residents) to report young people to the police for committing minor offences such as stealing, fighting and criminal damage.

<sup>16</sup>[http://www.tactcare.org.uk/data/files/resources/4/care\\_experience\\_and\\_criminalisation\\_an\\_executive\\_summary\\_from\\_tact\\_090909.pdf](http://www.tactcare.org.uk/data/files/resources/4/care_experience_and_criminalisation_an_executive_summary_from_tact_090909.pdf)

- 11.5 In terms of the situation in Cheshire East, the Group interviewed the Head of the Youth Offending Service (YOS). It was reported following Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) the Council had inherited some significant historical issues relating to the offending rates of children in care. These very much reflected the findings in the TACT survey and can be summarised as thus:
- There was a disproportionate amount of children in care who were offenders in comparison to the general population (25 out of 450)
  - Children were becoming offenders once they had moved into care.
  - Those children who were already offenders, continued to offend at the same rate once they had entered care.
  - The young people coming into the Borough were quite sophisticated in their criminality – e.g. making use of knives.
  - A high number of offences were due to a breach of order which were being unnecessarily reported by residential home staff due to a lack of training and support – thereby needlessly criminalising those young people in care.
- 11.6 On this latter point, the Head of the YOS explained that they had implemented a number of initiatives to prevent this from happening. Indeed, they were providing training to staff and foster carers around managing challenging behaviour and also providing mediation support from specially trained members of staff. This had prevented residential home staff and foster carers from inappropriately escalating an issue to the Police. Similarly the YOS had developed a protocol with the Police and separately with the Crown Prosecution Service to prevent the unnecessary escalation of a minor misdemeanour to a criminal offence.
- 11.7 As a result of these initiatives, since LGR the YOS has greatly reduced the number of children in care who offend to the extent that it was now commensurate with the general population. It asserted however that the YOS were aiming to reduce this figure to below that of the general population and this is the goal they were currently working towards.
- 11.8 In terms of improving the successful and crime free transition of children in care who have offended into adulthood, the Group was informed that this had been improved by developing partnership working. This was not only working with the Council's 16+ team but also with partners in the community. A particular example was given of working with the Youth development team of Macclesfield Town Football Club in order to build capacity and reduce the chance of continued offending or re-offending.
- 11.9 Summary**
- 11.10 The work of the YOS in reducing the offending rates of Cared for Children has been a real success story for the Council and it is making a vital contribution

to the Council's efforts to improving outcomes for Care Leavers. The Group wishes to applaud all those involved in the YOS and there is a great belief that the service will continue to go from strength to strength as it moves into a new era as a single Cheshire East YOS. This belief was recently reaffirmed by a letter received by John Drew, the Chairman of the Youth Justice Board which complimented the Council's YOS arrangements, noting the considerable improvements that had been made. What particularly impressed the Group was the use of partnership working and it is suggested that the Council could learn a number of lessons from this work.

## 12.0 Conclusion

12.1 In the course of this review, the Group has discovered a number of alarming facts about care leavers nationally<sup>17</sup>:

- The number of care leavers aged 19, not in education; training or employment has increased by 5% since 2009 and by 26% since 2006.
- A third (33%) of looked after children aged 19 are not in education, training or employment.
- 54% of young people in care felt that councils are doing poorly or very poorly at helping them prepare to get good jobs in the future.
- Only 12% of children in care achieve 5 A\*-C GCSEs, including maths and English, compared to 53% of all children.

In relation to Cheshire East, the number of care leavers aged 19 not in education, training or employment is a declining figure. In Cheshire East in 2012, 6% of Cared for Children were not in education, training or employment. In 2012, 13% of Cheshire East Cared for Children received 5 A\*- C GCSEs including English and Maths.

12.2 What these facts demonstrate is the enormous gulf between the achievements and outcomes of care leavers compared to their peers. This is quite simply not good enough and as a society we need to start to do more to ensure that young people in care have the same opportunities in life as everybody else. This is of course a moral argument but it has financial implications too. The think-tank DEMOS in their report 'In Loco Parentis' mapped the cost of care journeys to the age 30 for two young people, one with good qualifications and the other with no qualifications. The key finding from this process was that after combining both the costs of the care journey and the outcomes, the difference could be £133,330.89 per child from entering care to age 30. Given the current care population is nearly 61,000 children (approx 450 in Cheshire East) the contrast between the two creates a powerful argument to invest to save in both the short term and the long term<sup>18</sup>. The Group has recommended that targets are set so as to demonstrate the importance of education and training for its Cared for Children, both for the individual Cared for Child and to the Council itself.

12.3 This report set out to explore what the Council could do to improve outcomes for care leavers and to ensure that they make a successful transition into independent living. Overall, it is important to state that the Group has found that the leaving care service is a well performing area of work for the Council. For instance, it is clear that the Council is actually

<sup>17</sup> <http://www.reedinpartnership.co.uk/media/68137/from%20care%20to%20independence.pdf>

<sup>18</sup> [http://www.demos.co.uk/files/In\\_Loco\\_Parentis\\_-\\_web.pdf?1277484312](http://www.demos.co.uk/files/In_Loco_Parentis_-_web.pdf?1277484312) (p.167)

leading the way nationally in improving educational attainment and offending rates for Cared for Children and as a corollary this has had a positive impact on the outcomes of care leavers.

- 12.4 Having said this, it is also clear that there is room for improvement in a number of areas. Important lessons can be learned from other leading authorities who, it could be argued, are a little further along in their journey than Cheshire East. In particular, the Council needs to pay greater attention to widening the housing options for care leavers and take further measures to ensure that care leavers are prepared for work and able to access further and higher education.
- 12.5 An important finding to note is that wherever success has been found, whether in Cheshire East or in other authorities, it has followed that there has been a culture of teams within a local authority working together and engaging with the resources in the local community. An example of this in Cheshire East has been the Virtual School and the YOS and in both Ealing and Haringey Councils they make best use of Council and community resources. The Council is a powerful organisation with a wide network of connections and resources that dwarfs that of any individual parent. Following this logic no child in care or young person leaving care should be disadvantaged with regards to the opportunities that are made available to them. To this end, the Group would call on the Council to start to maximise its potential as a 'corporate parent' to ensure that outstanding outcomes are achieved for the young people in its care.

## 13.0 Recommendations

### 13.1 *Changes to the processes that support care leavers*

- 13.1.2 That the Council make attempts to delay the changing of the young person's social worker until after their exams have been completed and that an 'overlap' period be initiated in order to maintain a smooth transition. (p.18 – para 6.8)
- 13.1.3 That the Council take steps to ensure that the Pathway Plan is an easy to use, easily understood and meaningful document for the young person. (p.19 – para 6.15)
- 13.1.4 That young people become more engaged in the leaving care process with more opportunities provided for them to engage with and question the processes that affect their lives. To support this, the Council should look to appoint a participation officer. (p.20 – para 6.16)
- 13.1.5 That foster carers be given a key role in the leaving care and pathway planning process. (p.20 – para 6.17)
- 13.1.6 That the Council ensure that the policy to provide adequate luggage to move a young person's belongings is being fully adhered to and continued until the age of 25. (p.45 – para 10.35)
- 13.1.7 That the Council ensure that the young person's voice is fully listened to in the spending of the 'leaving care grant'. (p.45 – para 10.36)
- 13.1.8 That a comprehensive but easy to use information pack be developed and given to every young person leaving care – to include; information on what they are entitled to, how to complete administration (setting up direct debits etc) and contact details of various agencies who they can turn to for help/advice. (p.45 – para 10.37)

### 13.2 *Changes to how the support the Council provides to care leavers is structured*

- 13.2.2 That alongside the Lead Member for Corporate Parenting, a non-Executive Councillor, with no Chairmanship duties, be appointed as a 'Cared for Children' champion to liaise with Cared for Children and to drive through the Corporate Parenting agenda and to monitor the outcomes of the Task Group reports on cared for children. (p.21 – para 7.4)
- 13.2.3 That opportunity be provided for Cared for Children/Care Leavers to engage directly and informally with officers so that positive relationships can be established. Ideally, small satellite bases be made available in the North (Macclesfield) and in the South (Crewe) of the Borough enabling access to kitchen facilities and to Personal Advisors/Youth Support staff/Careers advice. Consideration be given to increasing access to these teams through utilising Skype facilities (p.21 – para 7.4)
- 13.2.4 That the Council explore recruiting more Personal Advisors to bring down high case loads. (p.22 – para 7.7)



- 13.2.5 That the Council recruit a specialist Personal Advisor who is qualified to work with disabled young people. (p.22 – para 7.10)
- 13.2.6 That the Council explore the appointment of a funding co-ordinator to have a strategic and practical lead in maximising income for children and adults coming through social care and health systems, including GPs and hospitals. (p.28 – para 8.16)

## 13.3 *Training and support*

- 13.3.2 That the Council provide easy to read and accessible guidance explaining the benefits entitlements of care leavers and current employability schemes offered under New Deal and Flexible New Deal. That this be developed with the support of the DWP and distributed to care leavers, leaving care teams, benefit and Jobcentre plus offices. (p.28 – para 8.16)
- 13.3.3 That the Council provide budget management training for cared for children (p.29 – para 8.16)
- 13.3.4 That the Council explore initiating a mentoring scheme which would pair care leavers/young people with cared for children. (p.33 – para 9.23)
- 13.3.5 That the Council explore initiating a mentoring scheme for foster carers with other experienced foster carers. (p.38 – para 9.41)
- 13.3.6 That foster carers be strongly encouraged to attend one education based training event a year. (p.38 – para 9.41)
- 13.3.7 That training events be made available for agency foster carers for a small charge. (p.38 – para 9.41)
- 13.3.8 That the Council provide a range of tenancy workshops for those care leavers due to move into social housing – focusing on developing life skills, budgeting skills and information on good neighbour behaviour. (p.44 – para 10.31)
- 13.3.9 That the Council provide ‘practical’ life skill training for cared for children e.g. cooking, cleaning, minor DIY tasks prior to the pathway plan process. (p.44 – para 10.33)

## 13.4 *Benefits*

- 13.4.2 That the Council explore paying landlords directly for those care leavers who are deemed unable to manage their budget. (p.28 – para 8.16)
- 13.4.3 That the Council encourage the Department for Work and Pensions to enable ‘jam jar’ accounts for Universal Credit payments in order to help facilitate budget management. (p.29 – para 8.16)
- 13.4.4 That the Council work with the Department of Work and Pensions to enable young people to register for social housing at 17 years 6 months of age rather than at 18 to reduce pressure on the pathway planning process and double payment. (p.28 – para 8.16)

## 13.5 *Housing*

- 13.5.2 That the Council explore how to implement a policy so that a young person can remain in their foster placement to complete any training or qualification that they have started prior to their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. (p.42 – para 10.20)
- 13.5.3 That the Council explore extending the number of supporting lodging placements that are available. (p.42 – para 10.22)
- 13.5.4 That the Council explore providing semi-independent accommodation options for care leavers based on the following two models (p.43 – para 10.24):
- Small 3-4 bed units (staffed) with support available 24 hours a day.
  - In agreement with social housing associations, a small number of single bed tenancies be provided to accommodate 16 -18 year old Cared For young people with floating support being provided by Residential Service care staff.
- 13.5.5 That the Council explore how foster carers and supported lodging hosts can retain meaningful relationships with a young person once they move into independent accommodation. (p.43 – para 10.25)
- 13.5.6 That the Council ensure that care leavers in university can return to a foster/supported lodging placement during the vacation period. (p.43 – para 10.27)
- 13.5.7 That the Council open discussions with the three housing associations that operate in the Borough with the aim of re-establishing a joint protocol to prioritise a quota of social housing for care leavers. (p.44 – para 10.30)
- 13.5.8 That the Council explore either appointing or seconding a housing officer to generate supported lodging/semi-independent placements, build relationships with housing associations and facilitate workshops for care leavers. (p.45 – para 10.38)
- 13.5.9 That the Council take steps to reduce the chance of loneliness for when a young person moves into independent accommodation e.g. ensuring that housing placements are close to friends when appropriate and that social networks are facilitated. (p.44 – para 10.34)

### *13.6 Education, Employment and Training*

- 13.6.2 That the Council explore increasing the allowance that is paid to those care leavers who go to university to encourage increased applications. (p.33 – para 9.23)
- 13.6.3 That targets are set to demonstrate year on year improvements in education outcomes, training outcomes and attendance levels for Cheshire East Cared for Children (p.33 - para 9.24)
- 13.6.4 That targets are set to demonstrate a year on year decrease in the numbers of Cared for Children aged 19 who are not in education, employment or training (NEET)
- 13.6.5 That the Council extend the remit of the Virtual School from 19 to 25. (p.33 – para 9.24)

- 13.6.6 That the Council encourage secondary schools to retain a link with a young person in care once they enter further education. (p.34 – para 9.24)
- 13.6.7 That the Council encourage secondary schools and sites of further education to apply for the Buttle UK Quality Mark. (p.34 – para 9.24)
- 13.6.8 That the Council initiate a programme of support to better prepare cared for children for the demands of work. That this include (p.34-35):
- An incremental approach to work experience – beginning with taster days and ending with increasingly tailored and intensive work experience placements. Working with the Government’s ‘From Care2Work’ programme to support this.
  - The Council adopting a policy in which a work experience placement would be available to a cared for child every week of the year.
  - The Council strongly encouraging cared for children to participate and complete life skill development courses with existing (Prince’s Trust) and newly developed partnerships.
- 13.6.9 That the Council initiate the business case for Care Leavers accessing Apprenticeships as set out in Appendix 1 to the report.
- 13.6.8 That the Council ensure that Personal Advisors are provided with sufficient training so that there is a consistency of service across the team. That this include training on care leaver’s entitlements and need. (p.22 – para 7.8)

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## **Appendix 1: Business Case - Care Leavers accessing Apprenticeships with support from the Shared Lives Service.**

### **1. Purpose**

To respond to the challenges that young people within/leaving the Council’s care face in finding employment and with this in mind to request that funding be allocated to the 16+ Team in order to:

- 1) Offer Apprenticeship placements, both within the Council and with partner organisations to those young people who are deemed by the service to be ready to make the most of the opportunity.
- 2) Commission the Shared Lives Service to support young people within/leaving our care whilst they are in an A-Team/partner organisation apprenticeship placement.
- 3) Deliver a holistic Council approach to apprenticeships for young people within/leaving care, and align support/resources across services as required to enable successful completion of apprenticeships.

### **2. Background**

Securing employment is an important step for any young person as they try to make the transition into adulthood. It not only helps to achieve financial independence but also provides self confidence and an all important sense of self worth. For young people within/leaving care, gaining employment could be seen as more crucial than it is for many of their peers. Young people within care are expected to make a leap into adulthood at a much earlier stage than most other young people with the average leaving care age being 16-18 as compared to the average age that a young person leaves home (24). Having said this, finding and maintaining a job can be difficult for many young people in care. Young people from care are much more likely than their peers to experience unemployment, both when first leaving school and throughout life. Government statistics for the year ending 31st March 2009 reveal that 37% of young people aged 19, who were formerly in care, are not in education, employment or training.

Recognising this issue, in 2010/11 the Council took a policy decision to ring-fence and recruit 5 young people from within the Council's care into A-Team Apprenticeships. After interview, the 5 successful candidates were then inducted into the A-Team scheme and began their placements between February and March 2011 in a range of Council services. A further placement was agreed for another young person as a result of conversations with a Head of Service who was mentoring a young person within the Council's care.

After some good initial progress with regard to adapting to the working environment things quickly changed for the cohort of apprentices and issues began to surface for apprentices and the cohort as a whole. In summary, across the cohort there were issues around attitude, and in particular attendance, motivation and punctuality. As a result, none of the cohort completed the apprenticeship programme. To put this in some context, the A Team has a 100% successful completion rate.

### **3. The Proposal**

There were a number of aspects which influenced the unsuccessful completion of the A Team programme by the cohort. Indeed, on a wider level what is required is a new model of tackling the issues faced by the young people within our care in terms of their employment outcomes. This would draw together and align a number of Council services to establish a corporately led holistic approach to developing our young people into successful careers. The primary element which this paper touches upon is developing the support outside of the work placement – a key factor that has been identified as being absent for the initial cohort.

Following work carried out by a Scrutiny Task and Finish Review, an opportunity has been identified to re-establish a cohort of young people within/leaving our care to participate in A-Team or external apprenticeships but with added support from sessional carers as part of the Shared Lives Service. Sessional Support is where a service user is supported by a Shared Lives Carer either in their own home, the Carers home or out in the community. Sessions last for 3, 6, or 9 hours. These placements are set up to achieve specific outcomes included health and emotional wellbeing, improved quality of life and increasing choice and control for service users. This will also provide one point of contact for the A-Team and other employers to ensure excellent communication, take preventative action on any issues, and consistently aim to support young people to move forward, overcome challenges, and also receive timely feedback and recognition to reinforce positive behaviours, both in and outside the workplace.

This underpinning support would enable a more effective approach to motivation and sustaining a positive approach to work within the cohort, and greatly enhance the potential for successful completion and progression. The A-Team development experience would be made available to all young people within our care who become apprentices in Cheshire East organisations, not just the Council.

Workplace supervisors will also be trained further to support their apprentices working with the appropriate specialists such as the 16+ and Shared Lives teams.

In taking a more outcome focused position based on the whole ecology system of the young people who are embarking on apprenticeships, there may also be opportunity to further develop and explore aligning other Council services to play a part in this new approach such as Cheshire East Youth Support Service, and other relevant services within Children's and Families that could make a positive contribution.

Once agreed, the process of recruitment would work as follows:

- The 16+ team would evaluate the capabilities and the readiness for work of the young people in care. This would take into consideration factors such as the successful completion of the Prince's Trust 12 week programme, which is now open to all young people in care between 16 and 25 and participation in a work experience taster day.
- Those young people identified as being ready for work would then be interviewed by Organisational Development/Shared Lives to identify their preferences and development needs. Attempts would then be made to find an appropriate placement either within the Council or with a Council partner. Part of identifying an 'appropriate placement' would be determining whether the workplace supervisor is sufficiently trained and prepared to host a young person, and the level of commitment that the service can put into supporting the young person.
- Once the placement type is identified, a Social Care Assessor on the Shared Lives Team would match an appropriate sessional Shared Lives Carer to support the young person whilst they are in the placement. The extent of this support would depend on the individual's needs.
- A small budget would be required to recruit a sessional Shared Lives Carer if an appropriate match could not be found. It must be noted that this would be an unlikely occurrence.

#### **4. The cost**

A key finding from the initial cohort of young people within our care was that it was unhelpful to have a ring-fenced number of placements. A preferable situation would be to determine those who are ready for work and then find placements for them. The cost of the proposal as a whole would therefore be determined by the individuals and is unknowable at this stage. It has been suggested by the 16+ team manager that in the current cohort of young people in care there would be 3-6 young people who could benefit.

As apprenticeship recruitment has been frozen corporately, the funding of the placements would have to be taken from the 16+ team budget. For each placement this would be £5460.00 p.a. including on costs.

It has been determined that the support from the Shared Lives team would require 1 day a week from a Grade 7 Social Care Assessor (mid scale). This would cost:

Without on costs	£4,591.60
With on costs	£5,854.60

N.B. This would not include an allocation of Resource Manager time or any travel expenses, but for a 12 month pilot the Shared Lives Team would absorb these costs. The cost of the Shared Lives Sessional Carer is paid at minimum wage (£6.19ph) and they work in three hour sessions. The amount of hours required would be bespoke to each individual and therefore the total cost is unknown.

## Worked example:

Yearly cost for:

5 placements – 2 young people receiving 3 hours per week and 3 receiving 6 hours per week:

Placements -	£27,300 (£5460 x 5)
Social care Assessor -	£5,854.60 (with on costs)
Sessional Support -	£6833.76 ([24 hours x £6.19] x 46 weeks)
	<b>£39,988.36 per annum</b>





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## Overview and Scrutiny Review

### Children and Families Scrutiny Committee

March 2012 – December 2012



For further information, please contact  
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## CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

### Cabinet

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<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	15 <sup>th</sup> October 2013
<b>Report of:</b>	Director of Economic Growth and Prosperity
<b>Subject/Title:</b>	National Housing Federation Campaign Backed by Central Government
<b>Portfolio Holder:</b>	Cllr Don Stockton, Housing, Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration

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#### 1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 Cheshire East Council believes that housing provision must be representative of local communities, and development sites must accord with the needs and wishes of local people.
- 1.2 As such, the Council is committed to ensuring that the right homes are built in the right places, at the right prices in accordance with the views of local communities and stakeholders.
- 1.3 These impulses are shaping the formation of the Local Plan. The emerging Local Plan has adopted a pro-growth approach to housing, now the subject of further consultation, currently provisioning around 27,000 homes and meeting the Council's targets for the next five years. The Plan is also scrupulously designed to represent local people, to ensure that any housing developments align with the needs of Cheshire East constituents, are located appropriately, and will deliver improved outcomes for communities.
- 1.4 In light of the emerging Local Plan formulation, the Council wishes to reiterate and bolster our commitments to housing, expressed in the likes of our housing strategy 'Moving Forward'. The Council:
  - Recognises the national need for increased housing provision, and is concerted pro-growth with regards to housing – provided such growth is in the right places, of the right type, and at the right price in accordance with the needs of local people.
  - Will continue to promote housing options to achieve balanced and sustainable communities through a mix of property types and tenures.
  - Will ensure that Cheshire East residents have the opportunity to live in the local area at a price they can afford through the delivery of market and affordable housing.

- Will ensure decent homes across all types of tenure, maximising the use of our existing housing stock.
  - Will meet the needs of our most vulnerable residents by ensuring access to housing options and appropriate housing support.
  - Will meet the housing needs of our ageing population through good quality, adaptable housing and access to support services.
  - Will promote and enable self-building in the Borough to give local people further control over the kinds of properties and development they want to see, and encourage communities to band together to create self-build projects.
  - Will work to provide homes for key workers, so vital skills are retained in the Borough.
  - Will facilitate the wide menu of housing products promoted by central government, enabling working families to realise the dream of homeownership. This includes intermediate rent, NewBuy, Help to Buy, and First Buy.
  - Will look to address and reflect housing issues and needs unique to rural communities – for instance, capturing the need for affordable housing in rural areas and facilitating appropriate development.
  - Will work with communities to ensure that housing unlocks the potential of local people regardless of where they live, promoting the Localism agenda and utilising housing to address health inequalities.
  - Will deliver all of the above objectives in consultation with local people and in accordance with their identified needs, to ensure any housing development is appropriate and representative.
- 1.5 The 'Yes to Homes' campaign is promoted by the National Housing Federation and supported by central government officials such as the planning minister, Nick Boles MP. It aims to promote consultation and engagement with the local populace in order to develop the right homes, in the right places, at the right price in accordance with local need. As such, the campaign is deemed to align with Cheshire East's aforementioned housing commitments and ethos.
- 2.0 Recommendations**
- 2.1 To note the report.
- 2.2 In line with the objectives outlined in the report, the Council wishes to formalise its support for the 'Yes to Homes' campaign, which promotes the engagement of the local populace in the development of the right homes, in the right places, at the right price.

### **3.0 Reasons for Recommendations**

- 3.1 Cheshire East is at a critical juncture in the delivery of its housing objectives. The Local Plan is being finalised and proposed development sites scrutinised prior to inclusion. At this stage, the Council wants to reinforce the outcomes it hopes to achieve through housing development. The guiding principles outlined in section 1.4 have informed, and will continue to inform, the proposition and assessment of housing developments.
- 3.2 The Council recognises the need to bolster housing provision to address national deficiencies. There is a recognised housing shortage across the United Kingdom, with only 9,600 new homes being built in the North West in 2011/12.<sup>1</sup> Rising house prices are debarring many people from home-ownership and driving them into the private rented sector, which is causing rents to rise along with demand.
- 3.3 Cheshire East is committed to improving this housing context locally, and is already playing a facilitative and active role in setting the growth agenda. This is reflected in the emerging Local Plan, which is inherently pro-growth and aims to deliver around 27,000 new homes in the Borough over its lifespan.
- 3.4 However, the Council is equally aware of the need to ensure that local people are best represented in any future housing developments. The Council is committed to ensuring that the right homes are developed in the right places, at the right price. This involves stimulating and encouraging engagement with local people via consultation, so that local views are best captured and reflected in any development.
- 3.5 In accordance with this objective, the Council wishes to commit its support to the 'Yes to Homes' campaign. The end goal of the campaign, in accordance with those of Cheshire East, is to create the right homes, in the right places, at the right price in accordance with the needs of the local community. Endorsed by central government, it aims to catalyse and capture the demand for housing across the country, ensuring that there is a balanced debate regarding any new housing developments. Cheshire East hopes to support the campaign to reinforce the organisation's desire to reflect and represent as thoroughly as possible the views of the local communities in new developments.

### **4.0 Wards Affected**

- 4.1 All

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<sup>1</sup> Communities and Local Government (CLG) Statistics

## **5.0 Local Ward Members**

### **5.1 All**

- 5.2 If the recommendations of section 2 are adopted, local ward members are encouraged to promote 'Yes to Homes' in their wards to capture the degree of local support for new housing, ensuring that any development best accords with the needs of the local community.

## **6.0 Policy Implications**

- 6.1 Cheshire East's housing commitments complement and reinforce the objectives of the corporate housing strategy, as well as informing the emerging Local Plan core strategy and site allocations.
- 6.2 The 'Yes to Homes' campaign will form another element of the public engagement taking place as part of the Local Plan consultation and the Housing team's wider programme to foster awareness of, and support for, new housing.

## **7.0 Financial Implications**

- 7.1 There are no significant financial implications anticipated. Any resource commitments associated with support will be absorbed into existing capacity.

## **8.0 Legal Implications**

- 8.1 There are no immediate legal implications arising from the Council acknowledging its support for the National Housing Federation scheme that is supported by central government.

## **9.0 Risk Management**

- 9.1 Not applicable

## **10.0 Background and Options**

- 10.1 'Yes to Homes' is a campaign co-ordinated by the National Housing Federation designed to empower those people who need homes across the country and counterbalance the concerns that often surround new housing propositions.
- 10.2 The National Housing Federation represents housing associations nationwide and seeks to drive initiatives for better housing. The 'Yes to Homes' campaign is one such initiative designed to ensure that the national need for housing is being captured and utilised to drive housing investment and growth.
- 10.3 The campaign hopes to make the need for new homes visible. It specifically targets Councils and Councillors to advocate new housing locally as well as represent those individuals who need it in development fora and plans.

Ultimately this is intended to present a balanced argument and progressive strategy for new homes.

- 10.4 The campaign will assist its advocates with information, data, and guidance to best capture and utilise support for new housing developments.
- 10.5 The campaign is not a commitment to guarantee new homes or approve all housing development planning applications. Rather, it is a promise to foster a more balanced debate, where those who need housing are encouraged, consulted, and represented.

#### **11.0 Access to Information**

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer:

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## CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

### Cabinet

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<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	15 <sup>th</sup> October 2013
<b>Report of:</b>	Strategic Infrastructure: Director of Economic Growth and Prosperity
<b>Subject/Title:</b>	A6 to Manchester Airport Relief Road – Planning Submission and Outcome of Public Consultation Process (Forward Plan Ref: 13/14-56)
<b>Portfolio Holder:</b>	Councillor David Brown, Strategic Communities

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#### 1. Report Summary

- 1.1. This report seeks authorisation to submit a Planning Application for the A6 to Manchester Airport Relief Road and progress necessary legal agreements, based on the Plan of the proposed scheme attached as Appendix A.
- 1.2. The scheme is being jointly promoted by the three local authorities of Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council (SMBC), Cheshire East and Manchester City Council (MCC) and all three authorities will need to consider the planning application when it is submitted.
- 1.3. Members are asked to note the attached consultation report at Appendix B outlining the results of the second phase of SEMMMS consultation undertaken in June/July as part of the development of a preferred option for the scheme. The key phase two consultation results relating to Cheshire East residents are highlighted in this main report. Members will recall that the outcome of the previous phase of consultation was reported at the May 2013 Cabinet.

#### 2. Recommendations

- 2.1. That approval is given for the A6 to Manchester Airport Relief Road planning application to be submitted to the Council Strategic Planning Board based on the scheme plan in Appendix A.
- 2.2. That delegated authority is granted to the Director of Economic Growth and Prosperity in consultation with the Portfolio Holder to authorise the Section 8 Agreement with Stockport MBC required to develop and deliver this road.
- 2.3. That the Monitoring Officer/Head of Legal be instructed to negotiate and enter into a legal agreement between the Council and Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) regarding the circa £4.75m funding package inclusive of CEC £1m match funds

towards highway improvements in the Borough, in particular the Poynton Relief Road.

- 2.4. To note the summary report (Appendix B) outlining the results of the second phase of consultation undertaken in June and July and the approach taken by the SEMMMS project team in responding to the consultation.
- 2.5. To note that there are still some outstanding issues around traffic mitigation measures for the A6 corridor which are being considered by officers in consultation with the Portfolio Holder, and are close to being resolved.
- 2.6. To note detailed draft plans for sections along the proposed A6 to Manchester Airport Relief Road within the Cheshire East boundary are attached as Appendix C.

### **3. Reasons for Recommendations**

- 3.1. The proposed scheme has been under development for many years and the current proposal is the result of extensive consultation. The previous phase one consultation process, undertaken between October 2012 and January 2013 and reported to Cabinet in May 2013, identified a high level of public support for the scheme with over 80% of those expressing a preference stating they were in favour.
- 3.2. The proposed scheme is identified as a priority within the National Infrastructure Plan and will support the Council's key objective to deliver new and improved infrastructure to support economic growth.
- 3.3. The road is being developed and funded by the Government and GMCA. SMBC would take responsibility for its delivery.
- 3.4. Analysis of network congestion and journey patterns justifies the need for a road scheme. The proposed scheme is the most appropriate solution to cater for the dispersed, orbital journeys currently occurring across the scheme corridor, albeit using north-south routes in order to make east-west journeys.

### **4. Wards Affected**

- 4.1. Disley, Handforth, Poynton East and Pott Shrigley, Poynton West and Adlington, Prestbury, Wilmslow Dean Row, Wilmslow Lacey Green, Wilmslow West and Chorley, Wilmslow East.

## **5. Local Ward Members**

- 5.1. Cllr Harold Davenport (Disley).
- 5.2. Cllr Barry Burkhill and Cllr Denis Mahon (Handforth).
- 5.3. Cllr Jos Saunders and Cllr Howard Murray (Poynton East and Pott Shrigley).
- 5.4. Cllr Roger West and Cllr Philip Hoyland (Poynton West and Adlington).
- 5.5. Cllr Paul Findlow (Prestbury)
- 5.6. Cllr Paul Whiteley (Wilmslow Dean Row).
- 5.7. Cllr Don Stockton (Wilmslow Lacey Green).
- 5.8. Cllr Wesley Fitzgerald and Cllr Gary Barton (Wilmslow West and Chorley).
- 5.9. Cllr Rod Menlove (Wilmslow East).

## **6. Policy Implications**

- 6.1. The proposed A6 to Manchester Airport Relief Road (A6MARR) will provide a high quality highway link between the A6, A523 and A34 and Manchester Airport and the M56.
- 6.2. The proposed scheme was identified by the Coalition Government in the National Infrastructure Plan in November 2011 as a priority for delivery.
- 6.3. The existing local road network passes through residential communities and local and district centres currently suffer from congestion and severance as traffic uses a variety of unsuitable roads to make this orbital journey.

## **7. Financial Implications**

- 7.1. There are no direct financial implications for the Council regarding the planning submission of the A6MARR. The Council is not contributing funding to the development or delivery of the Scheme and will therefore not be bearing any of the associated financial risks. However, the Council, in its capacity as the highway authority, will be liable for the future maintenance of the stretches of road within Cheshire East upon the expiration of a 12 months maintenance period following the completion of the scheme.
- 7.2. In November 2011, the scheme was identified as a priority in the Budget and included in the National Infrastructure Plan with a funding allocation of £165m from central funds and the rest to be identified locally.
- 7.3. In July 2013, the Greater Manchester Combined Authority agreed a £290m funding package comprising; £165 million of specific Department for Transport (DfT) capital grant, £105 million of additional capital grant funding being made available by

Government in the context of the Manchester City Deal 'Earnback', and £20 million of existing LTP top slice allocation.

- 7.4. Negotiation between the Greater Manchester Combined Authority and the Council resulted in a written commitment from the Leader of the GMCA to contribute £3.75m towards the delivery of the Poynton Relief Road and other highway improvement works as part of a £4.75m funding package inclusive of Cheshire East monies.
- 7.5. Over £1m of this funding will be spent on this project delivery by providing an upgraded junction capable of accommodating the Poynton Relief Road.

## **8. Legal Implications**

- 8.1. There are no direct legal implications related to authorising the submission of a planning application on behalf of the three SEMMMS local authorities.
- 8.2. There are two related legal implications: the legal agreement being drafted with Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council under Section 8 of the Highways Act; and the need to enter into a legal agreement with GMCA regarding the offer of funding towards Poynton Relief Road and the evaluation of transport requirements, as per the Manchester City Council letter dated 7<sup>th</sup> September 2012.
- 8.3. The Section 8 legal agreement is currently being drawn up between the three legal teams representing the SEMMMS authorities of Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council, Manchester City Council and Cheshire East Borough Council. Under Section 8 of the Highways Act, it is proposed that Cheshire East and Manchester City Council, subject to the provisions of the Section 8 Agreement, will authorise Stockport to exercise all its functions as Highway and Traffic Authority insofar as required for the purpose of the carrying out the Works related to the SEMMMS scheme. This draft agreement is with the Monitoring Officer/Head of Legal and is undergoing legal review and will only be considered for authorisation once agreement in principle is reached between the three legal teams.
- 8.4. The Council should seek a separate legal agreement to confirm the payment terms and funding offer from the GMCA as set out in the letter from the Leader of Manchester City Council dated 7<sup>th</sup> September 2012.

## **9. Risk Management**

Delay in the authorisation to submit a planning application would result in one significant risk to the project. The Council may be seen

as delaying the critical path for the project, impacting on the planning application process and the likely construction date.

- 9.1. Opportunities for the Council to maximise improved connectivity as a result of SEMMMS are linked to receipt of the GMCA funding contribution agreed through the negotiated deal, currently only confirmed by letter. A formal legal agreement would mitigate the risk and guarantee this funding.

## **10. Background**

- 10.1. The scheme has been developed in partnership with SMBC and MCC, with SMBC taking the lead Project Sponsor role. The scheme is being fully funded by the Department for Transport and GMCA.
- 10.2. The A6 to Manchester Airport Relief Road (A6 MARR) is a 10 kilometre dual carriageway connecting the A6 near Hazel Grove to Manchester Airport and utilising a further four kilometres of the existing A555 to the north east of Handforth and south of Bramhall (the central section of the scheme). An outline plan showing the broad location of the scheme is attached as Appendix A. The scheme travels east to west along the Cheshire East, Stockport and Manchester local authority boundaries and is adjacent to several areas within Cheshire East, including Handforth and Poynton.
- 10.3. The new road would include seven new junctions and four improved junctions as well as associated traffic and environmental mitigation and complementary measures. There are four rail crossings in the new sections including the Hazel Grove to Buxton Line, West Coast Main Line (Stockport to Stoke), Styal Line and the Styal Line Northern Airport Spur. A pedestrian and cycle route is proposed for the whole length of the scheme, including the four kilometre existing section of A555. The A6MARR interfaces with the proposed Poynton Relief Road at Chester Road.

Additional footpath and bridleway provision as well as that above will be provided along parts of the scheme and it is proposed to upgrade a number of existing public rights of way from footpaths to bridleways to improve linkages into the existing networks.

### **Business Case**

- 10.4. A business case was submitted for the proposed scheme in November 2012 to support the funding case. The business case identified that the BCR (benefit to cost ratio) is 5.06 and offers very high value for money.
- 10.5. The objectives of the proposed scheme as set out in the Business Case are to:

- Increase employment and generate economic growth: -provide efficient surface access and improved connectivity to, from and between Manchester Airport, local, town and district centres, and key areas of development and regeneration (e.g. [Manchester Airport Enterprise Zone](#));
  - Boost business integration and productivity: - improve the efficiency and reliability of the highway network, reduce the conflict between local and strategic traffic, and provide an improved route for freight and business travel;
  - Promote fairness through job creation and the regeneration of local communities: - reduce severance and improve accessibility to, from and between key centres of economic and social activity;
  - Reduce the impact of traffic congestion on local businesses and communities;
  - Improve the safety of road users, pedestrians and cyclists: reduce the volume of through-traffic from residential areas and retail centres; and
  - Support lower carbon travel: reallocate road space and seek other opportunities to provide improved facilities for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport.
- 10.6. As part of the scheme development a number of assessments have been undertaken. These assessments include environmental, transport, health impact and socio-economic and sustainability. The completed assessments will be submitted as part of the planning application. The assessments have influenced the design of the scheme so that any negative impacts are minimised and the benefits are maximised.
- 10.7. The consultation process described below has also been used to inform the design process.

#### **Outcome of A6 MARR Consultation**

- 10.8. A two stage consultation process has been carried out to inform the design of the preferred scheme. The issues raised during the first phase were reported to the May 2013 Cabinet meeting and detailed responses from the second phase (undertaken from June to July 2013) are incorporated within the Phase 2 Consultation Report attached as Appendix B.
- 10.9. The consultation approach for both phases included delivery of leaflets to 85,000 properties, a website and dedicated phone line, public exhibitions along the route and meetings with key stakeholders.
- 10.10. Local Liaison Forums for people living adjacent to the scheme have also been held to allow for more detailed discussion on local issues.

- 10.11. The first phase of consultation between October 2012 and January 2013 focused on whether people supported the scheme and asked for views on junction options and the overall scheme. Over 9,000 people responded to the consultation. Approximately 70% of all respondents stated they were in favour (6,208). When the respondents who did not know or did not provide an answer were excluded from the results (1,318), the percentage in favour was 6,208 out of 7713, or more than 80%.
- 10.12. The phase one consultation also asked for preferences regarding options at six junction locations along the scheme. Consultation preferences which were taken forward as part of the on-going design for the scheme.
- 10.13. The response to identify the preferred option at the Chester Road Link, Poynton was less clear cut and further work has been undertaken to identify the preferred option at this location.
- 10.14. The design of the emerging preferred scheme used for the second phase of consultation was also informed by comments received during the phase one consultation. This resulted in changes to the design proposals along the length of the scheme which included:
- Further reducing the noise and visual impacts of the scheme with additional noise fencing and low noise surfacing, extended earth mounds (noise bunds), lowered road level and mitigation landscaping along the route;
  - Where possible, the road was moved further from residential properties;
  - The proposals to accommodate the needs of pedestrians, cyclists, equestrians and public rights of way were developed in more detail.
- 10.15. The second phase of consultation concentrated on the detail of the scheme including proposed landscaping, rights of way changes and the incorporation of the junction options and changes identified by the phase one consultation. Further comments were received on the proposed rights of way changes and cycle facilities, landscape and detailed design of the scheme at the junction of Macclesfield Road north of Poynton. These comments have been reviewed and where practical have been incorporated into the final proposed preferred scheme.
- 10.16. The phase two consultation also aimed to identify local community views with regards to whether the emerging preferred scheme is likely to address its environmental impact and is going to address the access / traffic issues. The latter point relating to the needs of pedestrians, cyclists, public rights of way and the accommodation of any changes to traffic flows in the local area through complementary and mitigation measures.

10.17. Appendix B provides more detailed information on the results from the second phase of consultation. Approximately 1340 of the 5,481 respondents who provided postcode details came from residents in Cheshire East areas. The key issues are as follows:

#### **Traffic and Access Issues**

- There was a broad geographical distribution of respondents that both agreed or strongly agreed that the scheme design would address the different traffic/access issues.
- Of note, a slightly higher percentage of Cheshire East residents were in strong agreement that the scheme addressed each of the four traffic and access issues covering pedestrian and cyclist needs, public rights of way and changes to traffic flows than the results for ALL respondents which included Stockport and Manchester residents.
- With regards to whether the scheme ‘addresses changes to traffic flows in the local area through complementary and mitigation measures’ Poynton and Disley residents were least likely to agree. Almost a quarter (25%) of the 537 Poynton respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement compared to approximately 16% of all 5,481 respondents to this question. However, 59% of Poynton respondents agreed with the statement.
- The 141 Disley respondents were also more likely than other areas to disagree or strongly disagree the scheme addressed changes to traffic flows through complementary and mitigation measures with 62% agreeing and just over 21% disagreeing.

#### **Environmental Issues**

- Overall, the majority of Cheshire East respondents agreed *“that the emerging preferred scheme for the A6 to Manchester Airport Relief Road addresses the following environmental impacts: Noise; Visual; Landscaping; and Ecology”*.
- Almost two thirds (65%) of Cheshire East respondents agreed the scheme would address the noise impact, and 69% agreed it addressed the visual and landscaping impacts.
- However, there was less agreement overall (all respondents) and by Cheshire East respondents that the scheme addressed the impact on ecology (58% of Cheshire East respondents and only 55% of all 5,481 respondents).

10.18. In addition to addressing specific questions, respondents were invited to make comments on the scheme. A summary of the main concerns raised during the Phase 2 consultation of particular



relevance to Cheshire East is provided below along with the SEMMMS Project Team response:

- **Likelihood of increased traffic on the A6 in High Lane and Disley:**

SEMMMS Team Response: It is recognised that a package of mitigation measures are required to address areas which are forecast to experience changes to traffic flows as a result of the A6 to Manchester Airport Relief Road scheme, including High Lane. Mitigation measures are proposed for the A6 through High Lane and Disley that will manage traffic flow, support the local centres and improve non-motorised user facilities. Discussion is on-going between Stockport Council and Cheshire East Council on what the most appropriate form of measures would be on the A6 corridor where an increase in traffic levels is forecast. There is a commitment as part of the scheme that mitigation measures will be implemented, and their detail will be determined through further analysis and consultation. Support for the final package of measures will be agreed in consultation with the Portfolio Holder and the local ward member.

A separate study is also being undertaken to look at wider transport improvements on the A6 corridor by Stockport Council, Cheshire East Council, Derbyshire County Council, High Peak Borough Council and Transport for Greater Manchester.

- **A6MARR will only bring benefit if Poynton Relief Road is constructed at the same time.**

Comments were received relating to the Poynton Relief Road (PRR), including that the A6 MARR scheme would not bring any benefits unless the Poynton Relief Road was constructed at the same. Cheshire East Council's intention, now that the A6-MARR scheme is fully funded, is to progress the Poynton scheme as soon as possible to limit the time between the opening of the A6-MARR scheme, programmed for 2017, and the opening of PRR.

Poynton Relief Road has been prioritised within the Cheshire and Warrington Local Transport Body (CWLTB) 4 year funding programme with an allocation of £9.78m, around 50% of the overall estimated costs, and an anticipated start in 2017.

- **Concern about road safety on Chester Road.**

SEMMMS Team Response: Improvements to the Chester Road are not proposed as part of the A6 to Manchester Airport Relief Road because, in 2017, the year of the scheme's opening, traffic flows on Chester Road, both east and west of the proposed junction, are forecast to decrease as a result of the scheme. Cheshire East

Council has been made aware of concerns about road safety on Chester Road.

CEC Response: Cheshire East is currently conducting a borough wide cluster review of road safety, focusing on high collision locations. Following the review, a programme of works will be drawn up at priority locations. Concerns about road safety along Chester Road within the Cheshire East borough should be addressed to the Cheshire East Traffic and Road Safety Team or emailed to [roadsafetyeast@cheshireeast.gov.uk](mailto:roadsafetyeast@cheshireeast.gov.uk).

10.19. CEC still has some concerns about the impact the new road may have on the local road network and these are not yet fully resolved. Officers are working in consultation with the Portfolio Holder to ensure satisfactory mitigation packages are built into the scheme.

- **Noise and visual impact of the scheme on Glastonbury Drive.**

The road should be deeper in cutting, the road alignment moved further from Glastonbury Drive and the bunding in the area extended in length and increased in height.

SEMMMS Team Response: The project team has considered relevant aspects of the emerging preferred scheme in order that sufficient, appropriate and proportionate visual and noise mitigation can be provided - these aspects include distance of the road from the residential properties, the existing topography within that distance, the road being in a cutting and the proposed landscaping.

- **Concern about the impact of the scheme on Mill Hill Hollow.**

SEMMMS Team Response: Following comments received during the Phase 2 consultation, in order to further mitigate the impact if the scheme, we have made the following changes to the design: Reducing the height of the bridge over Norbury Brook in the vicinity of Mill Hill Hollow; extending the lengths of environmental fencing to further mitigate noise impacts; Updating landscape mitigation in this area; and Increasing the depth that the road is in cutting west of Norbury Hollow.

A meeting with Mill Hill Hollow residents was held on 15th August 2013 in order to discuss their concerns about the scheme in more detail.

- **More bunding and visual mitigation is needed for properties on London Road North.**

SEMMMS Team Response: The existing landscape provides visual mitigation. Noise has been assessed and mitigation is not deemed to be required.

- **The road should go underneath the West Coast Mainline.** If it is to go over the West Coast Main Line, increased visual screening is required.

SEMMMS Team Response: Environmental and engineering aspects have been assessed when considering the design for the West Coast Mainline crossing, the outcome of which indicate that the road over rail option to be the most appropriate design. A review of the visual and noise mitigation proposals has been undertaken which demonstrates that additional mitigation is not required.

## **11. Access to Information**

- 11.1. The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting:

Name: Sophie Kelly  
Designation: Senior Strategic Advisor  
Tel No: 01270 685961  
Email: [Sophie.kelly@cheshireeast.gov.uk](mailto:Sophie.kelly@cheshireeast.gov.uk)

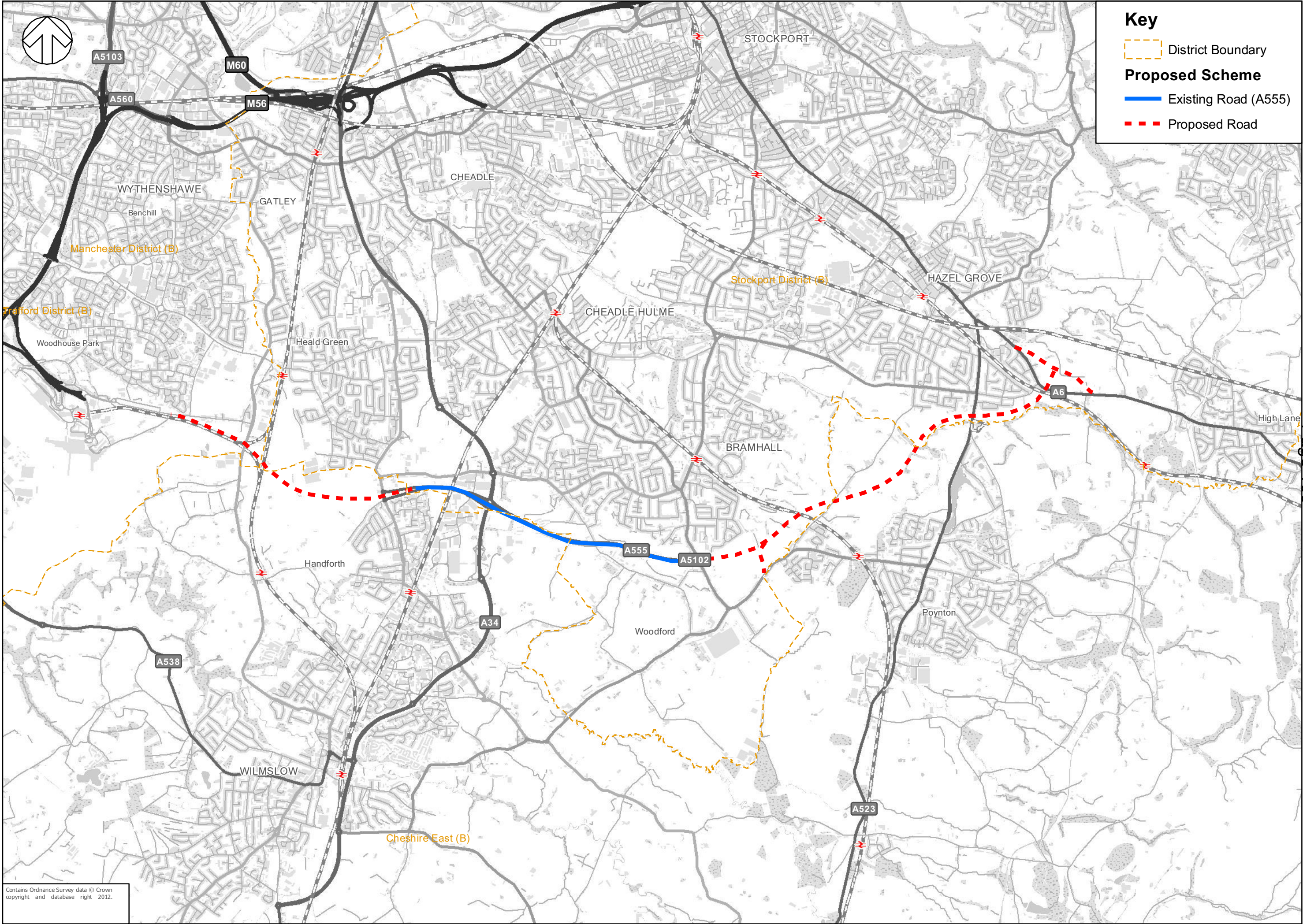
## **Appendix A Outline Plan of Proposed Scheme**

## **Appendix B A6 to Manchester Airport Relief Road- Phase Two Consultation Final Report**

## **Appendix C Detailed Plans of Manchester Airport Relief Road in Cheshire East**

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## **Appendix B: A6 to Manchester Airport Relief Road- Phase Two Consultation Final Report**

### **Introduction**

This appendix provides more detailed information on the outcomes of the second phase of consultation held between 3rd June and 19th July 2013. It provides an overview of the responses received to the consultation questions and highlights the key topics and issues raised, including the project team responses to those issues in developing the preferred scheme. The proposals for the preferred scheme have been further developed on the basis of the outcome of the phase 2 consultation and other design considerations.

### **Consultation Process**

The purpose of the second phase of consultation was to provide feedback from the Phase One consultation and seek comments on the emerging preferred scheme in order to inform the development of the preferred scheme for the planning application.

A range of methods was used to maximise participation in the consultation process and are summarised as follows:

#### ***Leaflet and Response Form***

For the Phase Two consultation a leaflet and response form was distributed to properties within the area surrounding the proposed scheme. The postal distribution of the leaflets was to an area of approximately 85,000 properties, including residential and business properties.

The leaflet provided summary feedback from the Phase One consultation, information about the emerging preferred scheme and ways that individuals could find out more about the emerging preferred scheme in order to respond to the consultation. A response form was included with the leaflet along with an enclosed FREEPOST envelope. The self-completion response form included questions covering overall opinion on environmental and traffic / access topics. The form also provided respondents with the opportunity to provide comments on the scheme.

The leaflet, response form and a FREEPOST envelope were made available at public venues across Stockport, Manchester and Cheshire East such as libraries and advice centres. They were available at the staffed exhibitions and could be requested via the telephone helpline. In addition, the leaflets were made available on the website.

#### ***Website***

Information about the consultation was provided on the website [www.semmms.info](http://www.semmms.info). The website contains further information about the consultation, as well as about how the A6 to Manchester Airport Relief Road scheme fits within the context of the SEMMMS Strategy.

As well as a source of information, the website provided an opportunity for respondents to directly submit their comments by completing an online

response form and also via an interactive map. The online response form asked the same questions as those on the response form that was distributed with the Phase Two consultation leaflet.

The interactive map allows the user to navigate and zoom in on an individual area of the scheme to see more detail or the junction options available and also hover over the scheme to get more detailed information about each section. A comment/question could be recorded on the interactive map.

### ***Exhibitions***

The primary purpose of the exhibitions was to provide attendees with an opportunity to find out more about the feedback from the Phase One consultation and obtain further information about the emerging preferred scheme. There was also the opportunity to discuss and provide feedback to members of the Project Team. Leaflets were provided at the exhibitions and attendees were encouraged to comment using the response forms.

A total of nine exhibitions were held between 13th June and 4th July 2013. Approximately 870 people attended the exhibition events.

### ***Other Stakeholder Engagement***

Engagement with stakeholder groups has been a vital method of gathering feedback on the emerging preferred scheme proposals. Through a combination of written correspondence and meetings, the project team has sought the views of key groups, including residents, road users, interest groups and local businesses, affected by the A6 to Manchester Airport Relief Road.

### ***Environment Forum***

The Environment Forum has been set up specifically for the A6 to Manchester Airport Relief Road scheme in order to discuss and gather feedback on environmental aspects of the scheme, such as environmental impact, mitigation and landscaping. An Environment Forum was held during the Phase Two consultation on 19th June 2013.

### ***Vulnerable Road Users Group***

The Vulnerable Road User Group (VRUG) has been set up specifically for the A6 to Manchester Airport Relief Road scheme in order to discuss and gather feedback on pedestrian, cycle and equestrian facilities, provision for mobility impaired individuals and public rights of way. A VRUG meeting was held during the Phase Two consultation on 12th June 2013.

### ***Local Liaison Forums***

Local Liaison Forums (LLF) have been undertaken in areas most affected by the proposals, as listed below:

- LLF 1. Hazel Grove - Buxton Road Area;
- LLF 2. Hazel Grove - Mill Lane Area;
- LLF 3. Hazel Grove - Norbury Hall Area;
- LLF 4. Poynton - London Road South Area;
- LLF 5. Poynton - Mill Hill Farm Area;



- LLF 6. Poynton - Glastonbury Drive Area;
- LLF 7. Poynton - Woodford Rd / Chester Road Area;
- LLF 8. Bramhall - Woodford Road Area;
- LLF 9. Bramhall - Albany Road Area;
- LLF 10. Heald Green - Bolshaw Road Area;
- LLF 11. Handforth - Clay Lane Area;
- LLF 12. Moss Nook - Styal Road Area;
- LLF 13. Queensgate Primary School; and
- LLF 14. Stanley Green.

These LLF meetings are considered to be a key element of the consultation in order to capture the detailed comments and concerns of the most directly affected residents.

The meetings are a vital channel for a two-way dialogue between the local community, the Local Authorities and, eventually, the appointed contractor. LLF membership includes those businesses, land owners and local residents affected by the scheme.

The LLF has become a fixed element of the on-going consultation and communications strategy for the scheme and will continue to do so as it progresses.

One LLF meeting was held for each LLF group during the Phase Two consultation with the exception of LLFs 2 and 3, for which an additional meeting was held. The additional meeting for these groups was held following feedback received during the first Phase Two consultation meeting regarding the selection of Option 1 at Macclesfield Road. The project team agreed to hold an additional meeting to provide further information in response to the concerns raised.

### **Raising Awareness**

The consultation was supported by an awareness raising campaign across a range of media in order to encourage engagement in the consultation from a broad spectrum of the local community. This included:

- Road Signs;
- Social Media;
- Radio Advertisements;
- Bus Advertisements;
- Press Advertisement; and
- QR Codes (Signpost to the [semmms.info](http://semmms.info) website).

## Consultation Response

A draft report on the second phase of consultation has been completed by WSP consultants on behalf of the SEMMMS project team and it provides a detailed examination of the responses received. 5,481 responses to the consultation were included within the analysed data set via the following channels:

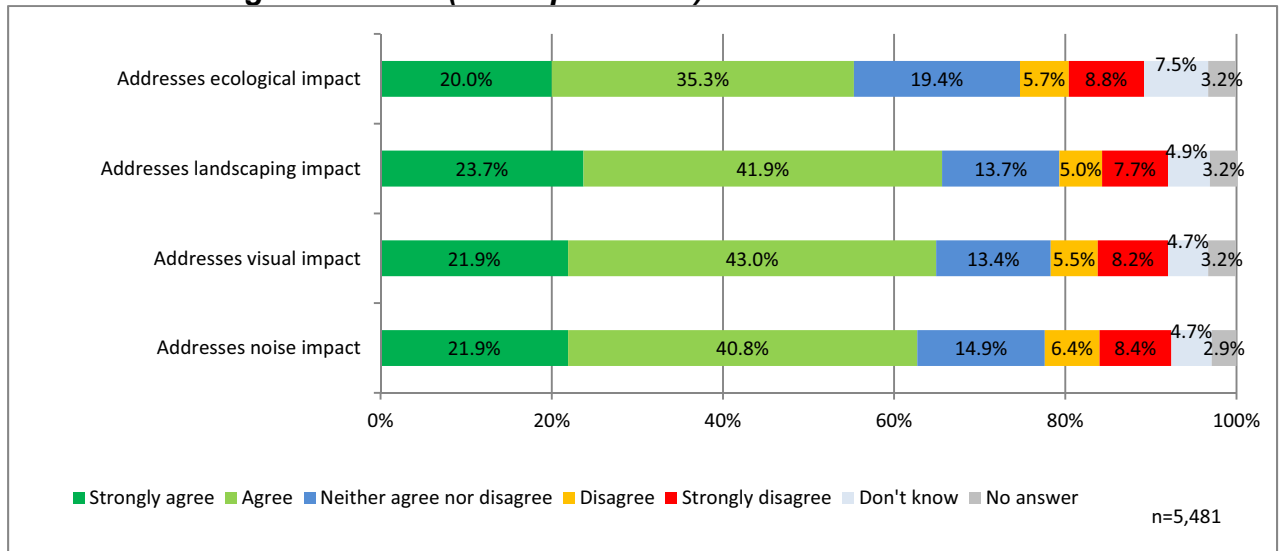
- Paper response form: 4,898 responses
- Online response form: 471 responses
- Other response mechanisms (phone, email, letter): 112 responses.

## Summary of Response on Environmental Issues

One of the aims of the Phase Two consultation was to identify whether the local community agrees or disagrees that the emerging preferred scheme addresses its environmental impact. The results indicate that the majority of respondents agree that the environmental impacts of the scheme are being addressed. As illustrated in Figure 1, respondents are most in agreement that the landscaping impact is being addressed by the scheme and agree least that the scheme is addressing ecological impacts.

Whilst overall levels of agreement were still high, respondents were most likely to disagree that noise and ecological impacts are being addressed by the scheme.

**Figure 1: Overall Opinion on Whether Environmental Impact of the Scheme is Being Addressed (all respondents)**



The consultation leaflet drop zone has been broken down into a number of geographical areas, according to local settlements, and in all of these areas, more respondents agree than disagree that the scheme addresses its environmental impacts.

Respondents living within the Hazel Grove area are most likely to disagree or strongly disagree that the scheme addresses each of the four environmental

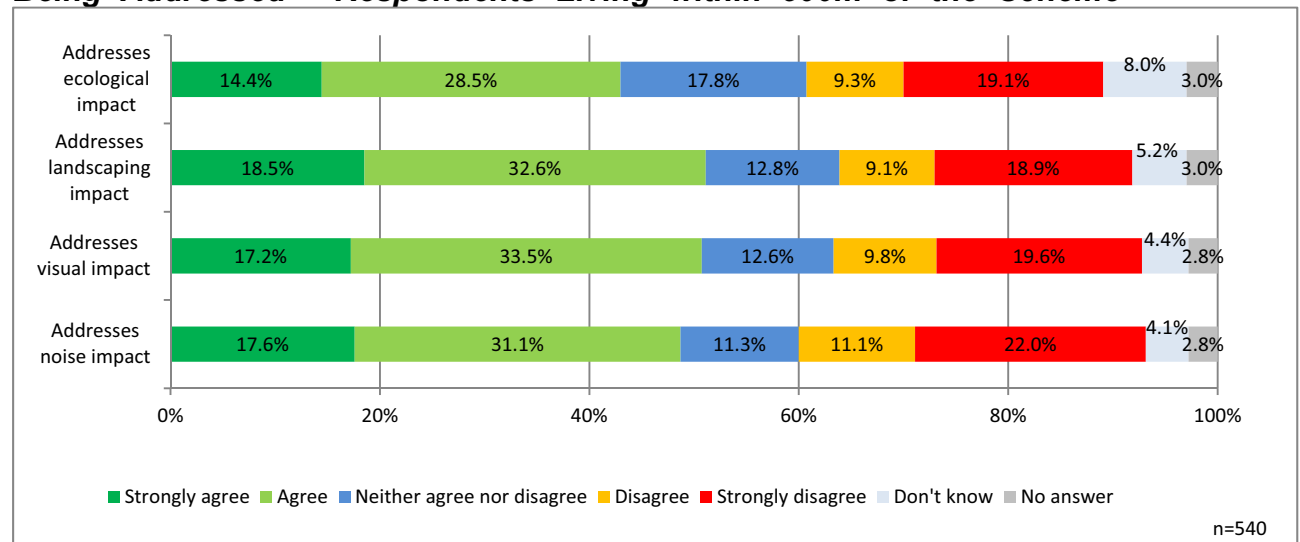
impacts under consideration, indicating that there are notable levels of concern about the scheme in this area.

Analysis of opinion on the environmental impacts of respondents living within 500m and 1km of the scheme, as illustrated in Figures 2 and 3, demonstrates that respondents living closer to the scheme are less likely to agree that the environmental impacts of the scheme are being addressed.

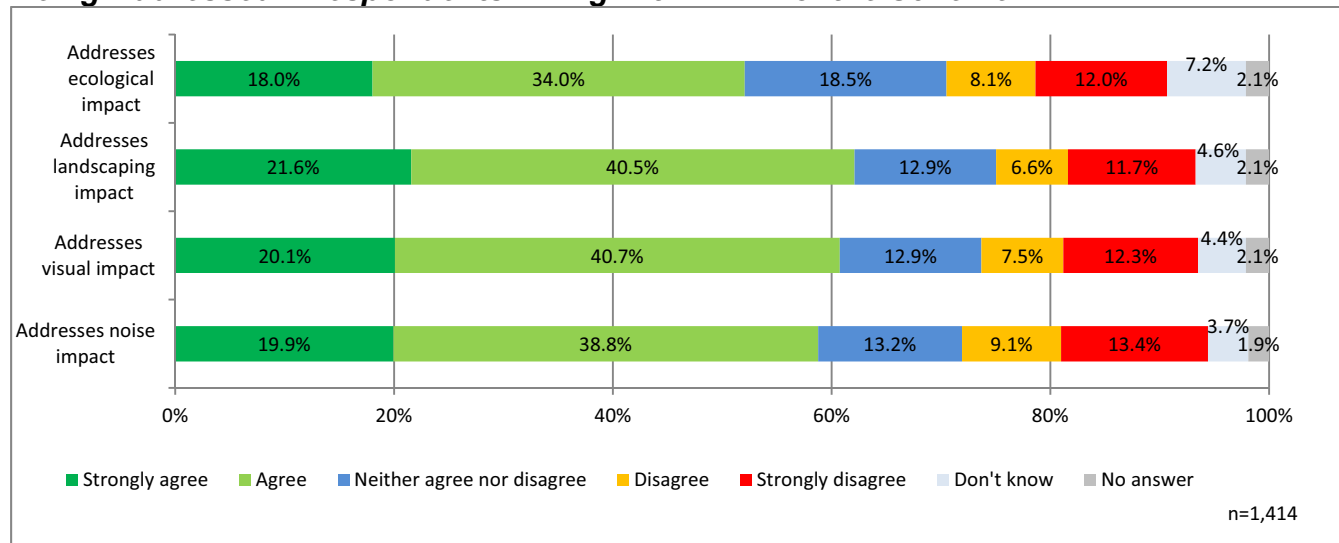
Of the four environmental impacts under consideration, there is the great level of disagreement that the noise impact is being addressed among respondents living within both 500m and 1km of the scheme.

Respondents living within both 500m and 1km of the scheme are least likely to agree that the ecological impact of the scheme is being addressed. Of the four environmental impacts, respondents are most likely to respond neither agree nor disagree or don't know about how the ecological impact is being addressed by the scheme.

**Figure 2: Opinion on Whether Environmental Impacts of the Scheme are Being Addressed - Respondents Living within 500m of the Scheme**



**Figure 3: Opinion on Whether Environmental Impacts of the Scheme are Being Addressed - Respondents Living within 1km of the Scheme**



When considering the spatial distribution of respondents that both agree or strongly agree that the scheme addresses the environmental impacts, the results show that there is a broad distribution of respondents with this view across the leaflet drop zone and urban areas in the vicinity of the proposed road. There are notable clusters of strong agreement in Heald Green, Handforth, Poynton and Hazel Grove.

In terms of those respondents that either disagree or strongly disagree that the scheme addresses environmental impacts, the results show that there are pockets of respondents with these views in relative close proximity to the proposed road. Furthermore, it is evident that there are a greater number of respondents that live along the eastern section of the scheme (from the Woodford Road, Bramhall junction to the A6 junction) that disagree or strongly disagree that the environmental impacts are being addressed. One significant cluster to note are those respondents residing close to the proposed A523 Macclesfield Road junction.

### Cheshire East Respondents

The consultation zone areas of Styal/Wilmslow/Handforth; Poynton and Disley most closely match the Cheshire East postcodes.

Overall, the majority of Cheshire East respondents agreed that the emerging preferred scheme for the A6 MARR addresses the environmental impacts of noise, visual intrusion, landscape and ecology.

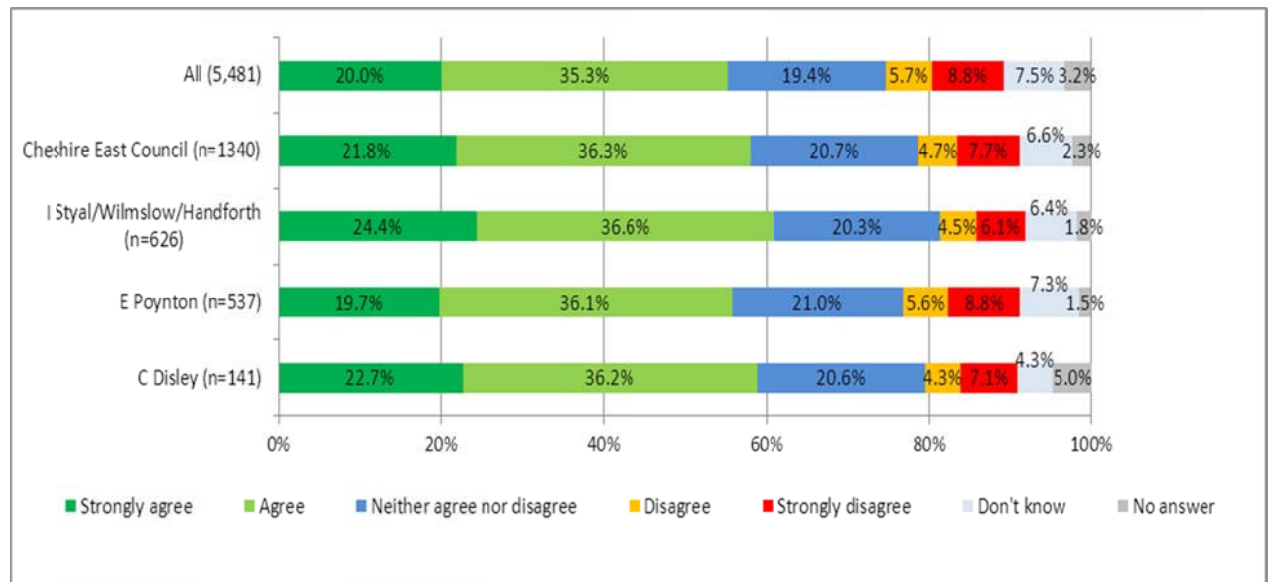
Almost two thirds (65%) of Cheshire East respondents agreed the scheme would address the noise impact, and 69% agreed it addressed the visual and landscaping impacts.

However, in common with the findings for all respondents, there was less agreement that the scheme addressed the impact on ecology. Approximately

58% of the 1340 Cheshire East respondents agreed with the statement, as shown in Figure 4 overleaf.

This figure was slightly higher than the overall figure for all respondents which was 55%.

**Figure 4: Opinion on Whether Ecological Impacts are being addressed – Cheshire East Respondents**



In addition to answering the specific questions, a range of comments were made relating to environmental issues. Respondents were keen to see noise and visual impacts mitigated as far as possible by keeping the road low and introducing earth bunds, noise fencing and landscaping. Some respondents stated a preference for earth bunds rather than acoustic fencing. Respondents would like to see landscaping that is native and sympathetic to the local environment and the number of trees replanted to be maximised.

Respondents also expressed a desire to see provisions put in place to ensure the protection of local wildlife through, for example, the use of underpasses for mammals.

The environmental impact of the scheme was cited by some respondents as grounds for opposition to the scheme. Concerns were raised about the loss of greenbelt land and woodland as a result of the scheme, particularly ancient woodland in the Hazel Grove area.

Another environmental concern raised by respondents was that of the air quality impact of the scheme, including in terms of carbon emissions and impact on the health of residents.

Requests were also made for more information regarding the environmental impacts of the scheme and the measures that would be taken to address these impacts.

**SEMMMS TEAM Response:** The SEMMMS project team has reviewed the environmental mitigation proposals for the scheme and considers that appropriate and proportionate mitigation has been included within the preferred scheme. We will continue to ensure that the community is kept up to date and informed about the proposals for environmental mitigation measures.

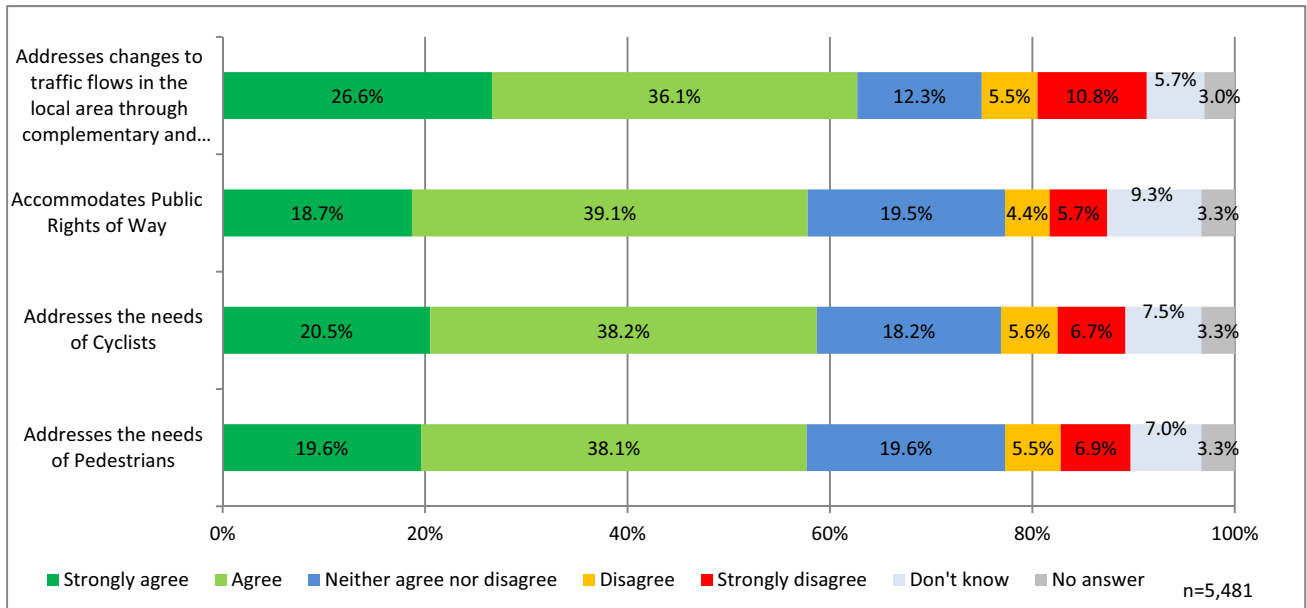
The results reflect the detailed comments obtained through the Local Liaison Forums and meetings with residents and stakeholder groups. The responses to the detailed issues raised through these channels are set out within the relevant following sections of this report.

### **Summary of Response on Traffic / Access Issues**

The results indicate that the majority of respondents agree that access / traffic issues are being addressed by the scheme.

Respondents have greatest strength of feeling regarding the proposals to address changes to traffic flows in the local area through complementary and mitigation measures. The results show that of the four access / traffic issues under consideration, whilst respondents are most likely to agree that the scheme will address changes to traffic flows, conversely, they are also most likely to disagree that this is the case. This is likely to reflect both positive and negative changes to traffic flows within the consultation area as a result of the scheme, as exemplified by the high levels of agreement in the Heald Green Cheadle area, contrasted with a notable strength of disagreement in High Lane.

**Figure 5: Overall Opinion on Whether Access / Traffic Issues are being Addressed by the Scheme**



In all geographical areas of respondent home location and across each respondent main method of travel in the south east Greater Manchester area, more respondents agree than disagree that the four access / traffic issues are being addressed by the scheme.

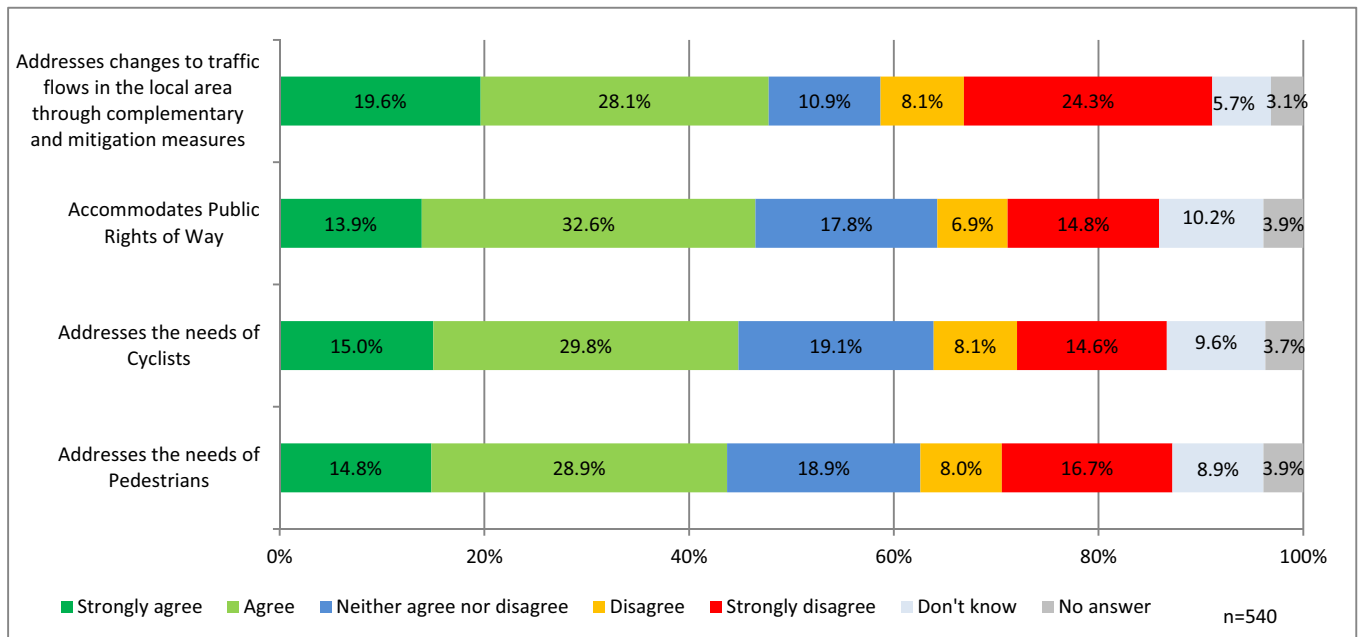
A level of disagreement with the proposals to address the needs of pedestrians and cyclists and accommodate Public Rights of Way is evident among respondents who live outside of the leaflet drop zone, with respondents from this area being most likely to disagree that these three access / traffic issues are being addressed by the scheme.

The results also demonstrate that, of residents within the leaflet drop zone, those living within the Hazel Grove area are most likely to disagree or strongly disagree that each of the four access / traffic issues under consideration is being addressed by the scheme.

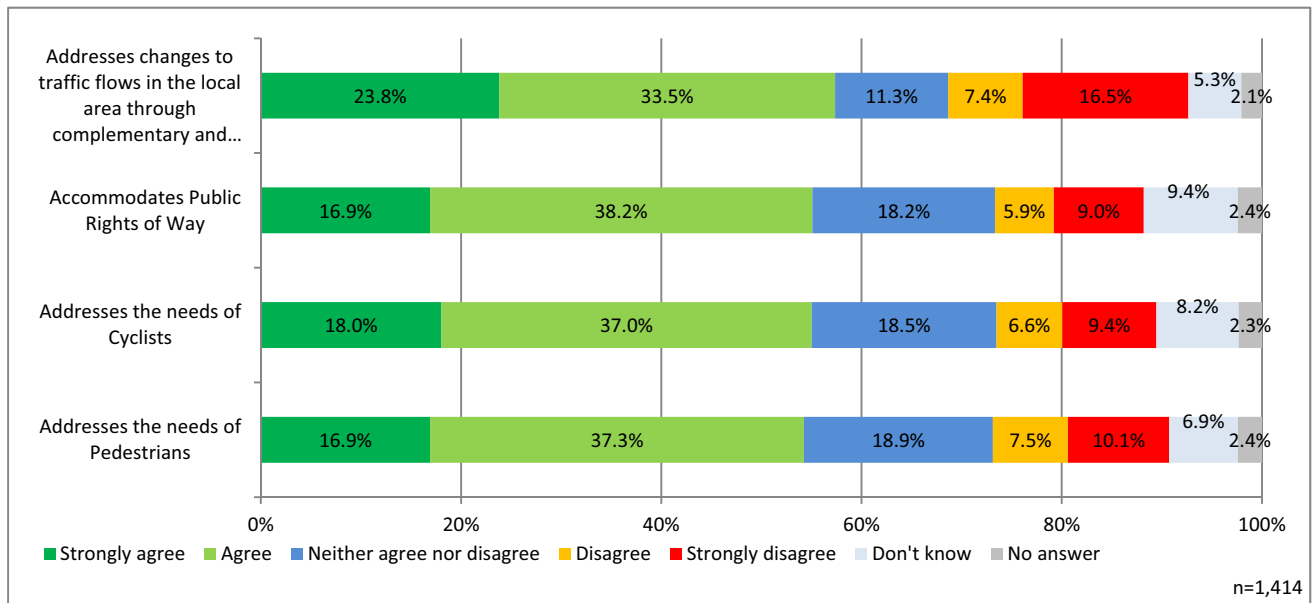
Analysis of opinion on access / traffic issues of respondents living within 500m and 1km of the scheme, as illustrated in Figures 5 and 6, indicates that respondents living closer to the scheme are less likely to agree or strongly agree that these issues are being addressed by the scheme.

Of the four access / traffic issues under consideration, there are greatest levels of disagreement that changes to traffic flows in the local area are being addressed among respondents living within both 500m and 1km of the scheme. Conversely, of the four access / traffic issues, respondents living within 500m and 1km of the scheme are also most likely to agree or strongly agree that changes to traffic flows in the local area are being addressed.

**Figure 6: Opinion on Whether Access / Traffic Issues are being addressed by the Scheme - Respondents living within 500m of the scheme**



**Figure 7: Opinion on Whether Access / Traffic Issues are being addressed by the Scheme - Respondents living within 1km of the scheme**



When considering the spatial distribution of response regarding access / traffic impacts, the results show that there is a broad distribution of respondents across the leaflet drop zone and urban area that both agree or strongly agree that the scheme addresses traffic/access issues. Of note, there are a significant number of respondents in strong agreement Heald Green, Handforth, Poynton and Hazel Grove.



The results show pockets of respondents across the leaflet drop zone that have stated that they disagree or strongly disagree that the scheme addresses traffic/access issues. A greater number of respondents that live along the eastern section of the scheme (from the Woodford Road, Bramhall junction to the A6 junction) that state they disagree or strongly disagree that the access / traffic issues are being addressed. The largest cluster of respondents who strongly disagree are those residing in the south Hazel Grove area close to the proposed A523 Macclesfield Road Junction. The results also show a broad distribution of respondents across the leaflet drop zone that have stated that they don't know or neither agree or disagree on whether the scheme addresses traffic/access issues.

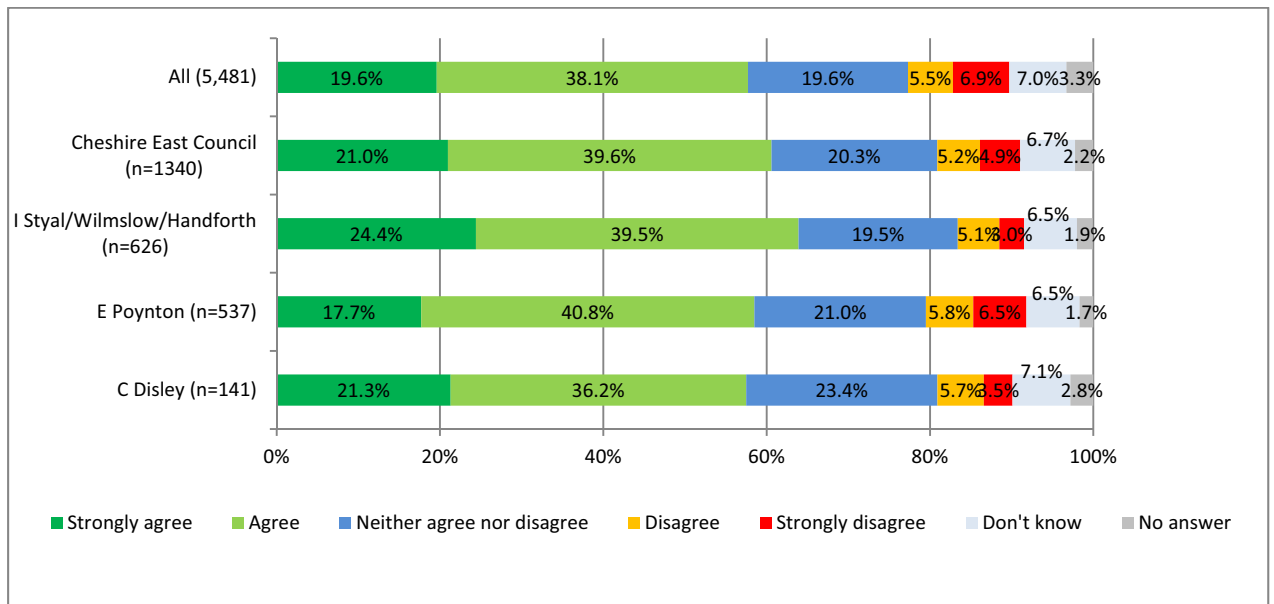
Car drivers are most likely to agree or strongly agree that the scheme addresses the needs of pedestrians and cyclists and accommodate Public Rights of Way. Cyclists are most likely to disagree or strongly disagree that the scheme addresses the needs of pedestrians and cyclists, whereas train users are most likely to disagree or strongly disagree that the proposals accommodate Public Rights of Way and address changes to traffic flows. This suggests that potential users of the road by car in general show more support for the scheme proposals whereas concerns are evident among cyclists about the provision for non-motorised modes.

### **Cheshire East Respondents**

A slightly higher percentage of Cheshire East residents were in strong agreement that the scheme addressed each of the four traffic and access issues covering pedestrian and cyclist needs, public rights of way and changes to traffic flows than the results for ALL respondents which included Stockport and Manchester residents.

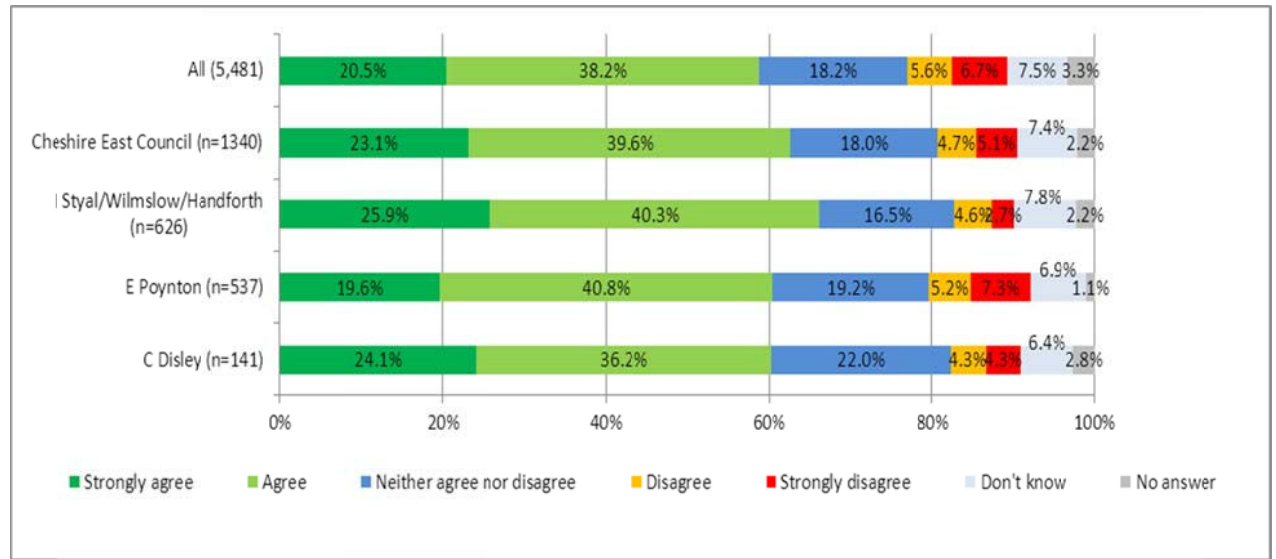
Figures 8 to 11 show levels of agreement with each of the traffic and access statements by Cheshire East respondents compared to the results for all respondents.

**Figure 8: Opinion on whether pedestrian issues are being addressed by the Scheme**



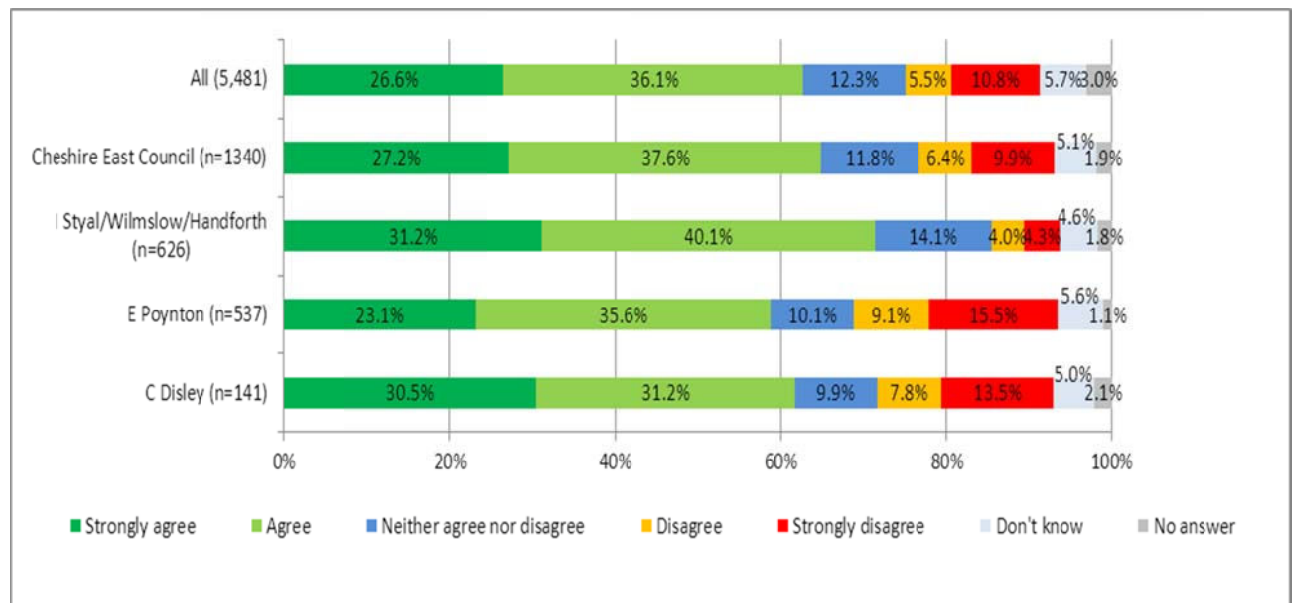
The graph above shows similar levels of agreement within Cheshire East compared to the results for all respondents. However, those living in Poynton and Disley were slightly less likely to agree the scheme was addressing pedestrian issues.

**Figure 9: Opinion on whether cyclist issues are being addressed by the Scheme**



When asked about whether cyclist issues were being addressed, there were similar levels of agreement with approximately 60% of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing that cyclist issues are being addressed. The respondents living in Styal/Wilmslow/Handforth postcode areas were most likely to agree or strongly agree – 66% compared to 59% of all respondents. Similar results were recorded in relation to the assertion that public rights of way are being addressed by the scheme.

**Figure 10: Opinion on whether scheme addresses changes to traffic flows in the local area through complementary and mitigation measures**



With regards to whether the scheme 'addresses changes to traffic flows in the local area through complementary and mitigation measures,' Poynton and Disley residents were least likely to agree. This was one of the most marked differences observed for each of the different statements.

Almost a quarter (25%) of the 537 Poynton respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement compared to approximately 16% of all 5,481 respondents to this question. However, it is worth noting that almost three fifths (59%) of Poynton respondents agreed with the statement.

The 141 Disley respondents were also more likely than other areas to disagree or strongly disagree the scheme addressed changes to traffic flows through complementary and mitigation measures with 62% agreeing and just over 21% disagreeing.

The lower levels of agreement from Disley and Poynton residents for the statement relating to the scheme's traffic impacts are not unexpected. Both areas are likely to see an increase in traffic without mitigation. Cheshire East and Stockport Councils are working together to identify and agree a package of mitigation measures.

### **General Comments on Access/ Traffic**

A range of comments were made relating to access / traffic. Respondents commented that there is a need to accommodate the needs of and provide access for cyclists and pedestrians. Particular comments include the need to provide bridges/underpasses to allow pedestrians and cyclists to cross junctions, provide a separate cycle lanes and suggestions for wider upgrades to the cycle network. Respondents also commented that there is a need to ensure that the scheme links into the wider pedestrian/cycle/bridleway network. Concerns were raised about the impact of the proposals on Public Rights of Way and respondents expressed a desire to ensure that all Public Rights of Way are maintained.

With regards to traffic flows and complementary and mitigation measures, whilst a range of positive comments were made regarding traffic flows as a result of the scheme, concerns were raised about traffic congestion as a result of the scheme. Particular concerns were raised regarding the impact of the scheme on areas such as High Lane and Disley which will see an increase in traffic as a result of the scheme. Respondents commented that there is a need to ensure consideration is given to addressing the issues in these areas. Respondents were also stated that the proposals must ensure road safety.

The responses also indicate that the respondents have doubts as to the traffic benefits of the scheme, with concern being raised about increased traffic in areas such as Hazel Grove and Bramhall as a result of the scheme – places that the traffic modelling shows will see a reduction in traffic as a result of the scheme.

**SEMMMS TEAM Response:** A review of the provision for cyclists has been undertaken (which will be described in further detail later in this report) which demonstrates that the proposals provide suitable provision for cyclists. Crossing facilities for pedestrians, cyclists and, where relevant, equestrians are provided at each of the proposed junction on the alignment of the Relief Road. The proposals also provide connectivity to the wider pedestrian, cycle and Public Rights of Way network and ensure that all existing Public Rights of Way are accommodated. The proposals also include a package of upgrades to the Public Rights of Way network. The project team will continue to develop the proposals for pedestrians, cyclists and public rights of way during the detailed design stage.

The results reflect the detailed comments obtained through the Local Liaison Forums and meetings with residents and stakeholder groups. The responses to the detailed issues raised through these channels are set out within the relevant following sections of this report.

### **Other Comments Received via the Response Form, Letters, Emails and Telephone Calls.**

Respondents commented on a range of other issues, not specifically related to the environmental and access / traffic issues under consultation.

A number of the comments were relevant to the Phase 1 consultation. During the Phase 2 consultation respondents continued to express their general support or opposition for the scheme. Grounds for opposition to the scheme included its environmental impact, the view that the money would be better spent on public transport and that the evidence does not demonstrate that the scheme is needed.

Respondents also continued to make comments regarding the junctions provided along the route, reflecting those made during the Phase 1 consultation. Such comments include the view that there are too many junctions on the route, the junctions should be grade-separated and a preference for roundabouts rather than traffic light controlled junctions.

Comments were received relating to the Poynton Relief Road, including that the scheme would not bring any benefits unless the Poynton Relief Road was constructed at the same and opposition to the scheme unless the Poynton Relief was constructed at the same time.

The comments also revealed opposition to the selection of the junction that was termed Option 1 at Macclesfield Road, Hazel Grove during the Phase 1 consultation. Respondents commented that Option 2 was the only acceptable option and raise concerns about the impact of Option 1 in terms of noise, visual, air quality and traffic impacts. Concerns were raised that the proximity of the junction to the Fiveways junction would affect its operation.

Requests for further information about the scheme were made by respondents.

**SEMMMS TEAM Response:** Opposition to the scheme is noted. In developing the proposals the project team has endeavoured to address the grounds for opposition to the scheme where possible. During the first phase of consultation respondents were given the opportunity to state their overall opinion of the scheme and the results revealed that the majority of respondents were in favour of the scheme.

The junctions were consulted on as part of the Phase 1 consultation and therefore comments relating to the format of the junctions are outwith the scope of the Phase 2 consultation. The concerns of residents within the vicinity of the Macclesfield Road junction, Hazel Grove have been identified through the Local Liaison Forums and our response to this issue is set out in the Local Liaison Forum section of this report.

Again, the results reflect the detailed comments obtained through the Local Liaison Forums and meetings with residents and stakeholder groups. The responses to the detailed issues raised through these channels are set out within the relevant following sections of this report.

#### **Issues raised by members of the Local Liaison Forums**

##### **LLF 1. Hazel Grove - Buxton Road Area;**

*The realigned A6 should be moved further north away from properties on the existing Buxton Road.*

**Response:** The location of the realigned A6 is dictated by land constraints and therefore the proposed location is the optimum position.

##### **LLF 2. Hazel Grove - Mill Lane Area and LLF 3. Hazel Grove - Norbury Hall Area;**

*Concern that the selection of Option 1 at Macclesfield Road went against local opinion.*

**Response:** It is recognised that the residents in the local area stated a preference for option 2 during the Phase 1 consultation. However, analysis undertaken by the project team has demonstrated that options 1 and 2 have comparable impact. The designs have been developed to further mitigate the impact of the scheme in the vicinity of the Macclesfield Road in response to concerns raised.

*Concern about the noise, air quality, visual and traffic impact of option 1 at the Macclesfield Road junction.*

**Response:** Analysis undertaken by the project team has demonstrated that the air quality, noise and traffic impacts of options 1 and 2 at the Macclesfield Road junction are comparable. This information was presented to local residents at the LLF meeting of 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2013.

*Concern about the interaction between the proposed Macclesfield Road junction and the Fiveways junction.*

**Response:** The traffic modelling undertaken demonstrates that there will be no interaction between the queues at the two junctions. This information was presented to local residents at the LLF meeting of 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2013.

**LLF 4. Poynton - London Road South Area, LLF 5. Poynton - Mill Hill Farm Area and LLF 6. Poynton - Glastonbury Drive Area;**

*Concern about the noise and visual impact of the scheme on Glastonbury Drive. The road should be deeper in cutting, the road alignment moved further from Glastonbury Drive and the bunding in the area extended in length and increased in height.*

**Response:** The project team has considered relevant aspects of the emerging preferred scheme in order that sufficient, appropriate and proportionate visual and noise mitigation can be provided - these aspects include distance of the road from the residential properties, the existing topography within that distance, the road being in a cutting and the proposed landscaping.

*Concern about the impact of the scheme on Mill Hill Hollow.*

**Response:** Following comments received during the Phase 2 consultation, in order to further mitigate the impact if the scheme, we have made the following changes to the design:

- Reducing the height of the bridge over Norbury Brook in the vicinity of Mill Hill Hollow;
- Extending the lengths of environmental fencing to further mitigate noise impacts;
- Updating landscape mitigation in this area; and
- Increasing the depth that the road is in cutting west of Norbury Hollow.

A meeting with Mill Hill Hollow residents was held on 15<sup>th</sup> August 2013 in order to discuss their concerns about the scheme in more detail.

*More bunding and visual mitigation is needed for properties on London Road North.*

**Response:** The existing landscape provides visual mitigation. Noise has been assessed and mitigation is not deemed to be required.

*The road should go underneath the West Coast Mainline. If it is to go over the West Coast Main Line, increased visual screening is required.*

**Response:** Environmental and engineering aspects have been assessed when considering the design for the West Coast Mainline crossing, the

outcome of which indicate that the road over rail option to be the most appropriate design. A review of the visual and noise mitigation proposals has been undertaken which demonstrates that additional mitigation is not required.

**LLF 7. Poynton - Woodford Rd / Chester Road Area and LLF 8. Bramhall - Woodford Road Area;**

The size of the junction at Woodford Road, Bramhall should be reduced.

**Response:** The size of the interchange has been reduced as far practicable whilst providing the required traffic capacity.

*The distance between slip roads and surrounding properties at the Woodford Road, Bramhall junction should be reduced.*

**Response:** See above response.

*Measures need to be put in place to ensure that local residents can safely access their properties at the Woodford Road, Bramhall junction.*

**Response:** The proposals include measures to ensure the safe access to properties. All designs are subject to a Road Safety Audit.

*Concern about light pollution and visual impact at the Woodford Road, Bramhall junction on surrounding properties. Increased levels of visual screening are required through the introduction of landscaping.*

**Response:** The designs have been reviewed and the proposed mitigation is deemed appropriate and proportionate. Due to the reduced size of the junction the number of lighting columns required will be reduced. The specified lighting columns have been designed to reduce light pollution as far as is practicable.

*Concern about road safety on Chester Road.*

**Response:** Improvements to the Chester Road are not proposed as part of the A6 to Manchester Airport Relief Road because, in 2017, the year of the scheme's opening, traffic flows on Chester Road, both east and west of the proposed junction, are forecast to decrease as a result of the scheme. The local highway authority, Cheshire East Council, has been made aware of existing concerns about road safety on Chester Road.

**CEC Response:** Cheshire East is currently conducting a borough wide cluster review of road safety, focusing on high collision locations. Following the review, a programme of works will be drawn up at priority locations. Concerns about road safety along Chester Road within the Cheshire East borough should be addressed to the Cheshire East Traffic and Road Safety Team or emailed to [roadsafetyeast@cheshireeast.gov.uk](mailto:roadsafetyeast@cheshireeast.gov.uk).



CEC still has some concerns about the impact the new road may have on the local road network and these are not yet fully resolved. Officers are working in consultation with the Portfolio Holder to ensure satisfactory mitigation packages are built into the scheme.

*Question as to why the Chester Road link junction is needed.*

**Response:** This proposed junction configuration at Chester Road alongside that at Woodford Road, Bramhall is required to accommodate the traffic flows/demands in this area with the scheme proposals. The Chester Road junction is also required to accommodate access requirements for the Bramhall Oil Terminal along with potential future provision for the Poynton Relief Road.

*The road should go underneath the West Coast Mainline. If it is to go over the West Coast Main Line, increased visual screening is required.*

**Response:** Environmental and engineering aspects have been assessed when considering the design for the West Coast Mainline crossing, the outcome of which indicate that the road over rail option to be the most appropriate design. A review of the visual and noise mitigation proposals has been undertaken which demonstrates that additional mitigation is not required.

*Increased visual mitigation is needed to screen the Chester Road link junction from properties on Chester Road.*

**Response:** The project team has reviewed the proposals and it is considered that appropriate and proportionate mitigation has been provided in the preferred scheme design. Landscape design proposals have been developed to maximise visual screening with an early impact.

#### **LLF 9. Bramhall - Albany Road Area;**

*Further visual and noise mitigation is needed in the vicinity of Albany Road. The road should be deeper in cutting and more bunding and noise fencing are required.*

**Response:** A number of mitigation measures, including landscaping, low noise surfacing, fencing and noise bunding, have been incorporated in the scheme design.

*Concern about an increase in crime and antisocial behaviour in the area as a result of the introduction of the recreation area to the south of Albany Road, the footway/ cycleway alongside the road and link to Albany Road.*

**Response:** The proposals have been developed to be secure by design.

*Concern about the impact of the scheme on Queensgate Primary School.*

**Response:** The designs for the scheme have been reviewed and it is considered that appropriate and proportionate mitigation for Queensgate Primary has been included within the scheme proposals.

*More visual mitigation is needed at the Bramhall Oil Terminal junction.*

**Response:** The designs for the scheme have been reviewed and it is considered that appropriate and proportionate mitigation has been included within the scheme proposals for this area.

**LLF 10. Heald Green - Bolshaw Road Area and LLF 11. Handforth - Clay Lane Area;**

*Concern that the scheme alignment has moved further north towards Bolshaw Road since the Phase 1 consultation.*

**Response:** The scheme has been moved north by approximately 25 metres. This change in alignment is accompanied an increase in the depth of the Relief Road therefore it is not considered to have a materially different impact on properties to the north of the scheme in this area compared to the alignment presented at the Phase 1 consultation.

*The Yew Tree footbridge should be moved back to the location presented during the Phase 1 consultation.*

**Response:** The Yew Tree footbridge has been returned to its Phase 1 consultation location within the preferred scheme.

*Concern about an increase in crime and antisocial behaviour as a result of improved access to the area.*

**Response:** The proposals have been developed to be secure by design.

*Concern about flooding of properties on Davies Avenue as a result of the scheme.*

**Response:** The local authority's Flood Management and Drainage Team Leader is aware of the existing issue and is carrying out investigations. The proposals for the scheme will ensure that existing flooding issues are not worsened.

*More bunding is needed on the north side of the scheme in this area.*

**Response:** A review of the mitigation in this area has been undertaken which demonstrates that appropriate and proportionate mitigation has been included within the emerging preferred scheme proposals. The scheme is in cutting in

this area and as a result of the existing topography it is not considered that additional bunding is required.

*Concern that road speeds will be greater than 50mph in this area due to its proximity to the existing A555 which is subject to national speed limit and therefore that noise levels will be higher than forecast.*

**Response:** Noise modelling has been undertaken in line with national guidance and best practice. Monitoring of noise levels will be undertaken once the scheme has been implemented. Appropriate speed management measures will be included within the scheme proposals as required.

#### **LLF 12. Moss Nook - Styal Road Area;**

*Concern about the impact of the proposals on local bus services.*

**Response:** The project team is working with Manchester City Council and Transport for Greater Manchester in considering the impact of the scheme on bus services in the local area.

*Concern about an increase in crime and antisocial behaviour as a result of improved access to the area.*

**Response:** The proposals have been developed to be secure by design.

*More mitigation is needed at the Styal Road junction, particularly for Hollin Lane residents.*

**Response:** We have investigated with adjacent landowners with a view to introducing further mitigation. However, other safeguarding constraints have prohibited further mitigation.

*The road should be deeper in cutting in this area.*

**Response:** A review of the mitigation in this area has been undertaken which demonstrates that appropriate and proportionate mitigation has been included within the emerging preferred scheme proposals. The existing levels for the Relief Road provide the optimum design.

*More visual mitigation is needed in this area.*

**Response:** At Ringway Road, noise fencing has been introduced to the north of the Relief Road. Safeguarding issues prevent the introduction of landscaping in this area.

#### **LLF 13. Queensgate Primary School;**

*Concern about noise and air quality impact on the school in terms of the health of pupils and the quality of the teaching environment.*

**Response:** Analysis undertaken by the project demonstrates that appropriate and proportionate mitigation has been included within the preferred scheme to demonstrate that noise and air quality impacts are within acceptable levels and will not have a detrimental impact on the health of pupils or the teaching environment.

*More noise mitigation is needed for the school.*

**Response:** Analysis undertaken by the project demonstrates that appropriate and proportionate mitigation has been included within the preferred scheme to demonstrate that noise and air quality impacts are within acceptable levels.

*Concerns about safety and security at the school as a result of footway/ cycleway alongside the scheme and the associated link to Albany Road.*

**Response:** The proposals have been developed to be secure by design. We have determined that positioning the shared cycleway/ footway to the north of the scheme is the optimum design for the following reasons:

- The northern route requires two minor signalised pedestrian and cycle crossing movements compared four major signalised pedestrian crossings on the southern route;
- The northern route allows direct access to Albany Road;
- The northern route improves access to Queensgate primary school for active modes of travel;
- The northern route provides a simpler east / west Public Right of Way than the southern route;
- The southern route requires additional land from private landowners;
- The southern route requires the demolition of garage and additional land from 151 Woodford Road.

#### **LLF 14. Stanley Green.**

*Concern about light pollution from traffic signals introduced at A34/ Stanley Road junction, particularly regarding light pollution from the traffic signals gantry on the roundabout that is positioned to control northbound traffic exiting the roundabout.*

**Response:** The traffic lights on the gantry would be directed southward and would be hooded so any light pollution affecting Henbury Lane would be minimal.

*More visual and noise mitigation is needed for residents at Henbury Lane, particularly as existing mitigation is being lost as a result of the scheme.*

**Response:** The preferred scheme design for the north west quadrant of the Stanley Road/ A34 junction now includes a 3m high earth bund with a 1.8m acoustic fence placed on top to mitigate the noise and visual impact of the proposals.

*Concern about increases in noise for properties on Longsight Lane.*

**Response:** A review of the mitigation in this area has been undertaken which demonstrates that appropriate and proportionate mitigation has been included within the emerging preferred scheme proposals.

**Issues raised by Stakeholder Groups and Individuals (including at LLFs).**

*Increased traffic on the A6 in High Lane and Disley.*

**Response:** It is recognised that a package of mitigation measures are required to address areas which are forecast to experience changes to traffic flows as a result of the A6 to Manchester Airport Relief Road scheme, including High Lane. Mitigation measures are proposed for on the A6 through High Lane and Disley that will manage traffic flow, support the local centres and improve non-motorised user facilities.

At this stage there is ongoing discussion between Stockport Council and Cheshire East Council on what the most appropriate form of measures would be on the A6 corridor where an increase in traffic levels is forecast. The modelling has identified that that an appropriate set of mitigation measures need to be implemented on the A6 corridor through High Lane and Disley and these measures will be considered between the local authorities and with regard to feedback from local groups and the Phase 2 consultation. There is a commitment as part of the scheme that mitigation measures will be implemented, however, the detail is still to be determined through further analysis and consultation.

A separate study is being undertaken to look at wider transport improvements on the A6 corridor by Stockport Council, Cheshire East Council, Derbyshire County Council, High Peak Borough Council and Transport for Greater Manchester.

On 19<sup>th</sup> August 2013, the project team attended a High Lane Residents' Association meeting in order to discuss the concern of local residents in more detail.

*The need for the whole SEMMMS Relief Road to be built.*

**Response:** The current A6 to Manchester Airport Relief Road scheme is the first phase of the wider SEMMMS Relief Roads Scheme. Stockport and Cheshire East remain committed to delivery of the whole scheme subject to further funding being identified.

The Chester Road Link junction has been designed in consultation with Cheshire East Council to minimise abortive work and disruption should the Poynton Relief Road be implemented.

*The desire for improved pedestrian, cycle and equestrian provision along the route and the protection of existing rights of way.*

**Response:** The project team has engaged with vulnerable road users groups (VRUG) since early 2011. VRUG meetings have been held following each design freeze for the scheme in order to capture comments on each design iteration. Comments that have been received via the VRUG meeting, as well as the Phase 1 and 2 consultation, have been incorporated into the designs where possible.

A Concise Pedestrian and Cycle Audit (COPECAT) review has been undertaken on the preferred scheme. The results of the review demonstrate that the design principles for the pedestrian and cyclists' provision on the scheme are appropriate, maximise the benefits of the designs and provide suitable facilities for pedestrians and cyclists. The COPECAT review makes a number of suggestions for design modifications which are currently being considered and will be considered in further detail at the detailed design stage.

*Concern about drainage and subsidence as a result of the scheme.*

**Response:** A Flood Risk Assessment has been carried out which is in the process of being finalised. Any de-watering exercises that are required during construction will be determined during detailed design.

*Concern about subsidence as a result of the scheme.*

**Response:** Ground investigations and geotechnical studies have been undertaken to inform the design to date. Further ground investigations and geotechnical design prior to construction will ensure that subsidence issues do not occur as result of the scheme.

*The issue of whether the road should go under or over West Coast Main Line. If the road is to go over the West Coast Main Line, increased visual mitigation is required to screen the road from surrounding properties.*

**Response:** Environmental and engineering aspects have been assessed when considering the design for the West Coast Mainline crossing, the outcome of which indicate that the road over rail option to be the most appropriate design. A review of the visual and noise mitigation proposals has been undertaken which demonstrates that additional mitigation is not required.

*Concern that the SEMMMS STRATEGY was out of date or had not been implemented.*

**Response:** Appendix L of the business case for the scheme examines whether the case for the current proposed road scheme, is still justified or whether other solutions should be considered. In considering this justification, the document looks at:

- The original SEMMMS study objectives;

- The problems the study was tasked with addressing – and in particular those that relate to the current road scheme;
- The options for intervention that were considered in arriving at the SEMMMS study recommendations;
- Whether the traffic problems have materially changed since the publication of the SEMMMS study recommendations;
- Whether it is feasible to consider any non-road alternatives to address the transport problems in the study area; and
- The appropriate carriageway standard and whether it is appropriate to consider a Low Cost Alternative.

The document concludes that “The conclusions of the SEMMMS study remain valid in relation to the need for the SEMMMS Road Scheme. The road scheme can be seen to be justified from the analysis of network congestion and journey patterns. No solution other than a road could cater for the very dispersed, orbital journeys currently taken across the scheme corridor albeit using north-south routes in order to make east-west journeys.”

*Concern about whether a road was required.*

**Response:** There is currently no direct east-west transport link through south east Greater Manchester and Cheshire East. The lack of this connection is contributing to congestion on major and minor roads. This means that people and goods cannot move easily, directly and efficiently.

The congestion being created is constraining the local economy, affecting air quality in local areas and reducing access to key destinations. These problems will become significantly worse in the future if no action is taken. The A6 to Manchester Airport Relief Road has been identified as the best solution to address this problem, as part of the overall [SEMMMS Strategy](#).

The business case for the scheme was submitted to the Department for Transport in November 2012 and includes evidence supporting why the scheme is needed and an appraisal of the benefits and any adverse impacts of the scheme.

*Concern about noise, visual and air quality impacts of the scheme.*

**Response:** These aspects have been considered throughout the development of the scheme and appropriate and proportionate mitigation measures included within the preferred scheme proposals in the form of the scheme being in cutting, the introduction of bunding, acoustic fencing and landscaping.

*Concern regarding the impact on the greenbelt and future development along the route of the scheme.*

**Response:** The proposals for the A6 to Manchester Airport Relief Road do not change the designation of areas of land designated as greenbelt.

*Concern about environmental impacts of the scheme including the loss of ancient woodland.*

**Response:** Environmental impacts of the scheme are considered and appropriate mitigation proposed within the Environmental Statement for the scheme which will be submitted as part of the planning application. Changing the alignment of the scheme to avoid ancient woodland would result in the loss of residential properties and bring the scheme closer to residential properties to the north of the scheme.

*Concern about the impacts on adjacent residents and the local road network during construction.*

**Response:** A draft Code of Construction Practice has been developed to protect the interests of local residents, businesses and the general public in the immediate vicinity of the construction works. The Code will seek to minimise impacts, such as noise, vibration and traffic, during the period of construction. The Code will be submitted as part of the Planning Application for the scheme. It will be the responsibility of the appointed contractor to comply with the Code.

*Doubts as to the validity of traffic, noise and air quality modelling. Particular concern was raised about whether proposed developments in the local area including at Handforth and Woodford Aerodrome were included within the model. In a related issue, questions were also asked as to what would happen if traffic, noise and air quality impacts exceeded those forecast.*

**Response:** The traffic, noise and air quality modelling have been undertaken in line with national guidance. The forecast vehicle trips generated by proposed developments in the local area are factored into the traffic modelling. The model also takes into account wider traffic growth on the local network, not linked to specific developments.

*Opposition to the principles of the scheme.-* A number of groups who responded expressed their opposition to the scheme. These included the North West Transport Round Table, Campaign for Better Transport, Friends of the Earth, Campaign for the Protection of Rural England, CTC and PAULA.

**Response:** This opposition is noted. The project team has sought to engage with these groups and address their grounds for opposition to the scheme. For example, meetings have been held with and detailed written responses issued to PAULA and NWTAR

## **Summary of Key Issues Raised During the Consultation**



The consultation response indicates that whilst the majority of respondents are satisfied with the scheme proposals, a number of issues have been highlighted during the consultation. The key issues have been identified as follows:

- Concern about visual, noise and air quality impacts;
- Concern about the impact of the scheme on High Lane and Disley;
- Macclesfield Road, Hazel Grove and local preference for option 2 which was presented during the Phase 2 consultation;
- Concern about wider traffic impacts of the scheme, for example in outlying areas such as Prestbury;
- Poynton Relief Road should be implemented at the same time as the A6 to Manchester Airport Relief Road;
- Concern about flooding issues as a result of the scheme;
- General Opposition to the scheme due to the view that it will not bring about forecast benefits, its environmental impacts, the loss of greenbelt and that the money should be spent on sustainable modes of travel;
- Concern from cyclists that the scheme does not provide adequate facilities for cyclists, in particular through the provision of at-grade crossing facilities;
- Concern about traffic impacts of the scheme;
- Concern about the impact of the scheme on Queensgate Primary School, Bramhall;

As demonstrated in this report, the project team has considered these issues and addressed them where relevant, appropriate and feasible within the preferred scheme.

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**Appendix C: Detailed (Block) Plans A6MARR Planning Submission – Cheshire East**





KEY

- PROPOSED CARBAGEWAY
- PROPOSED CENTRAL RESERVE
- PROPOSED FOOTWAY/SHARED USE FACILITY/BRIDLEWAY
- PROPOSED FARMERS TRACK
- PROPOSED FENCE
- PROPOSED ENGINEERED EARTHWORKS
- PROPOSED ATTENUATION PONDS
- PROPOSED WATERCOURSE DIVERSION
- PROPOSED STRUCTURE
- EXISTING PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY
- STOPPED UP
- EXISTING PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY STOPPED UP
- FENCING LEGEND
  - PROPOSED 1.8m HIGH ACOUSTIC FENCING REFER TO DETAILS ON DRG
  - PROPOSED 3.0m HIGH ACOUSTIC FENCING REFER TO DETAILS ON DRG
  - PROPOSED 1.8m HIGH PALISADE FENCING REFER TO STANDARD
  - PROPOSED 1.8m HIGH PALISADE SECURITY FENCE
  - PROPOSED TEMPORARY FENCE
  - PROPOSED GATE
  - PROPOSED STREET LIGHTING COLUMNS

Rev.	Drawn	Checked	Date	Revision Details

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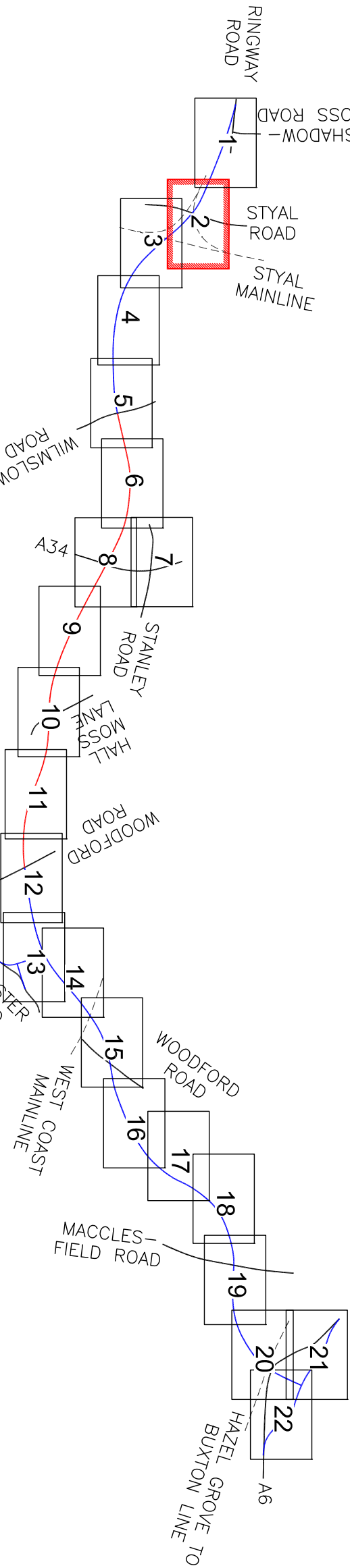
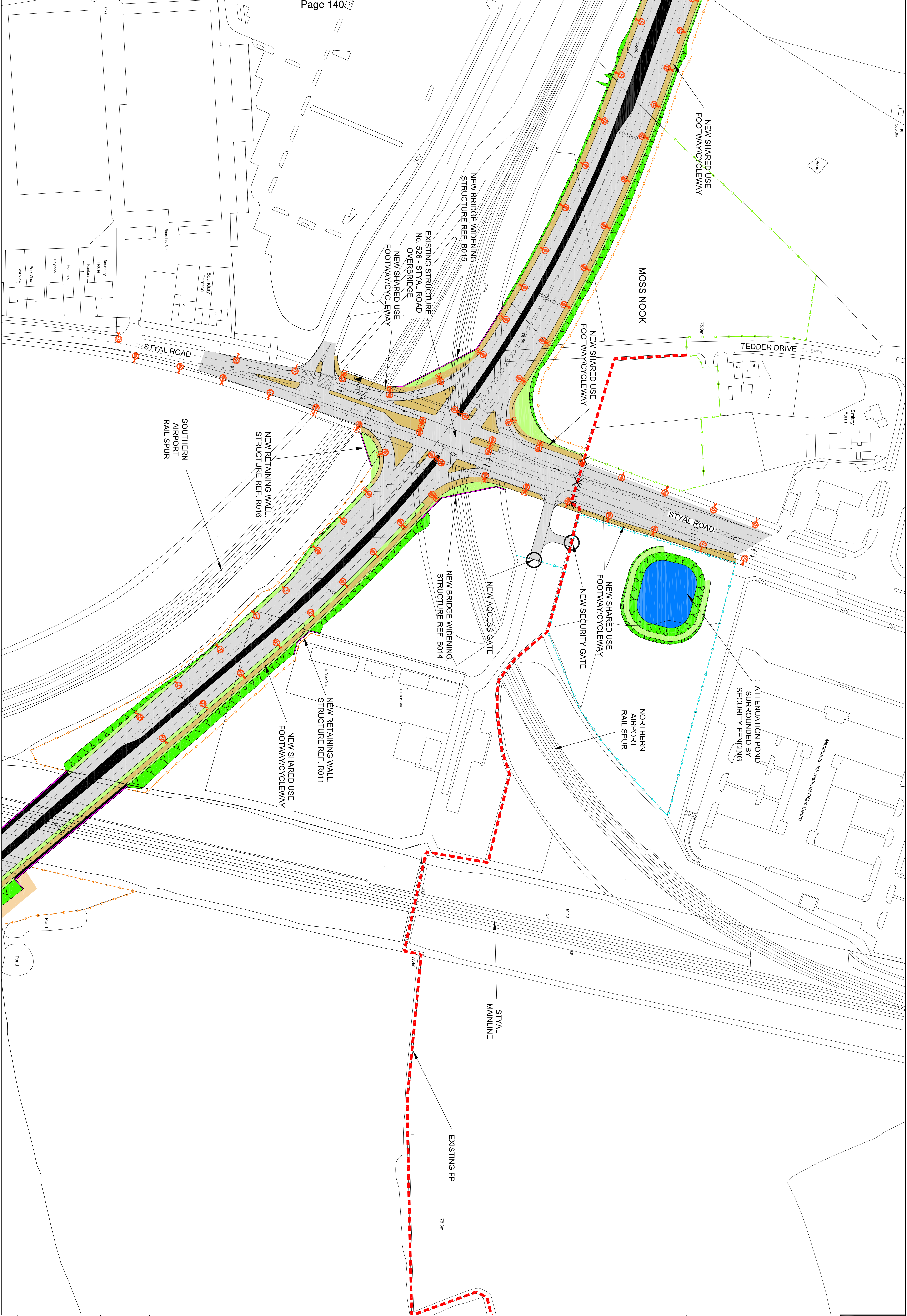
A6 - MANCHESTER AIRPORT  
RELIEF ROAD

Drawing Title

PLANNING APPLICATION  
BLOCK PLANS  
PROPOSED SHEET 2

Drawn	Engineer	Checked	Approved
Date	Date	Date	Date
Size	Scale	1:1000	
SCG No.	Flaretime		

Drawing No.	Revision
1007/30/DF7/A6-MA/PABP/P/024	









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KEY

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Rev.	Drawn	Checked	Date	Revision Details

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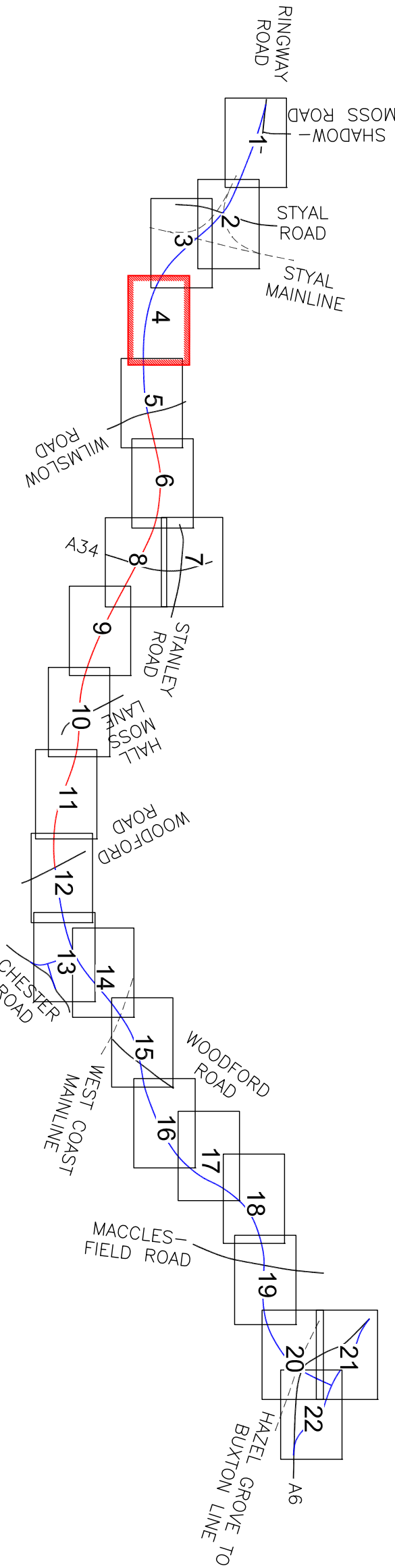
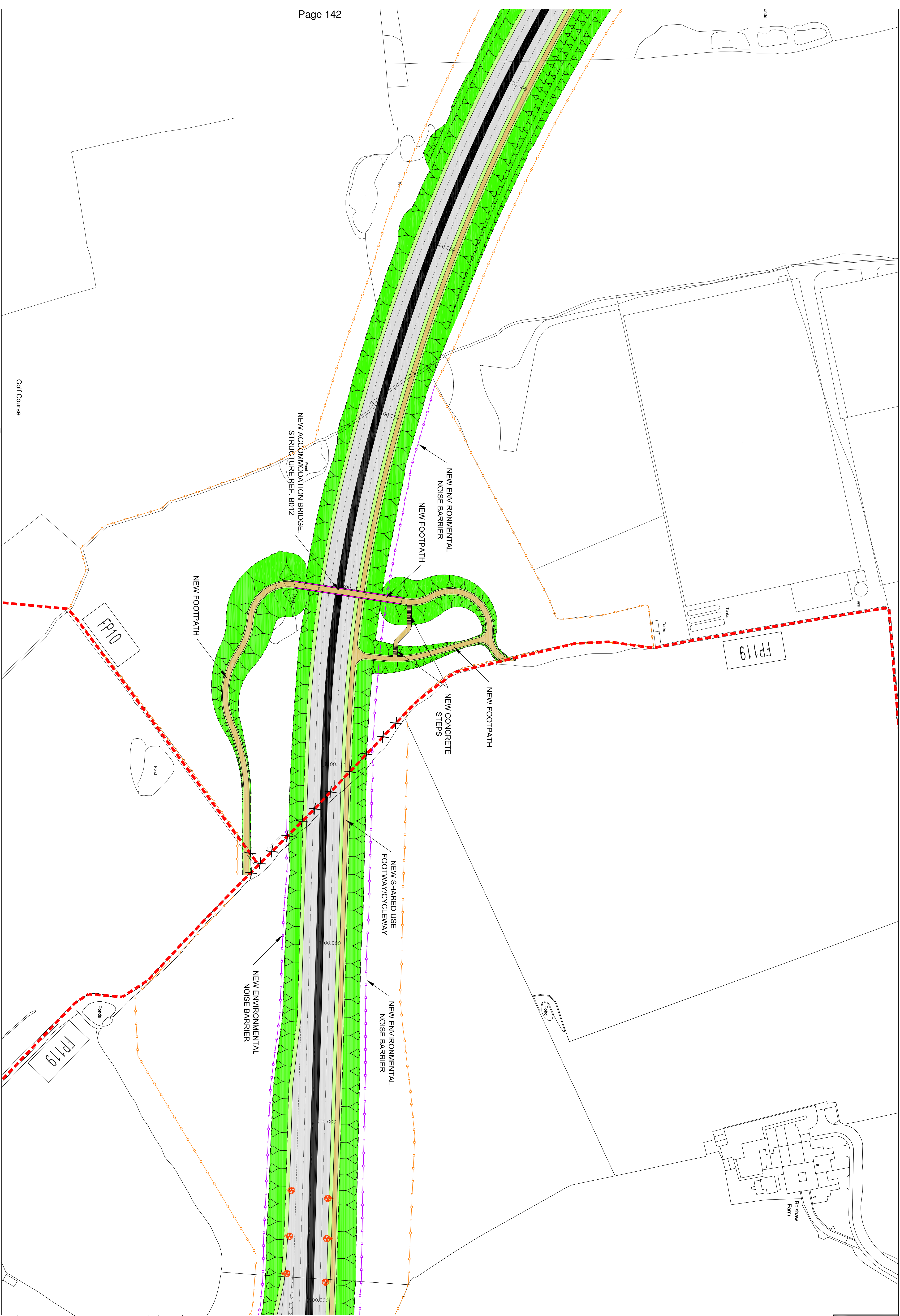
A6 - MANCHESTER AIRPORT  
RELIEF ROAD

Drawing Title

PLANNING APPLICATION  
BLOCK PLANS  
PROPOSED SHEET 4

Drawn	Engineer	Checked	Approved
Date	Date	Date	Date
Size	Scale	1:1000	
SGC No.	Flaretime		

Drawing No.	Revision
1007/30/DF7/A6-MA/PABP/P/026	







KEY

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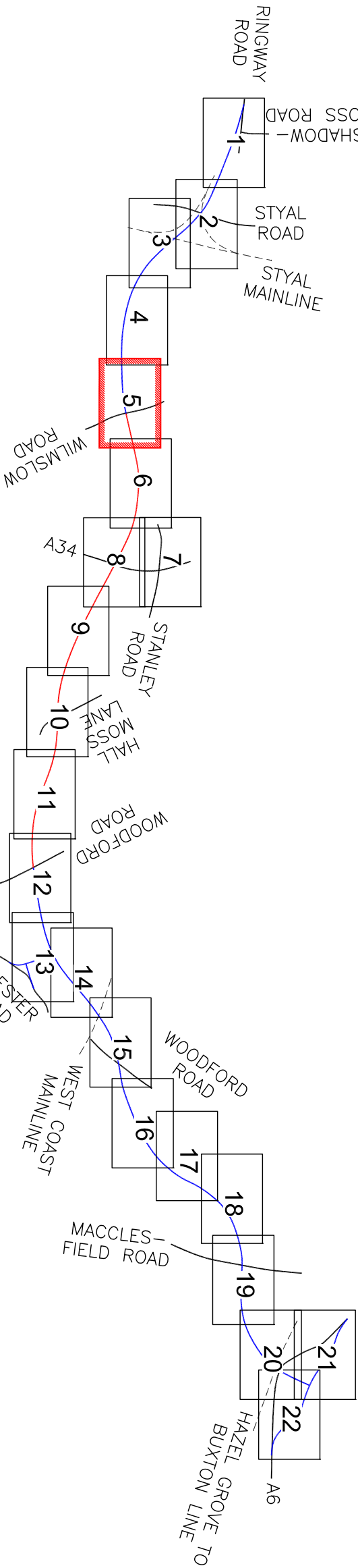
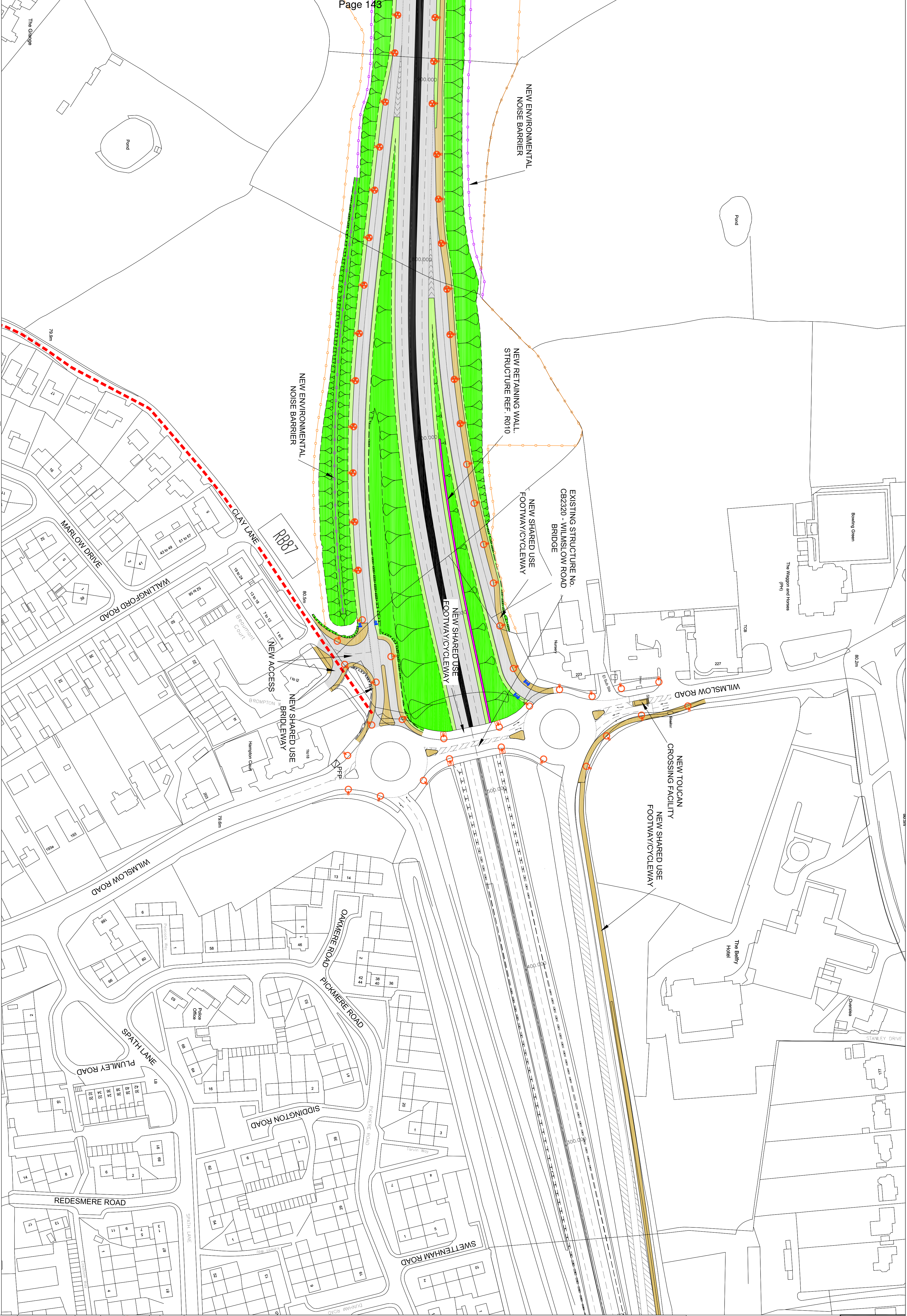
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152, 151 & 150, 151 & 152  
STOCKPORT, CHESHIRE, SK11 7LJ  
TEL: 01928 424 433  
FAX: 01928 424 433

A6 - MANCHESTER AIRPORT RELIEF ROAD

Drawing Title

PLANNING APPLICATION BLOCK PLANS PROPOSED SHEET 5

Drawn	Engineer	Checked	Approved
Date	Date	Date	Date
Size	Scale	1:1000	
SGC No.	Flaretime		
Drawing No.	1007/30/DF7/A6-MA/PABP/P/027	Revision	








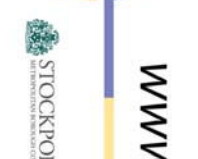
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- PROPOSED FOOTWAY/SHARED USE FACILITY/BRIDLEWAY
- PROPOSED FARMERS TRACK
- PROPOSED VERGE
- PROPOSED ENGINEERED EARTHWORKS
- PROPOSED ATTENUATION PONDS
- PROPOSED WATERCOURSE DIVERSION
- PROPOSED STRUCTURE
- EXISTING PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY
- EXISTING PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY STOPPED UP
- FENCING LEGEND
  - PROPOSED 1.8m HIGH ACROSTIC FENCING REFER TO DETAIL ON DRG
  - PROPOSED 3.0m HIGH ACROSTIC FENCING REFER TO DETAIL ON DRG
  - PROPOSED 1.8m HIGH PALISADE SECURITY FENCE
  - PROPOSED TEMPORARY FENCE
  - PROPOSED GATE
  - PROPOSED STREET LIGHTING COLUMNS


Rev.	Drawn	Checked	Date	Revision Details



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**STOCKPORT COUNCIL**



**MANCHESTER CITY COUNCIL**

Jim Mearns BSc, CEng, MSc  
SEMI-METROPOLITAN COUNCIL  
STOCKPORT  
MANCHESTER  
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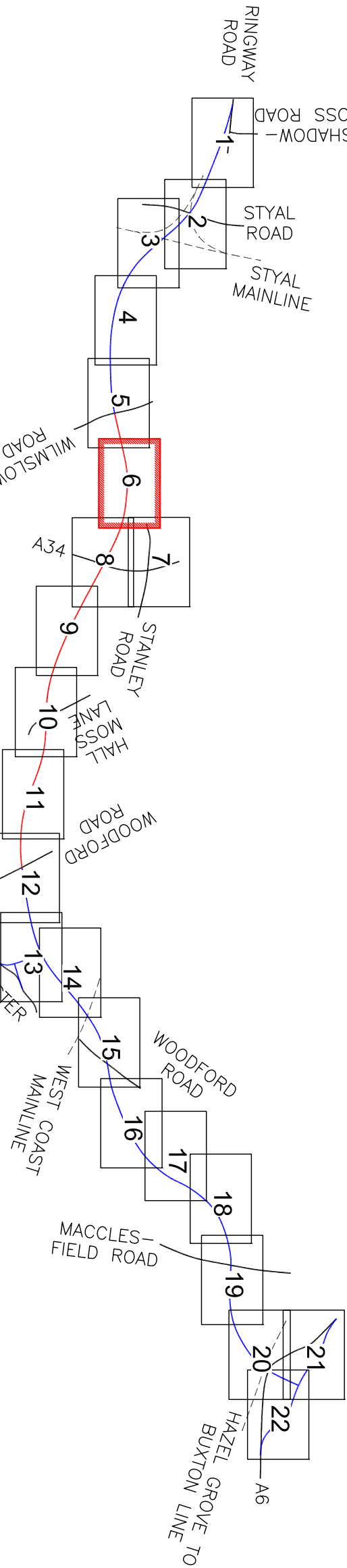
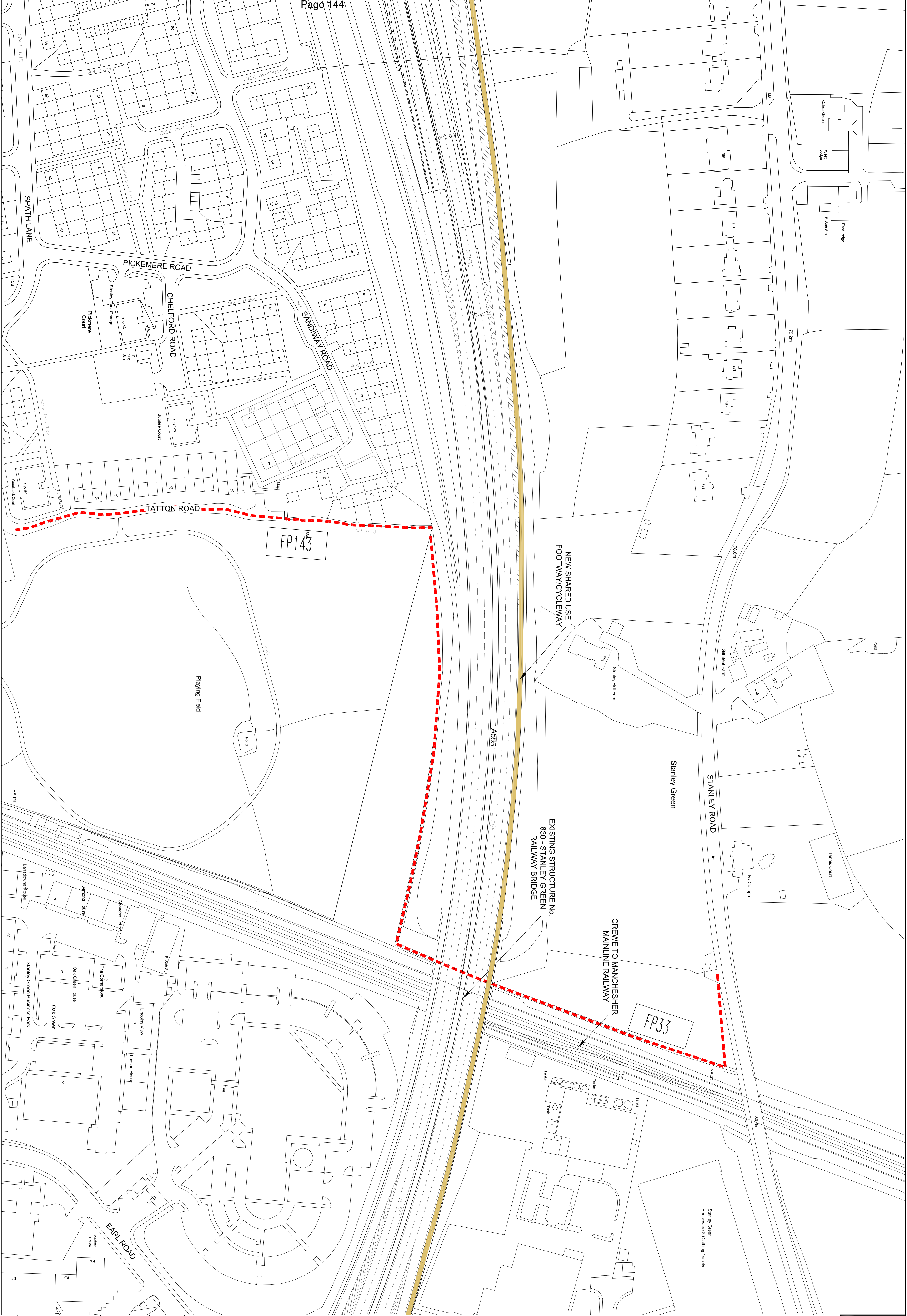
A6 - MANCHESTER AIRPORT  
RELIEF ROAD

Drawing Title

PLANNING APPLICATION  
BLOCK PLANS  
PROPOSED SHEET 6

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Date	Date	Date	Date
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Drawing No. 1007/30/DE7/A6-MA/PABP/P/028







KEY

- PROPOSED CARRIAGEWAY
- PROPOSED CENTRAL RESERVE
- PROPOSED FOOTWAY/SHARED USE FACILITY/ BRIDLEWAY
- PROPOSED FARMERS TRACK
- PROPOSED FENCE
- PROPOSED ENGINEERED EARTHWORKS
- PROPOSED ATTENUATION POND
- PROPOSED WATERCOURSE DIVERSION
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FENCING LEGEND

- PROPOSED 1.8m HIGH ACROSTIC FENCING REFER TO DETAIL ON DRG
- PROPOSED 3.0m HIGH ACROSTIC FENCING REFER TO DETAIL ON DRG
- PROPOSED 1.8m HIGH PALISADE SECURITY FENCE
- PROPOSED TEMPORARY FENCE
- PROPOSED GATE
- PROPOSED STREET LIGHTING COLUMNS

Rev.	Drawn	Checked	Date	Revision Details

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STOCKPORT MANCHESTER GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

JIM MASON BS. CAB. M2C  
SENIOR PROJECT MANAGER  
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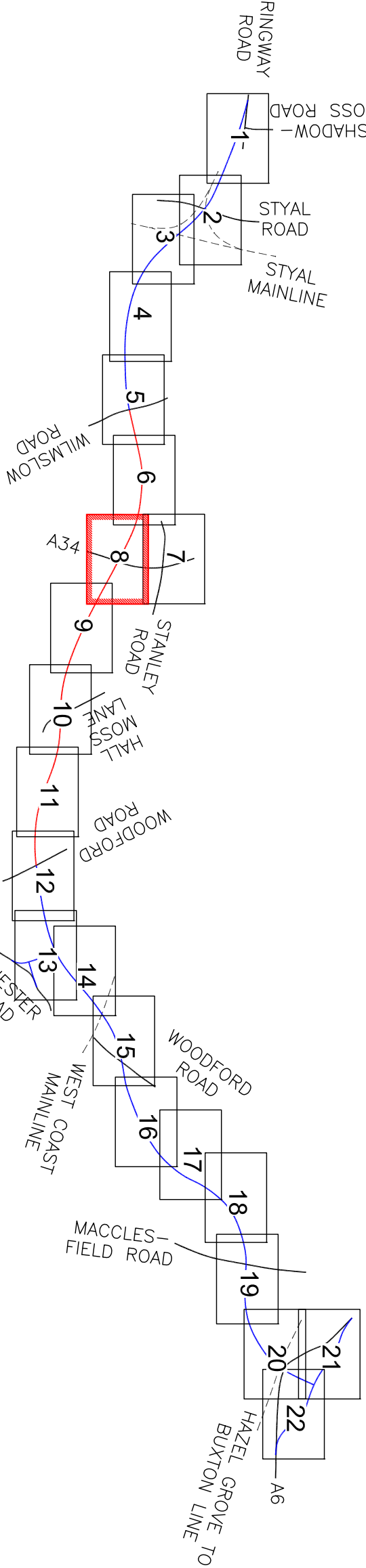
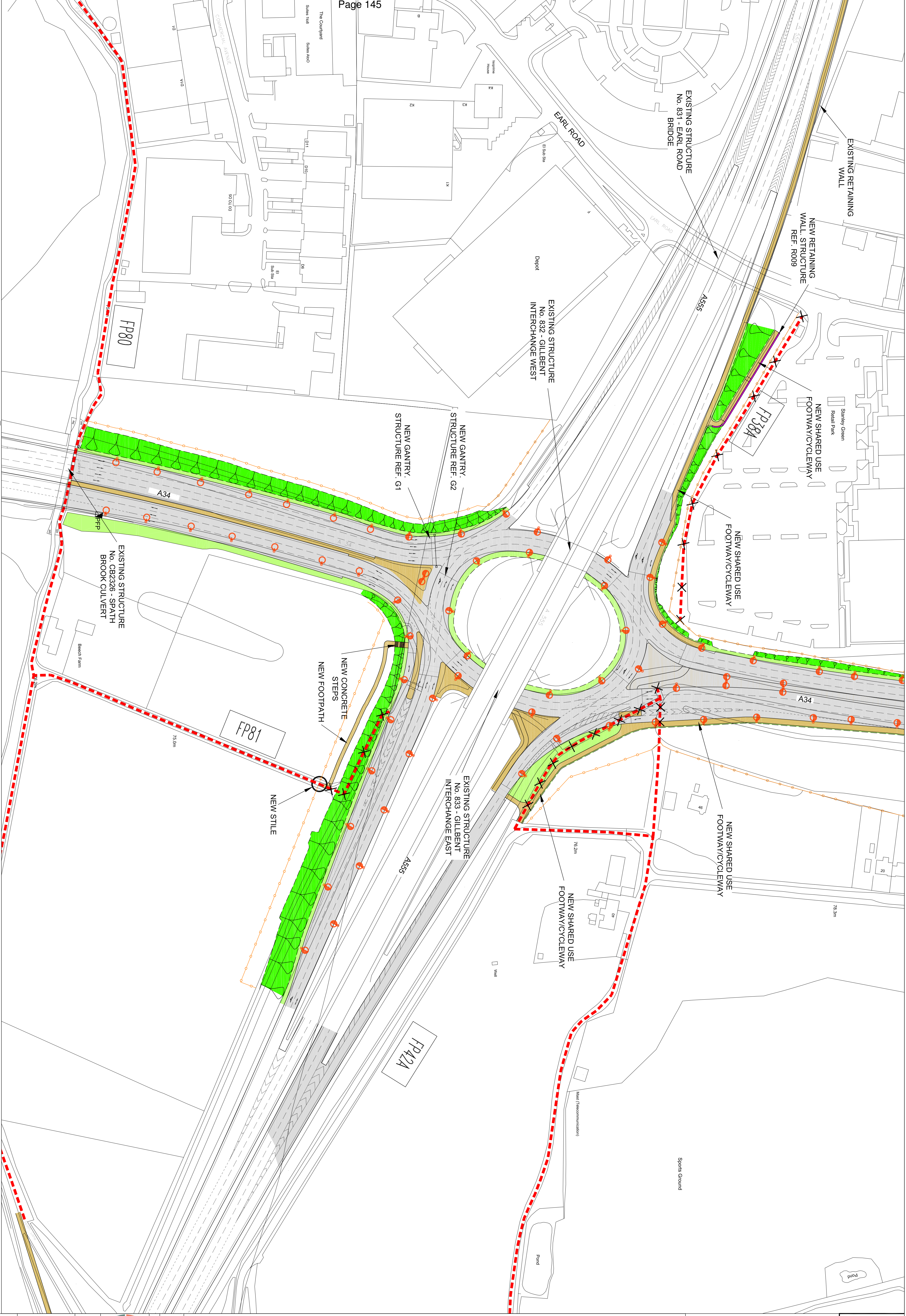
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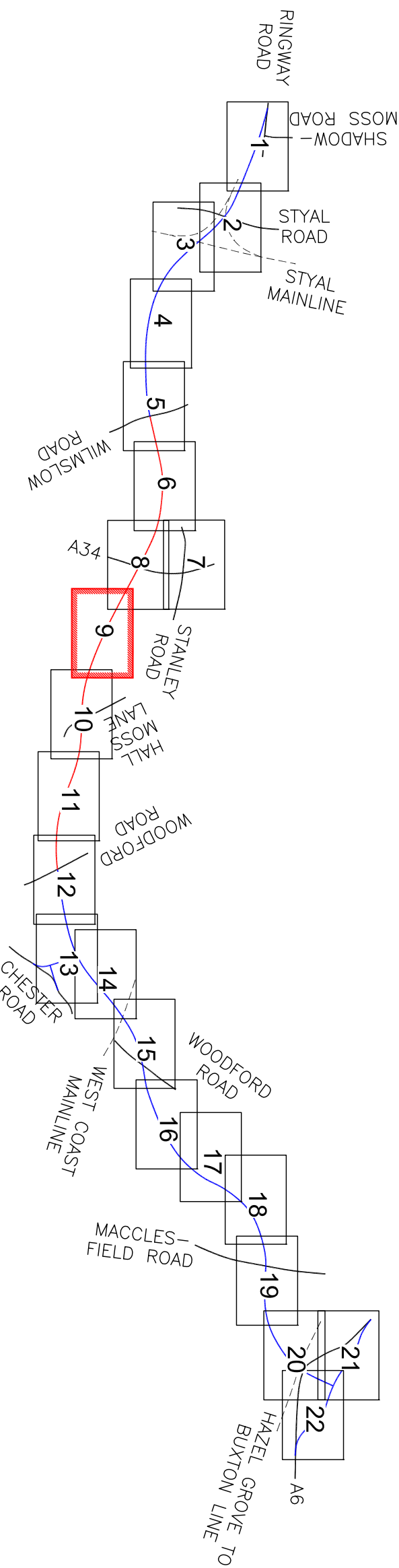
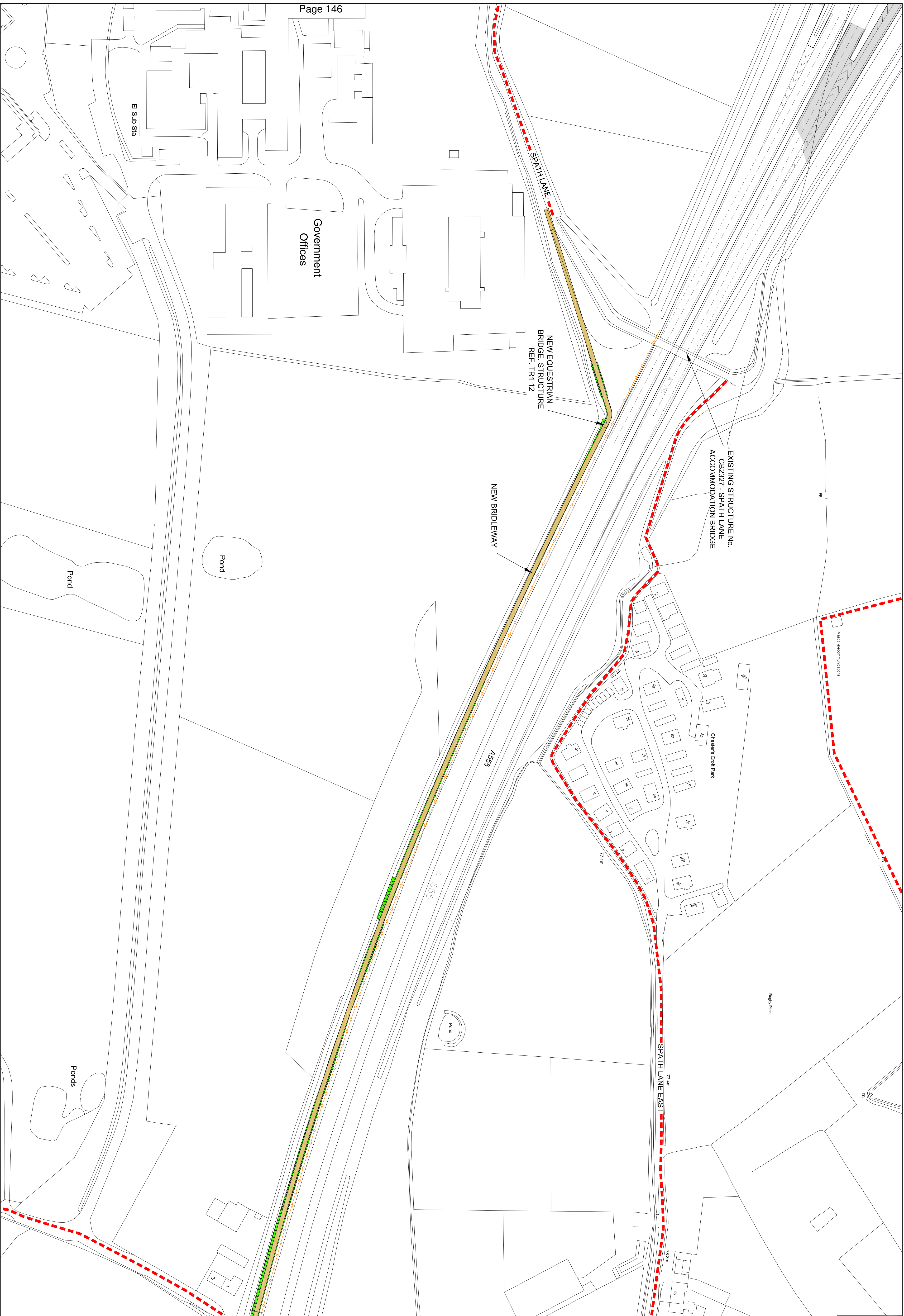
PLANNING APPLICATION  
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KEY

- 
- Legend:
- PROPOSED CARRIAGEWAY
  - PROPOSED CENTRAL RESERVE
  - PROPOSED FOOTWAY/SHARED USE FOOTWAY
  - PROPOSED FARMERS TRACK
  - PROPOSED VERGE
  - PROPOSED ENGINEERED EARTHWORKS
  - PROPOSED ATTENUATION POUNDS
  - PROPOSED WATERCOURSE DIVERSION
  - PROPOSED STRUCTURE
  - EXISTING PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY
  - EXISTING PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY STOPPED UP

### FENCING LEGEND

- | PROPOSED 1.8m HIGH ACOUSTIC FENCING REFER TO DETAIL ON DRG                            | PROPOSED 1.0m HIGH ACOUSTIC FENCING REFER TO DETAIL ON DRG                            | PROPOSED TUMBER POST AND FOUR RAIL FENCING REFER TO STANDARD SECURITY FENCE           | PROPOSED 1.8m HIGH PALLISADE                                                        | PROPOSED TEMPORARY FENCE                                                            | PROPOSED GATE                                                                       | PROPOSED STREET LIGHTING COLUMNS                                                    |
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Rev.	Drawn	Checked	Date	Revision Details



Job Title	
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A6 - MANCHESTER AIRPORT  
RELIEF ROAD

Drawing Title

PLANNING APPLICATION  
BLOCK PLANS  
PROPOSED SHEET 9

Drawn	Engineer	Checked	Approved
Date	Date	Date	Date
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SGC No.	Filename		

Drawing No.	Revision
1007/3D/DF7/A6-MA/PABP/P/031	

## CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

### Cabinet

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<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	15 <sup>th</sup> October 2013
<b>Report of:</b>	Director of Growth and Prosperity
<b>Subject/Title:</b>	Strategic Infrastructure – Delivery of Local Pinch Point Funded Schemes (Forward Plan Ref: 13/14-36)
<b>Portfolio Holder:</b>	Councillor David Brown, Strategic Communities

---

#### 1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 This report highlights the significant success the Council has had in securing Pinch Point funding from the Department for Transport (DfT) to deliver vital highway infrastructure improvements across the Borough and seeks approval to proceed with the development and delivery of schemes. The schemes are:

- Basford West Spine Road
- A500 Widening approaching M6 Junction 16
- M6 Junction 16 Junction Improvement
- M6 Junction 17 Junction Improvement

This equates to around £25 million of roads investment. The current design layouts are attached in Appendix A.

- 1.2 The delivery of these schemes will support the Council's key objective of infrastructure delivery to support economic growth.
- 1.3 A condition of the funding is that schemes are delivered by the end of March 2015. This means that actions required by the Council to achieve this deadline may need to be prioritised.

#### 2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 Approve the use of the Pinch Point funding to develop and deliver the Basford West Spine Road and A500 widening.
- 2.2 Approve the layout designs for each Pinch Point scheme shown in Appendix A.
- 2.3 That delegated authority be granted to the Director of Growth and Prosperity in consultation with the Portfolio Holder to:
- Enter into the necessary highways legal agreements to enable the Highways Agency to deliver those schemes that interact with the Strategic Road

Network, namely M6 Junction 17 and M6 Junction 16 and the A500 widening.

- Enter into the necessary highways legal agreements with the developer of Basford West to enable them to deliver the Basford West Spine Road.
- Sign off funding for the completed works using the approved capital allocations from the DfT Pinch Point grants, any third party contributions, and the Council's Corporate Capital Programme.
- Approve minor amendments to the current scheme designs.

### **3.0 Reasons for Recommendations**

- 3.1 To support the Council's key objective to deliver new and improved infrastructure to support economic growth.
- 3.2 To improve road safety and reduce congestion at some of Cheshire East's most congestion junctions.

### **4.0 Wards Affected**

- 4.1 The schemes will affect the wards of:

- Haslington
- Shavington
- Sandbach Heath and East
- Sandbach Town

### **5.0 Local Ward Members**

- 5.1 The schemes will affect various wards as follows:

- Cllr Brickhill
- Cllr Corcoran
- Cllr Hammond
- Cllr Marren
- Cllr Moran

### **6.0 Policy Implications**

- 6.1 The investment accords with the Local Transport Plan Implementation Plan (2011-2015) policy B2 – Enabling development and to support the emerging Local Plan and Infrastructure Delivery Plan.
- 6.2. This decision will contribute towards the delivery of key infrastructure across Cheshire East which will have a beneficial effect on congestion, road safety, accessibility and reduction of carbon emissions over the highway network. It will also help facilitate the delivery of the development proposed in the Local Plan by developing schemes which will mitigate the associated growth in traffic.



## **7.0 Financial Implications**

### **M6 Junction 17**

- 7.1 This scheme is fully funded by the Highways Agency, with scheme costs estimated at £3.4m.

### **M6 Junction 16 and A500 Widening**

- 7.2 The Highways Agency has secured full funding of £7.4m for the improvements to M6 Junction 16.
- 7.3 The A500 widening is estimated to cost £2.8m and the Council has received its allocated Pinch Point funding of £1.966m from the DfT. This equates to 70% of the estimated scheme costs for the widening of the A500 approaching M6 Junction 16. The scheme is noted in the Capital 5 Year Forward Plan and will be included in the Approved Capital Programme for 2014/15 as part of the Business Planning Process.
- 7.4 The remaining 30% of scheme costs (£0.840m) are expected to be covered by a Section 106 contribution from the Basford West developer, which will fund the Council's contribution towards the project, and could also cover some potential contingency over and above the 30% contribution. However, this contribution is dependent on the delivery of the Basford West Spine Road by March 2015 to release the Pinch Point funding for this scheme. The Council will be required to forward fund the additional costs of £0.840m prior to receipt of the S106 contribution and there is a risk that this may need to be met from Council resources.

### **Basford West Spine Road**

- 7.5 The Basford West Spine Road is expected to cost £5.4m and has secured Pinch Point funding of £2.7m (50% of the scheme costs).
- 7.6 The scheme is expected to be delivered by the developer of the Basford West strategic site who will take on all costs for delivery and completion of the Spine Road prior to the March 2015 deadline for Pinch Point funding. On achieving this the Council will pay the Pinch Point funding contribution of £2.7m to the developer.
- 7.7 All these schemes are dependent on Government funding and third party contributions. Any shortfall would have to be a first call on the Corporate Capital Programme.

## **8.0 Legal Implications**

- 8.1 To ensure that all the schemes can be delivered within the required timescales and achieve the preferred means of procurement. Highways legal agreements

are required urgently with the Highways Agency and the Basford West developer.

- 8.2 Completing the planning approval process and Section 106 agreement with the developer of the Basford West strategic housing and employment site is also required as soon as possible to secure the delivery of the Basford West Spine Road and a funding contribution towards the A500 widening Pinch Point scheme.

## **9.0 Risk Management**

- 9.1 The funding secured through the Local Pinch Point Funding must be invested by March 2015. The main risk associated with these schemes is the delivery to this timetable to avoid any loss of funding and, in so doing, minimising the need for allocating funds from the Corporate Capital Programme..
- 9.2 It is intended that the M6 Junction 17, M6 Junction 16 and A500 widening schemes will be procured and delivered by the Highways Agency through its framework arrangements, which will mitigate any risks associated with the delivery of two associated schemes by different contractors. This will ensure that the programme and works are managed as one overall project.
- 9.3 In order to manage risk standard risk management and monitoring systems will be used through the design and construction of the schemes to ensure that any issues are raised as soon as possible in order to mitigate the impact of any risk being realised.
- 9.4 The developer of the Basford West strategic site will carry the risk for delivery of Basford West Spine Road as they will be procuring the works and delivering through Section 38 and Section 278 agreements. The Council will only pay the developer the Pinch Point funding on completion of the scheme prior to the end of March 2015. If this was not achieved and the DfT so wished, this funding could be returned.
- 9.5 The speed of reaching the necessary legal agreements and satisfactory conclusion is key to ensuring completion of these projects on time. A critical path analysis plan will be constantly monitored.

## **10.0 Background and Options**

### **M6 Junction 16 and A500 Widening**

- 10.1 The A500 Pinch Point scheme involves the widening the A500(W) single lane approach to two lanes for approximately 500m, with a third lane provided for 60m on the approach to the signals, as well as widening of the B5078 arm to provide additional capacity. This widening scheme will complement the Highways Agency's proposals to signalise the existing junction and ensure that the benefits are shared by all movements. The general layout is the same as the 2008 scheme, which was part of an earlier approval for Basford West and can be delivered within the limits of the existing highway, see attached plan.

- 10.2 The intention with regard to the A500 and M6 Junction 16 schemes is that they will both be delivered by the Highways Agency through a Section 4 agreement, as the improvements complement each other and work together as an overall improvement. A highway funding contribution towards the A500 improvements forms part of the Basford West planning approval.
- 10.3 The Council sees this scheme as a short term measure to improve traffic conditions at this pinch point. In the medium term the view is that this junction will need to be upgraded further with an underpass of the A500 and that this should be linked to the delivery of the emerging proposals for a Managed Motorway scheme covering the M6 from J16 to J19.

#### Basford West Spine Road

- 10.4 The Basford West Spine Road scheme will create a new road from the A500 which will tie into Gresty Road corridor and head north towards the centre of Crewe. The road will facilitate the development of the existing land for both commercial and residential purposes, providing an excellent link to the strategic network, including the A500 and M6 Junction 16, as well as Crewe town centre. Cheshire East's emerging Local Plan states that around 2,000 jobs could be created on the site as well as providing 370 new homes. The layout was approved by Strategic Planning Board following local consultation, see attached plan.
- 10.5 The intention is that the Basford West Spine Road scheme will be delivered by the developer of the Basford West strategic housing and employment site (recently granted planning permission) through the implementation of Section 278 and Section 38 agreements.

#### M6 Junction 17

- 10.6 The M6 Junction 17 scheme won funding through a partnership bid submitted by the Highways Agency. Following considerable consultation involving local members, the scheme involves the signalisation of the southbound exit and entry slip roads at the junction with the A534 and the construction of a roundabout with the northbound exit and entry slip roads. The scheme will reduce the existing congestion which makes leaving the motorway at Junction 17 difficult, improve safety on the local network and support growth in the area. See attached plan.
- 10.7 The scheme at M6 Junction 17 will require a Section 4 agreement as the Highways Agency will be working on the Cheshire East highway network.

### **11.0 Access to Information**

- 11.1 Appendix A contains the current layouts for each scheme.
- 11.2 The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer:

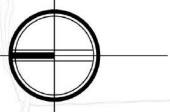
Name: Andrew Sellors  
Designation: Project Officer  
Tel No: 01270 685 961  
Email: andrew.sellors@cheshireeast.gov.uk

- 11.3 The Local Pinch Point Fund bid documents were also published on the Cheshire East Council website.

[http://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/transport\\_and\\_travel/highways\\_and\\_roads/pinch\\_point\\_funding.aspx](http://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/transport_and_travel/highways_and_roads/pinch_point_funding.aspx)

## **Appendix A – Scheme Layout Drawings**



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NOTES:

1. THE CONTRACTOR IS TO CHECK ALL DIMENSIONS AND LEVELS ON SITE prior TO COMMENCING WORKS & REPORT ANY DISCREPANCIES TO THE ENGINEER
2. FOR FINISHES REFER TO DRAWINGS No. 13-0587/100-0101 & 058.
3. FOR SURFACE FINISHES REFER TO DRAWING No. 13-0587/100-0101.
4. FOR KESING & ERODING DETAILS REFER TO DRAWING No. 13-0587/100-0101 & 058.
5. FOR IMPLANT SIONS & ROAD MARKINGS DETAILS REFER TO DRAWING No. 13-0587/100-0101, 01 & 04.
6. FOR FENCING DETAILS REFER TO DRAWING No. 13-0584/100-0205.
7. FOR FENCING LANTERN DETAILS REFER TO DRAWING No. 13-0584/100-0101.
8. FOR APPROACH VESIBILITY CHANGES REFER TO DRAWINGS No. 13-0584/100-0101 & 015.
9. FOR DETAILS OF RETAINING WALLS REFER TO STRUCTURAL DRAWINGS.
10. FOR DETAILS OF VEHICLE RESTRAINT SYSTEMS REFER TO DRAWING No. 13-0584/100-0101.

KEY:

PROPOSED CARRIAGEWAY	PROPOSED CUTTING/EMBANKMENT	EXISTING HIGHWAY UNDER CONTROL OF CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL (SEE DRAWING)	TRAFFIC SIGNAL HEAD (SEE NOTE 6)	LIGHTING COLUMN (SEE NOTE 7)	CHANGE AND ASSOCIATED CHANNEL, STRONG
PROPOSED FOOTWAY AND TRAFFIC DETECTION SENSORS	PROPOSED VERGE	No.03-0084/0100-002 (FOR DETAILS)			

MRC = CIRCULATORY CARRIAGEWAY  
 MNC = M6 NORTHBOUND ENTRY SLIP ROAD  
 APPROACH TO M6 SOUTHBOUND EXIT  
 SLIP ROAD APPROACH  
 MOC = M6 SOUTHBOUND EXIT SLIP ROAD  
 APPROACH TO A50 EASTBOUND EXIT  
 MOC = A50 WESTBOUND APPROACH TO M6  
 SOUTHBOUND ENTRY SLIP ROAD EXIT  
 MSC = M6 SOUTHBOUND ENTRY SLIP ROAD  
 APPROACH TO M6 SOUTHBOUND EXIT SLIP  
 ROAD APPROACH  
 MRP = M6 NORTHBOUND EXIT SLIP ROAD  
 APPROACH TO A50 WESTBOUND EXIT

E	25/11/11	DRAWING WINDOWS, NOTES & KEY REVISED. VERGES REVISED, SHADING ADDED.	DCI
D	APR '11	SOUTHBOND SLIP RETAINING WALL REVISED. SOUTHWEST QUADRANT	DCI

C	MAR '11	RETAINING STRUCTURE PROVISION	DCT
		UPDATED.	

B	DEC '10	TAPER REVISED TO A500 WESTBOUND	DCT
A	DEC '10	PROPOSED A500 APPROACH REVISED. FURTHER LAYOUT UPDATES ADDED.	DCT

**TH :: DA**  
consulting engineers  
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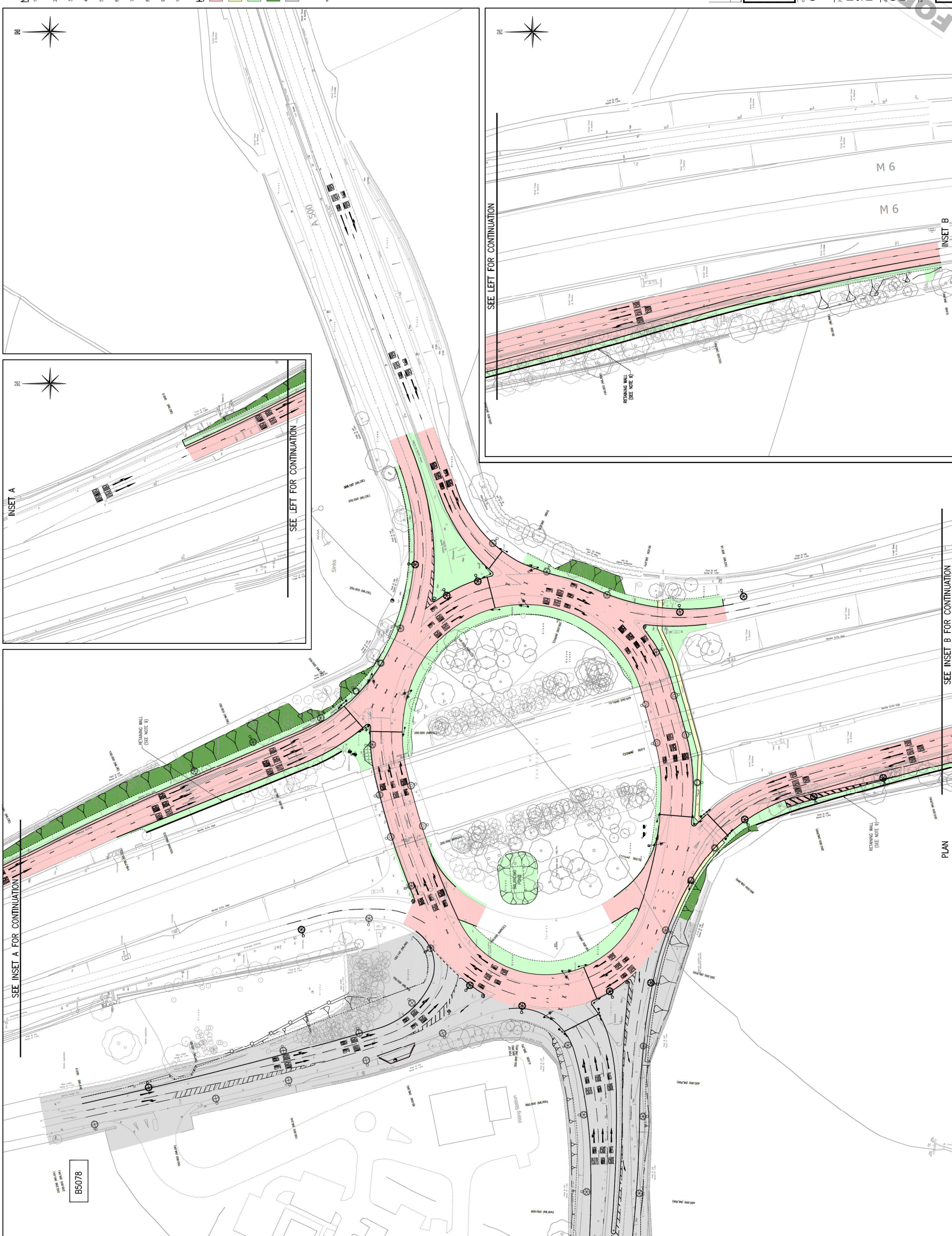
GOODMAN  
LIGHTS

Job title: **BASFORD WEST, CREWE  
S278 OFFSITE HIGHWAY WORKS  
M6 J16 AND BARTHOMLEY LINK**

Drawing title:  
**GENERAL ARRANGEMENT**  
**M6 J16**

scale:	date:	drawn by:	checked by:
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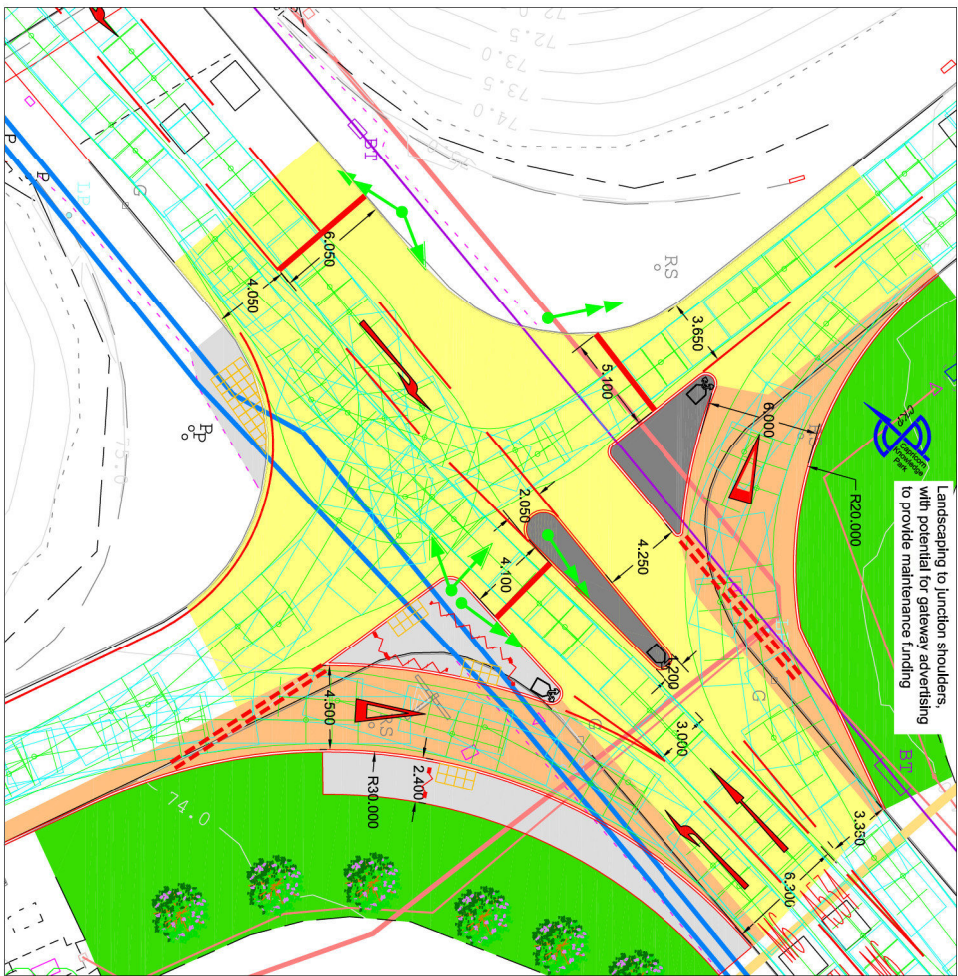
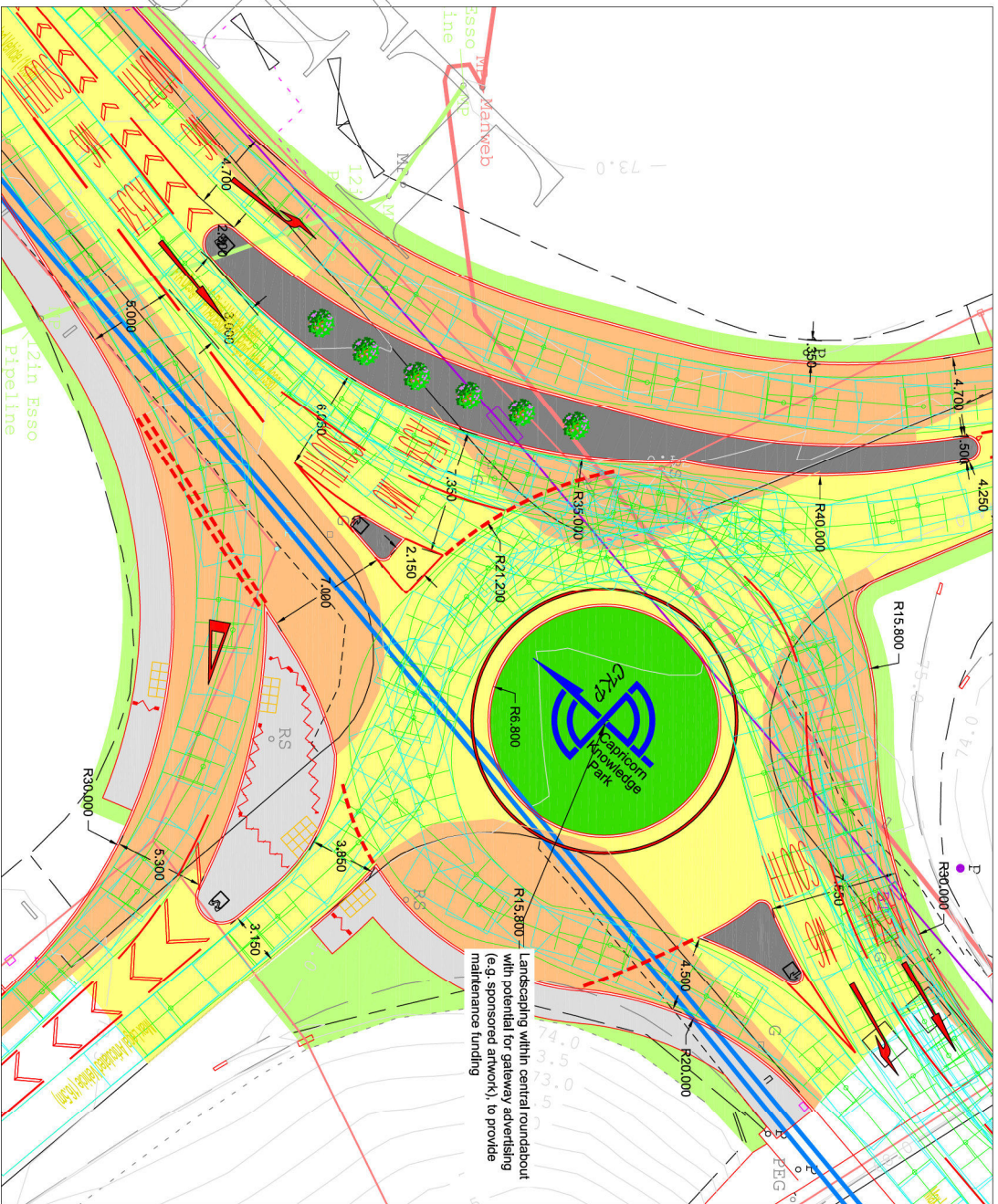
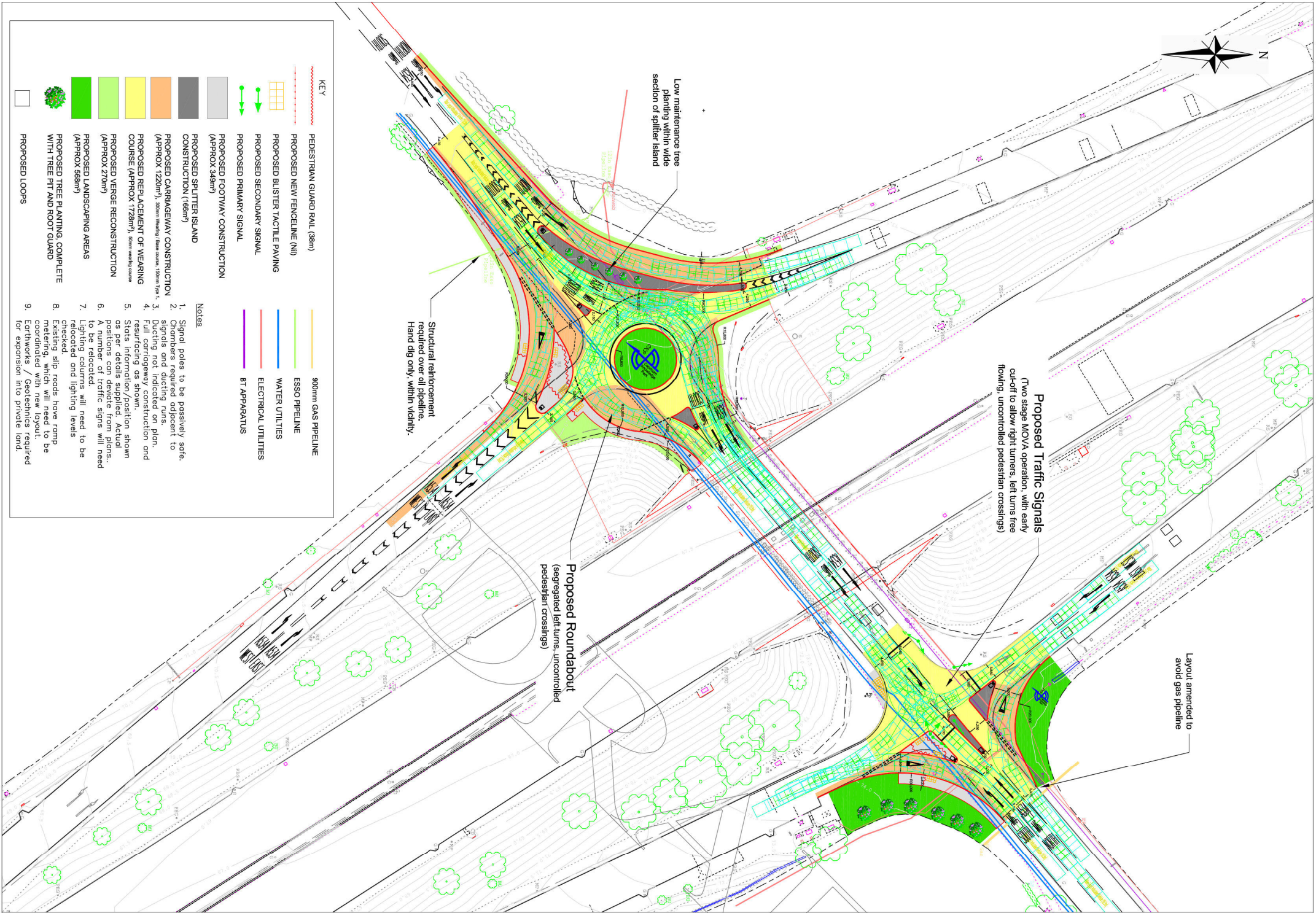
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Rev	By	Check	App	Date	Description

Client: **HIGHWAYS** AGENCY Department for Transport on Executive Agency of the

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Project: **M6 Junction 17**

Drawing: **Proposed Junction Improvements**

Drawing: **PROPOSED ALTERNATIVE HYBRID LAYOUT General Arrangement**

Drawn by: JF Date: 11/05/2012

Checked by: DS Date: 11/05/2012

Approved by: CR Date: 15/05/2012

Drawing No: **873/000/0101/01**

Drawing Scale: 1:500 / 1:200 @A1

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## CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

### Cabinet

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<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	15 <sup>th</sup> October 2013
<b>Report of:</b>	Director of Growth and Prosperity
<b>Subject/Title:</b>	Strategic Infrastructure – Development of Cheshire and Warrington Local Transport Body Schemes (Forward Plan Ref: 13/14-35)
<b>Portfolio Holder:</b>	Councillor David Brown, Strategic Communities

---

#### 1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 This report highlights the significant success of the Council in both securing funding to deliver schemes prioritised by the Cheshire and Warrington Local Transport Body (CWLTB) and promoting others to gain inclusion in a scheme “development pool”.
- 1.2 The Poynton Relief Road is awarded funding through the CWLTB prioritisation process and will be the subject of a separate detailed report to Cabinet.
- 1.3 The Sydney Road Railway Bridge is awarded funding by the CWLTB and is now fully funded with contributions from developers and an allocation in the Council’s Capital Programme. In order to move ahead with the delivery of the scheme key tasks need to be undertaken, which will include detailed design, a detailed business case and agreements with Network Rail.

#### 2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 Note the CWLTB “development pool” schemes in Cheshire East and the work required to support future funding bids, including for the sub-regional Growth Deal through the Government’s recently announced Single Local Growth Fund.
- 2.2 Note the progress already being made on the development of Congleton Link Road, Poynton Relief Road and Middlewich Eastern Bypass, all of which are subject to other Cabinet Reports and are in the “development pool”.
- 2.3 Approve the work required for the development and delivery of the new Sydney Road Railway Bridge scheme, as set out in section 10.6 of this report.

#### 3.0 Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 To support the Council’s key objective to deliver new and improved infrastructure to support economic growth.

- 3.2 To improve road safety and reduce congestion at some of Cheshire East's most congestion junctions and on some of the most congested corridors.

#### **4.0 Wards Affected**

- 4.1 All

#### **5.0 Local Ward Members**

- 5.1 All

#### **6.0 Policy Implications**

- 6.1 The investment accords with the Local Transport Plan Implementation Plan (2011-2015) policy B2 – Enabling development.
- 6.2. This decision will contribute towards the delivery of key infrastructure across Cheshire East which will have a beneficial effect on congestion, road safety, accessibility and reduction of carbon emissions over the highway network. It will also help facilitate the delivery of the development proposed in the emerging Local Plan by developing schemes which will mitigate the associated growth in traffic.

#### **7.0 Financial Implications**

- 7.1 The development of the funding bids will be achieved from existing budgets and in partnership with the CWLTB. Achieving successful bids will relieve the pressure on the Council's Corporate Capital Programme going forward.
- 7.2 For the Sydney Road Railway Bridge sufficient budget provision is available from the secured funding from the CWLTB, Section 106 contributions and allocations within the approved Capital Programme to cover the anticipated scheme development costs.

#### **8.0 Legal Implications**

- 8.1 An Asset Protection Agreement (APA) legal agreement will be required to deliver Sydney Road Railway Bridge improvements with Network Rail.
- 8.2 Section 106 agreements are either in place or under development on various sites along the Sydney Road corridor which, include contributions to the Sydney Road Railway Bridge improvements.

#### **9.0 Risk Management**

- 9.1 In order to manage risk standard risk management and monitoring systems will be used to ensure that any issues are raised as soon as possible in order to mitigate the impact of any risk being realised.

- 9.2 For the Sydney Road Railway Bridge project a risk register will be developed as part of the scheme and the project will be taken through the TEG and EMB process.

## **10.0 Background and Options**

- 10.1 The CWLTB prioritised schemes submitted by Cheshire East, Cheshire West and Warrington Borough Councils into four quartiles on the basis of an assessment criteria and methodology approved by the CWLTB and agreed with the DfT through the Assurance Framework. Those in the top two quartiles now form the CWLTB “development pool”, of which three received CWLTB funding for the 2015-19 period. These were Poynton Relief Road and Sydney Road Railway Bridge.
- 10.2 In the recent Budget Statement it was announced that significant additional funding will be made available through sub-regional growth deals and a Single Local Growth fund (SLGF) from Government. Work is now underway to develop a package of Cheshire East schemes that support the authority’s aspirations for growth. This package will be derived from the CWLTB “development pool” as well as the emerging Cheshire East Infrastructure Delivery Plan, which will form part of the Local Plan.
- 10.3 The CWLTB “development pool” contains the following Cheshire East schemes following the prioritisation process undertaken earlier this year:
- A500 Barthomley Link
  - Congleton Link Road
  - Crewe Northern Growth Corridor – A530 to Crewe Green Roundabout
  - Macclesfield Pinch Points Package
  - Middlewich Eastern Bypass
  - Poynton Relief Road (remaining funding) and A523 Corridor
- 10.4 Of the schemes listed above the replacement Sydney Road Railway Bridge from the Crewe Northern Growth Corridor and Poynton Relief Road were awarded funding from the LTB funding for 2015-19. The Sydney Road Railway Bridge was awarded £2.35m and Poynton Relief Road received £9.78m (of which £5.62m will be available in the period 2015-19), with the remainder carrying over into the next funding period. This will be included in the SLGF bid.
- 10.5 Sydney Road Railway Bridge has also secured Section 106 contributions from developments on the corridor, which includes £1.30m from the Coppenhall East and £1.08m from the Maw Green development sites. The remaining costs associated for delivery of the scheme are covered in the Council’s Capital Programme allowance for Crewe Transformational Projects and the Crewe Northern Growth Corridor (A530 – Crewe Green Roundabout). The funding scenario is summarised in the table below.
- 10.6 The Sydney Road scheme now requires development of a preferred option through a detailed design process and development of the business case. The detailed design process will include a Road Safety Audit process taking into

account the impact of removing the signals on the road layout approaching the bridge and side roads.

Sydney Road Bridge and Poynton Relief Road Funding Summary

	Scheme Cost	LTB Awarded Funding 2015-19	S106/3 <sup>rd</sup> Party Contributions	CEC	Funding Deficit
Sydney Road Bridge	£4.78m	£2.35	£2.38m	£0.05m	None, given the allocation in the Capital Programme
Poynton Relief Road	£19.80m	£5.62m (£4.16m post 2019)	£2.55m (GMCA)	£0.55m	£6.92m, other funding sources include; developers, CIL, Single Local Growth Fund

10.7 Progress is ongoing for a number of the other schemes prioritised by the CWLTB:

- Congleton Link Road is close to its consultation stage which will allow a protected route to be defined and incorporated into the Local Plan.
- Middlewich Eastern Bypass has planning approval and has secured the majority of its funding including Regional Growth Fund, and is being progressed by developers.
- A500 Barthomley Link is the subject of a preliminary engineering investigation prior to developing a project scope and programme.
- Macclesfield traffic studies are being finalised to determine the full extent of a pinch point investment programme.

## 11.0 Access to Information

11.1 The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer:

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## CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

### Cabinet

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<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	15 <sup>th</sup> October 2013
<b>Report of:</b>	Head of Public Protection and Enforcement
<b>Subject/Title:</b>	Devolution of Bus Service Operator Grant (BSOG) for Council Supported Bus Services (Forward Plan Ref: 13/14-46)
<b>Portfolio Holder:</b>	Cllr David Topping, Environment

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#### 1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 Following a review of the payment of Bus Service Operator Grant (BSOG) the Department for Transport (DfT) has decided to devolve payment of BSOG for Council supported bus services to Transport Authorities with effect from 1 January 2014.
- 1.2 These revisions will lead to monies previously paid directly to transport operators by DfT being devolved to the Council and a reduction in the revenue received by transport operators.
- 1.3 This change , initiated by the DfT to give more local control over public transport funding, is welcomed by Cheshire East Council. It is likely that, over time, this will allow for greater investment in rural bus services as it will give the Council control over a greater pool of funding.
- 1.4 This report seeks Cabinet agreement to increase contract payments to allow for distribution of this funding previously undertaken by DfT along the lines included in their guidance.

#### 2.0 Recommendations

That Cabinet:

- 2.1 note the contents of this report and
- 2.2 agree to the revision of contract payments to operators of current Council supported Local Bus services to reflect the change in the BSOG payment mechanism
- 2.3 note that a fully funded Supplementary Revenue Estimate will be approved in accordance with Finance Procedure Rule A.36, once the grant allocation from Government is known

### **3.0 Reasons for Recommendations**

- 3.1 It is recommended that cabinet agree this approach as failure to reimburse operators for the loss of BSOG payment from the DfT could result in wholesale termination of contracts by operators. Retendering of these contracts would not only require a considerable amount of administration time but could also result in higher contract prices.

### **4.0 Wards Affected**

- 4.1 All Wards are affected

### **5.0 Local Ward Members**

- 5.1 All Members are affected

### **6.0 Policy Implications**

- 6.1 None

### **7.0 Financial Implications**

- 7.1 Currently, six transport operators provide 29 local bus contracts, with a gross cost of £2.14m, on behalf of the Council. The operators claim in the region of £320,000 per annum from the DfT for Bus Service Operator Grant (BSOG). The DfT have undertaken to maintain funding at the current level until 2015/16 and therefore the allocation of funding to the Council should fully cover the increased costs that will result from withdrawal of the grant in respect of new contracts, over the next two years.
- 7.2 Funding to local authorities in lieu of BSOG payments will be ring-fenced until April 2017. Twenty of the Council's current Local Bus support contracts will be retendered before this date. After April 2017 the ring-fencing ends and the funding will form part of the general grant from Central Government; therefore the implications will need to be reflected in the budget setting process at that time.
- 7.3 On introduction of the new arrangement in January 2014, a fully funded Supplementary Revenue Estimate will be required to be approved in accordance with Finance Procedure Rule A.36, in respect of the totality of former BSOG-related grant to be distributed by the Council, financed by the new grant from Government.
- 7.4 The full-year implications of the payments to operators and the related grant income to the Council will be reflected in the budget setting process for 2014/15 and future years.

## **8.0 Legal Implications**

- 8.1 Devolution of payment of BSOG to local authorities was announced by the DfT and confirmation of this was received by the Council from the DfT in its letter of 5<sup>th</sup> July 2013. The guidance from the DfT suggests that the local authority make its own arrangements through its existing contracts with the operators to allocate the BSOG. All tendered bus services (i.e.: those that receive council subsidy) will receive devolved BSOG at a rate that must be agreed by each authority.. The Council will make a pro-rata allocation to all of the current operators of local bus contracts, to ensure that the BSOG is allocated in a fair and equitable manner.
- 8.2 Amendments to contract price will be made using the contract change process within the existing contracts with the operators and as advised by the Corporate Legal Team.
- 8.3 Any future tendering process will need to incorporate clear guidance to operators on withdrawal of direct payments and inclusion of any BSOG within the tendered contract price.

## **9.0 Risk Management**

- 9.1 There are no significant risks arising from this report

## **10.0 Background and Options**

- 10.1 The Department for Transport (DfT) currently pay operators of registered local bus service Bus Service Operators Grant (BSOG) to offset the cost of fuel duty paid on fuel used in buses on these services. The objective of this is to maintain viability of bus services and to assist in keeping fares at a reasonable level.
- 10.2 Following a lengthy consultation process the DfT announced that it would be devolving the funding for BSOG on Local Authority supported services to those local authorities. This devolved funding is intended to support localism and give communities more control over local services.

The DfT wishes to give councils greater control over local transport budgets. Cheshire East council welcomes this approach since it accords with the Cabinet's firmly expressed desire to see local people have greater say over local issues

- 10.3 Confirmation of this was received by the Council in a letter from DfT on 5<sup>th</sup> July 2013. A number of changes are to be made with the devolution of BSOG to Local Authorities taking place from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2014. This letter also confirmed that this funding would be ringfenced until April 2017
- 10.4 Bus operator who tender for local bus contracts with the Council make an allowance for the BSOG there are able to claim within their tender price.



Therefore the withdrawal of these payments within the current contract term will lead to a reduction in the operator's income.

- 10.5 Operators are currently paid their contract price at four weekly intervals throughout the year. The proposal to include BSOG payments within current contract payments will therefore lead to no additional processes or payments being made.
- 10.6 It is expected that the DfT will provide details of amounts paid to operators on confirmation of the level of funding being devolved, however this has not been forthcoming as yet. Should the levels not be confirmed by DfT operators would be required to provide a certified declaration of the amounts they have previously claimed and agree to this being audited.
- 10.7 Contracts currently being tendered for commencement after 1 January 2014 will not include any additional payments for the withdrawal of BSOG and operators will be required to include this in their base tender price. All operators have been informed of this as part of the tendering process.
- 10.8 The proposed method of interim payments is that suggested in DfT guidance:

“The Department strongly encourages local authorities to work closely with bus operators in order to avoid potential disruption to the bus market by adjusting contracts to account for the loss of BSOG.”
- 10.9 Alternative methods of administering this funding have been considered and could have been based on mileage, passenger usage, journey purpose or a number of other factors, however with the funding devolved from the DfT only covering the reimbursement cost and not those of administration a more complex scheme would have imposed additional administrative burdens on the Council.
- 10.10 With the proposed method of reimbursement only lasting for the validity of current contracts the level of additional payments will reduce year on year with the funding becoming an integral part of the Public Transport budget in order to fund increased contract prices due to the withdrawal of direct payments to operators.

## **11.0 Access to Information**

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer:

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## CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

### Cabinet

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<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	15 <sup>th</sup> October 2013
<b>Report of:</b>	Head of Public Protection and Enforcement
<b>Subject/Title:</b>	Supporting Community Transport & Accessibility Initiatives – Grants & Vehicle Donation (Forward Plan Ref: 13/14-45)
<b>Portfolio Holder:</b>	Cllr David Topping, Environment

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#### 1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 The report seeks approval of three complementary policies which each seek to allocate resources to communities in Cheshire East to support transport and accessibility initiatives:
- Policy for the Allocation of Transport & Accessibility Grants: aims to allocate funding to local community and voluntary groups to support community-led transport and accessibility initiatives tailored to local needs (see Appendix 1).
  - Policy for the Allocation of Surplus Council Vehicles: aims to gift vehicles which are no longer required by the Cheshire East Transport Service to community and voluntary groups to establish community bus schemes which improve access to key services (see Appendix 2).
  - Policy for the Allocation of Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) Business Travel Planning Grants: aims to utilise a proportion of the Department for Transport (DfT) funding to award grants to the business community in Crewe on a match fund basis as part of the LSTF programme (see Appendix 3)

#### 2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 To approve the “Policy for the Allocation of Transport & Accessibility Grants” and to delegate authority for decision making on award of grants to the relevant Portfolio Holder with responsibility for transport;
- 2.2 To confirm the allocation of £250,000 in 2013/14 for transport and accessibility grants in line with the policy above (see 2.1);
- 2.3 To approve the “Policy for Allocating Surplus Council Vehicles” and to delegate authority for the decision making on allocation of vehicles to the relevant Portfolio Holder with responsibility for transport;
- 2.4 To approve the “Policy for the Allocation of Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) Business Travel Planning Grants” and to delegate authority for decision making on award of grants to the relevant Portfolio Holder with responsibility for transport;

- 2.5 To authorise officers to take all necessary action to implement the decisions above and establish each of the schemes in line with the associated policy.

### **3.0 Reasons for Recommendations**

- 3.1 The objectives of the Transport & Accessibility Grant Scheme in supporting local grassroots initiatives in the community and voluntary sector are best achieved by developing a competitive grant scheme, rather than a procurement exercise. The aim is to support community-led activities which improve access to essential services, such as healthcare, shopping, leisure and other destinations that are important to local residents. In this way, the Council is over the long term helping people to meet their own needs.
- 3.2 The aim of allocating surplus Council vehicles to the community and voluntary sector is to help support community-led transport initiatives that will improve access to key services. The types of schemes which may be supported by the gifting of a vehicle include community bus schemes operated “by the community, for the community”. The value of the vehicles (£63,500) to be donated represents a relatively modest write off when compared with the service innovations and community benefits which will result from empowering the community to develop their own self help initiatives.
- 3.3 Both the grant scheme and vehicle allocation scheme will help deliver the priorities in the Sustainable Community Strategy (Ambition for All) and the associated Local Transport Plan (LTP), particularly the policies within the LTP relating to ‘Nurturing Strong Communities’.
- 3.4 Establishing an LSTF Business Travel Planning Grant Scheme is in line with the original bid document approved by the Department for Transport (DfT). The aim is to support businesses and employers in Crewe to implement measures that will encourage their staff to travel more sustainably.
- 3.5 Increasing the levels of walking, cycling, public transport and car sharing at key employment sites has a range of positive benefits for the employer, employee and wider community, including reduced car park problems, reduced traffic congestion in Crewe and improved health and wellbeing.

### **4.0 Wards Affected**

- 4.1 All

### **5.0 Local Ward Members**

- 5.1 All

### **6.0 Policy Implications**

- 6.1 The policy supports the delivery of the Sustainable Community Strategy, Local Transport Plan (LTP) and Ageing Well in Cheshire East Programme. Initiatives which improve accessibility have wider benefits including reduced isolation and social exclusion, and improved health and wellbeing. Promoting and

enabling passenger transport, walking and cycling supports the climate change agenda through low carbon travel choices.

- 6.2 The LSTF business travel planning project directly supports the All Change for Crewe regeneration programme by enabling transport measures which help to unlock the growth potential of Crewe in a low carbon way. Encouraging increased levels of walking and cycling for short local journeys within Crewe has associated health and wellbeing benefits.

## **7.0 Financial Implications**

- 7.1 The financial implications of each policy are outlined separately below:

### Policy for the Allocation of Transport & Accessibility Grants

- 7.2 It is proposed to allocate £250,000 for transport and accessibility grants from the approved 2013/14 base budget. The grant scheme will operate two tiers of funding based on the value – small grants up to £9,999 and larger grants of over £10,000.
- 7.3 The budget for each funding round is fixed prior to inviting applications, so that there is clarity on the limited amount of money available in each bidding window. The policy states that given the fixed budget for each funding round, and the Council's aim to benefit as many organisations as possible, the Council cannot guarantee to fund the maximum amount applied for.

### Policy for the Allocation of Surplus Council Vehicles

- 7.4 Currently there are 9 Council-owned vehicles which are surplus to requirements and ready to be allocated to community and voluntary organisations. The vehicles vary in age ranging from 9 years old (2004) to 4 years old (2009).
- 7.5 The estimated value of these vehicles at sale by auction is £63,500. In donating the vehicles to local organisations, these capital items will be written off to enable the development of community-led transport initiatives which are tailored to local needs.
- 7.6 The application and assessment process require initiatives to improve access to service, particularly for disadvantaged groups, which would be costly for the Council to provide as part of the supported bus network.

### Policy for the Allocation of LSTF Business Travel Planning Grants

- 7.7 The LSTF programme is fully funded by a grant from the Department for Transport (DfT). The policy seeks to award grants of up to £4,999 on a match fund basis to businesses located in Crewe. All funds which are awarded will be claimed in full from the DfT quarterly in arrears, in line with the Grant Agreement between the Council and the DfT. The policy will end on 31 March 2015 in line with the LSTF funding period.

- 7.8 The minimum capital and revenue allocations for each financial year are set out below – the figures for 2014/15 may increase if the scheme demonstrates value for money in 2013/14, and if under-spends emerge in other areas of the overall LSTF programme.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Capital</b>	<b>Revenue</b>
2013/14	£75,000	£18,000
2014/15	£25,000	£20,000

## **8.0 Legal Implications**

- 8.1 The Council has the power to award grants to organisations and to gift vehicles which are surplus to requirement using its general power of competence under section 1 of the Localism Act 2011. In exercising the power the Council must satisfy its public law duties. In essence this means that in making any decision the Council must have taken into account only relevant considerations, followed procedural requirements, acted for proper motives and not acted unreasonably.
- 8.2 The Constitution states as follows:
- F31 The Cabinet Member will on a periodical basis, agree a policy setting down the approach to be taken to the allocation of grants, donations and other contributions to outside bodies. This should specify the scale, nature and terms of such support, criteria for prioritisation and the process for allocation.
- 8.3 Putting in place these policies will ensure that grants are allocated in accordance with the Constitution and reflect that grants are awarded to organisations following an application process and against set criteria. Delegation of the decision making process to the Portfolio Holder will ensure that decisions can be made expeditiously and at the appropriate level.
- 8.4 Grants fall outside the public procurement regime. There is a narrow line between awarding a grant and commissioning services. In awarding a grant the Council cannot exhibit the same amount of control over the organisation as is commensurate with a contract. Essentially, the terms of the grant should set out the purpose of the grant, what it can be allocated to and only claim claw back of the grant where the grant funding has been used for other purposes or otherwise improperly. The Council will not be able to assess the quality of the services that are being provided and determine to withdraw grant funding on that basis (except at the end of the period of the grant funding).
- 8.5 Further legal implications of each policy are outlined separately below:

### Policy for the Allocation of Transport & Accessibility Grants

- 8.6 The assessment criteria provide a fair and equitable way to assess applications and award grants. Organisations awarded larger grants of over £10,000 are required to sign a Grant Agreement with the Council. This

provides a way to manage and monitor the organisation and ensure that funds are being spent in line with the original application and recover the grant, if necessary, if the organisation is in breach of the agreement. Organisations awarded a small grant (up to £9,999) will be required to sign a Grant Offer Acceptance Form confirming that the grant will be spent in line with the application and terms and conditions of funding.

- 8.7 Each organisation is required to have a signed constitution and management committee before any grant payments are issued. As part of the application form, organisations are required to disclose any other sources of funding to assess and guard against any potential state aid issues. It is unlikely that organisations have been or will be allocated grant funding in excess of the current de minimis levels applicable to state aid of £150,000 over 3 years but it is prudent to monitor any potential state aid.

#### Policy for the Allocation of Surplus Council Vehicles

- 8.8 Before the vehicle is released to a successful applicant, the organisation must sign an agreement to confirm that they will become the owner and registered keeper of the vehicle in its current condition as of the date of transfer. The agreement will confirm that they will pay all the future running costs of the vehicle, including service, maintenance, Tax, MOT and appropriately license the vehicle for the purposes outlined in their application form.

#### Policy for the Allocation of LSTF Business Travel Planning Grants

- 8.9 The assessment criteria provide a fair and equitable way to assess applications and award grants. The value of the grants to be issued under this policy (up to £4,999) does not necessarily require a formal Grant Agreement. However, the policy sets out a monitoring process to ensure that grants are used appropriately in line with the application and conditions for funding.

### **9.0 Risk Management**

- 9.1 The policy makes clear that grants are awarded specifically for the purpose stated in the application and that should it be spent in any other way, without written approval from the Council, the organisation may become liable to return the monies paid.
- 9.2 To ensure expenditure in line with the approved grant application and compliance with funding conditions, the policy sets out a monitoring process providing suitable safeguards to ensure that grants are spent appropriately and deliver value for money (etc). Failure to provide monitoring information within the timescale may result in the Council recovering the grant paid.
- 9.3 By launching and implementing the policies identified above, there is an opportunity to support grassroots initiatives and empowering local people to community-led initiatives, as well as supporting sustainable travel to help unlock the growth potential of Crewe. Failure to adopt the policy will delay such initiatives.

## **10.0 Background**

- 10.1 Cohesive, empowered and active communities in which people can influence the decisions that affect their locality is at the heart of the Sustainable Community Strategy for Cheshire East. It is recognised that local communities are often best placed to identify their own transport and accessibility needs and in some cases have the capacity to develop local solutions.
- 10.2 Many communities across the borough have a history of self help and coming up with innovative ways of serving local people, whether it is giving someone a lift to a doctor's appointment, establishing a Good Neighbour Scheme or saving a post office by relocating it to the local pub. This can be particularly important in rural areas where access to mainstream services is more difficult.
- 10.3 With regard to the LSTF programme, Cheshire East Council has been successful in securing £3.5m from the Department for Transport's Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF). In line with the original funding bid, the Council's LSTF programme focuses on transport measures which help to unlock the growth potential of Crewe in a low carbon way.
- 10.4 The Council has a formal Partnership Agreement with the South Cheshire Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SCCCI) to engage with businesses effectively. The aim of the Grants Scheme is to support businesses and employers in Crewe to implement measures that will encourage their staff to walk, cycle, use public transport and car share to work.

## **11.0 Access to Information**

The background papers can be inspected by contacting the report writer:

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## **APPENDIX 1**

# **POLICY FOR THE ALLOCATION OF TRANSPORT & ACCESSIBILITY GRANTS**

October 2013

## **CONTENTS**

- 1.0** Introduction
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- 3.0** Legal & Budgetary Framework
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  - Who can apply – eligibility criteria
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  - General Conditions
- 8.0** Decision-Making Process
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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of the Transport & Accessibility Grant Scheme is to support local people to develop community-led initiatives which improve access to essential services, such as healthcare, shopping, leisure and other destinations that are important to local residents.
- 1.2 The types of initiatives which may be supported include transport schemes, as well as measures which improve the availability of services locally within the community thereby reducing the need to travel. This reflects that the term “accessibility” is not just about transport, but also how services (e.g. shops) are planned and delivered.
- 1.3 In order to reflect the broad nature of the transport and accessibility agenda, the Grant Scheme is framed around four themes and priorities which indicate the types of activities the Council are seeking to support. These are:
  - Theme 1: Vibrant Rural Communities
  - Theme 2: Community Transport Initiatives
  - Theme 3: Encouraging Active Travel
  - Theme 4: Publicity & Information
- 1.4 The Grant Scheme aims to help deliver the priorities in the Sustainable Community Strategy<sup>1</sup> (Ambition for All) and the associated Local Transport Plan<sup>2</sup> (LTP), particularly the policies within the LTP relating to ‘Nurturing Strong Communities’, which include:
  - **Policy C1 Community:** Work in partnership with local communities to support community-led solutions that improve accessibility to key services (employment, education, health, shopping and leisure).
  - **Policy C2 Accessibility of Services:** Work with partner organisations and local communities to make key services easier to access with a particular focus on disadvantaged groups and areas, including people living in rural areas, older people, young people and those without access to a car.
  - **Policy C3 Access for all:** Consider the diverse range of needs concerning disabled people and other groups who experience difficulties using the transport system.
- 1.5 When using the term “grants” in this policy, it refers to the giving of a fixed amount of Council funds to organisations through an application and assessment process. This policy sets out the eligibility criteria to apply, as well as the criteria for assessing grant applications, the process for decision-making, governance arrangements and the monitoring requirements of the Grant Scheme.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/community\\_and\\_living/pace\\_strategic\\_partnerships/sustainable\\_community\\_strategy.aspx](http://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/community_and_living/pace_strategic_partnerships/sustainable_community_strategy.aspx)

<sup>2</sup> [www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/transport\\_and\\_travel/local\\_transport\\_plan.aspx](http://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/transport_and_travel/local_transport_plan.aspx)

## **2.0 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 Cohesive, empowered and active communities in which people can influence the decisions that affect their locality is at the heart of the Sustainable Community Strategy for Cheshire East. It is recognised that local communities are often best placed to identify their own transport and accessibility needs and in some cases have the capacity to develop local solutions.
- 2.2 Many communities across the borough have a history of self help and coming up with innovative ways of serving local people, whether it is giving someone a lift to a doctor's appointment, establishing a Good Neighbour Scheme or saving a post office by relocating it to the local pub. This can be particularly important in rural areas where access to mainstream services is more difficult.
- 2.3 The Council are seeking to work in partnership with local community groups and voluntary organisations to understand the range of transport and accessibility needs at a local level and work together to support community-led solutions wherever possible. There are clear opportunities through the Grant Scheme to support the development of grass roots initiatives and empower local people to develop a range of community-led solutions.

## **3.0 LEGAL AND BUDGETARY FRAMEWORK**

- 3.1 This policy has been approved by Cheshire East Council's Cabinet who have delegated authority for the assessment of applications and the decisions on award of grants to the Portfolio Holder for the Environment (or subsequent Cabinet Member with responsibility for transport).
- 3.2 The decisions on award of grants will be based on the Assessment Criteria set out in section 6 of this policy, which provides a fair and equitable way to assess applications and award grants.
- 3.3 The budget for each funding round is fixed prior to inviting applications, so that there is clarity on the limited amount of money available in each bidding window. Given the fixed budget and the Council's aim to benefit as many organisations as possible, the Council cannot guarantee to fund the maximum amount applied for; therefore organisations must ensure that they have procedures in place to cover any balance of funding required, or else funding may not be awarded.
- 3.4 As part of the launch of each funding round, a proportion of the available budget will be set aside to advertise the Grant Scheme and ensure that potential / eligible applicants are aware of the scheme through appropriate communications.

## 4.0 TYPES OF FUNDING

4.1 The Transport & Accessibility Grant Scheme operates two tiers of funding based on the value:

- **Small Grants** of up to £9,999 to pump-prime small scale projects, or to co-fund a larger initiative. Applications which include match funding from other sources will be considered more favourably in the assessment process, however the Council will consider applications for 100% funding. In any case, the Council cannot guarantee to fund the maximum amount applied for.
- **Larger Grants** over £10,000 to pump-prime new larger scale projects or extend an existing initiative. The Council will expect applicants to provide evidence of match funding from their own organisation or another organisation to support the scheme. Applicants seeking a larger grant will be required to submit the application form as an expression interest, which will then be assessed and, if shortlisted, a more detailed business case setting out the costs, benefits and plans for future sustainability will be required. Successful applicants must also sign a Grant Agreement with the Council.

4.2 The purpose of operating two tiers of funding is to support a variety of schemes and initiatives. Where there is capacity within the community to start a new large scale project which brings significant community benefits by improving access to services, the Council would like to work in partnership with these organisations to nurture, grow and develop community-led initiatives.

## 5.0 FUNDING THEMES

5.1 The Grant Scheme is framed around four themes which reflect the broad nature of the transport and accessibility agenda, as well as indicating the types of projects and activities which may be supported through the scheme.

- **Vibrant Rural Communities** – Connecting people in rural communities with key services is an activity which faces both challenges and opportunities. The challenges include greater distances to travel, less concentrated levels of demand for public transport and the loss of some local services. There are also clear opportunities to work in partnership with communities to develop local solutions to meet local needs. Through the Grant Scheme, the Council is seeking to support initiatives which improve access to services – whether it is a transport solution (e.g. voluntary car scheme) or improving access to services locally which avoids the need to travel longer distances to towns. This could include multi-use premises (e.g. establishing a shop in the village hall). It is recognised community facilities can become a focal point and hub of a village with significant social benefit, which avoid people becoming isolated and socially excluded in their community.

- **Community Transport Initiatives** – Local communities are often best placed to identify their own transport needs and in some cases have the capacity to develop local solutions, particularly for those who do not have access to public or private transport. Through the Grant Scheme, the Council is seeking to support innovative community transport solutions which are operated “by the community, for the community” and are tailored to local needs. This could include a developing a community bus scheme or shopmobility service to meet an identified need and enable people to access local services.
- **Encouraging Active Travel** – The aim is to encourage increased levels of active travel for local everyday journeys. The Council view walking and cycling as key modes of transport which are a fundamental part of the integrated transport network in Cheshire East. Through the Grant Scheme, the Council is seeking to support activities which promote and facilitate active travel, which may include cycle confidence training, network maps or a local campaign to encourage more people to walk and cycle more regularly.
- **Publicity & Information** – It is recognised that lack of information and awareness of travel options can be a barrier to accessibility in local communities. There is significant scope to increase the publicity and promotion of the range of travel choices including bus, rail, cycling, walking, as well as the range of community transport initiatives. Through the Grant Scheme, the Council is seeking to support local communities in developing information specific to their residents or user groups in a style and format which meets the local needs of the community.

5.2 Please state on the application form which theme(s) you are applying for in your small grant application or expression of interest for a large grant.

## 6.0 ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

6.1 The criteria for assessing applications are set out below.

Criteria	Description
Access to Services	The project must improve access to key services and make it easier for residents to get to health care, shopping, leisure facilities and other essential services. Ideas which show innovation and creativity are encouraged.
Disadvantaged Groups	Projects which have a particular focus on disadvantaged groups or areas, such as disabled people, older people, young people and those without access to public or private transport, will be scored more highly.
Community Involvement	Applications must demonstrate a high level of community involvement, or the ability to increase community involvement and attract more participants/volunteers through the project.

Financial Sustainability	The aim is for schemes to be sustainable beyond the initial grant funding period and continue to benefit the community into the future. Applications must demonstrate the potential for the project to be sustained in the future.
Other Funding Sources	Applications which have funding contributions from the organisations own funds and/or funding support from other bodies in place or promised will be scored more highly in the assessment.

## **7.0 APPLICATION PROCESS**

### **7.1 Who can apply**

To qualify to apply for a grant, organisations must meet the criteria listed below:

- Operate within the Cheshire East Borough Council area;
- Be a voluntary or community organisation, registered charity or other not for profit organisation;
- Be a Town or Parish Council that can match fund at least 50% of the projected scheme costs;
- Have a set of audited accounts, or as a minimum an organisation bank statement, and be able to provide such information as reasonably required in order to satisfy the Council as to the organisations financial position and its need for the assistance requested;
- Have a constituted management committee with a signed constitution. Informal organisations who do not yet have a signed constitution may still be eligible to apply, but must commit to establishing a management committee and submitting a signed constitution prior to any award of grant;
- Have appropriate safeguarding policies relevant to their organisation where children, young people or vulnerable adults are involved, which must include a requirement that staff / volunteers must be cleared with the Disclosure and Barring Service; and
- Have their own bank or building society account with two signatories.

### **7.2 How to apply**

- All applications for a grant must be made using the “Transport & Accessibility Grant Scheme Application Form”, which is available on the Council’s website or as a paper version on request;
- The application form must be completed in full – incomplete forms will be rejected;
- Applicants will need to include a copy of their signed constitution, or a written commitment to submit a signed constitution prior to any grant payment, as well as the supporting documentation listed in section 8 of the application



form. If these documents are not provided then the application will be treated as incomplete;

- Applicants will be notified of the closing date for submission of applications;
- All successful applicants will be required to complete a post grant monitoring report as per section 6 of this policy.

### **7.3 What cannot be funded?**

- Organisations which hold substantial free reserves, including local branches of national or regional organisations which hold free reserves that could be utilised;
- Work which has already taken place before receipt of offer letter;
- Individuals;
- General appeals, sponsorship or fundraising for national or local charities (including local branches) or other local organisations;
- Activities of a mainly political nature;
- Refreshments and/or accommodation;
- Projects or activities organised for the sole benefit of students of a school or college;
- Projects or activities for the sole benefit of organisations that derive the majority of funding from other Council sources or Council funded clients (e.g. day centres);
- Events which do not involve members of the local community participating;
- Repair costs where deterioration is due to neglect;
- Loan against loss or debt;
- Land purchase;
- Disabled facilities where the upgrading is required for an existing facility to meet the statutory requirements of the Equality Act 2010;
- Organisations which are not based in Cheshire East, unless they can demonstrate significant community benefits within Cheshire East.

### **7.4 General Conditions**

#### Financial Management & Monitoring

- Grants are classed as one-off and applicants should not assume any further Council funding beyond the initial grant;
- Organisations successful in applying for a small grant (up to £9,999) will be required to sign a Grant Offer Acceptance Form confirming that the grant will be spent in line with the application and terms and conditions of funding. Organisations that are successful in applying for a large grant (over £10,000) will be required to sign a Grant Agreement with the Council;
- Expenditure must not be incurred on the project, activity or initiative prior to the grant decision being given. In these circumstances the Council will withdraw the grant offer/rescind the grant decision;

- Organisations who are in receipt of other funding from the Council may apply to this grant scheme if the project is considered to provide an additional service to that already funded;
- All other sources of funding must be clearly stated in the application form;
- Any surplus from the project must be used to further develop the organisation or for any future transport and accessibility projects and not used to support other organisations;
- Organisations must notify the Council of any changes in circumstances which affect their financial position throughout the period in which the grant monies are being used;
- If the project or activity is cancelled, or only partially achieved, or if the organisation is wound up, any unused grant money must be returned to the Council;
- All conditions under which the grant has been awarded, including any additional conditions stipulated at the time of the award, must be met. Failure to do so could result in the organisation being asked to repay the grant award to the Council.

#### Implementation - Monitoring & Compliance

- Grants are awarded specifically for the purpose stated in the application. Should it be spent in any other way, without written approval from the Council, the organisation may become liable to return the monies paid;
- Any vehicles, whether leased, hired or purchased, must be insured against loss, theft, accidental damage (etc) for the period of the grant and a reasonable period thereafter;
- If the project involves work on land or a building, the applicant must own the freehold of the land or the building, or hold a lease that can not be brought to an end by the landlord for at least 5 years;
- Invoices or receipts must be forwarded to the Council's Transport Team after 6 months and again after 12 months (if applicable) of the date of offer letter. Failure to provide this information within the timescale may result in the Council recovering the grant paid;
- A monitoring report describing the project (including photographs) and summarising the transport outputs and how the community has benefited must be submitted on completion, or within 12 months of the date of offer letter.

#### Equality Opportunities

- Organisations must be committed to and have policies on Equal Opportunities and provide a copy of its equalities policy. Organisations must not discriminate on the grounds of age, gender, race, colour, nationality, national or ethnic origin, disability, religious belief or non belief, marital status or sexual orientation, but can direct some or all of its activities at specific groups where the intention is address discrimination or disadvantage.

#### Communication & Promotions

- Organisations must acknowledge the support of Cheshire East Council in press releases, publicity and advertising (etc);
- The organisation will allow Cheshire East Council to use details of the grant award, together with any relevant photographs supplied, in newsletters and on the Council's website.

### **8.0 DECISION MAKING PROCESS**

- 8.1 Following the closure of the bidding window for each funding round, a detailed assessment of each application will be undertaken in line with the assessment criteria outlined above. The Transport Team will prepare a recommendations report to be considered by the Portfolio Holder.
- 8.2 A Portfolio Holder Decision Meeting will then be held to decide on the grant awards. Following this meeting, a Portfolio Holders report is circulated to all elected members by Democratic Services, allowing for a 5 day call in period. Should any objections be made during the 5 day call in period a further Portfolio Holder meeting is held to discuss the objection(s) and adjust as is necessary.
- 8.3 There may be a need to add special conditions to the award of some applications to ensure that the purpose of the funding is achieved. For example, if a project is dependent on other sources of funding being secured then a conditional offer may be made. These special conditions may be recommended by officers, by the Portfolio Holder or following call-in of the decision.
- 8.4 If there are no objections (or after the follow up meeting), the applicants are notified to inform them of whether they have been successful or not as soon as possible after the call in period has ended and generally within 6 weeks after the closing date for applications.
- 8.5 All decisions are final.
- 8.6 Complaints about any aspect of the Transport & Accessibility Grant Scheme process will be dealt with under the Council's Corporate Complaints Procedure. A copy of the Council's Corporate Complaints, Compliments and Suggestions Policy is available on the Council's website<sup>3</sup>.

### **9.0 MONITORING AND RECORD KEEPING**

- 9.1 Following a successful application and in order to ensure that monies are used in an appropriate manner, as set out in the conditions for funding, a monitoring process will take place throughout the duration of the project.

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<sup>3</sup> [www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/council\\_and\\_democracy/customer\\_services/complaints\\_and\\_feedback.aspx](http://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/council_and_democracy/customer_services/complaints_and_feedback.aspx)

- 9.2 The Council reserves the right to monitor the use of the grant and ask for evidence to support the delivery of a project / initiative in line with the original application. Invoices or receipts must be forwarded to the Council's Transport Team after 6 months and again after 12 months (if applicable) of the date of offer letter. Failure to provide this information within the timescale may result in the Council recovering the grant paid.
- 9.3 The organisation will allow reasonable access to premises/accounts upon request from the Council.
- 9.4 Organisations need to retain records relating to the grant for an appropriate period (to be advised depending on the grant).
- 9.5 A monitoring report will be required on completion of the project, or within 12 months of the date of offer letter, which shall include (but shall not be limited to):
- A description of the project and how the grant money was used;
  - How many people benefitted from the project;
  - The characteristics of the people who benefitted;
  - Photographs of the project or initiative in action;
  - If any surplus was made and how it was used;
  - Plans for continuing the scheme in future; and
  - What difference the project made to the organisation and/or local people.
- 9.6 If organisations do not supply the required monitoring reports, in full and within the set time scale they will not be eligible to apply to the scheme again and may be asked to repay the grant funding to the Council.

**Policy & Accessibility Team  
Cheshire East Transport  
October 2013**

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## **APPENDIX 2**

# **POLICY FOR THE ALLOCATION OF SURPLUS COUNCIL VEHICLES TO COMMUNITY & VOLUNTARY GROUPS**

**October 2013**

## **CONTENTS**

**1.0** Introduction

**2.0** Background

**3.0** Legal & Budgetary Framework

**4.0** Application Process

- Who can apply– eligibility criteria
- How to apply
- Criteria for allocating vehicles
- General Conditions

**5.0** Decision-Making Process

**6.0** Monitoring & Record Keeping



## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 Cheshire East Council's Transport Service has a number of fleet vehicles that are surplus to its requirements and wishes to release the vehicles for use by local community and voluntary groups across the borough.
- 1.2 The aim of allocating surplus vehicles to the community and voluntary sector is to help support community-led transport initiatives that will improve access to key services such as health care, shopping and leisure facilities. The types of schemes which may be supported by the gifting of a vehicle include community bus schemes operated "by the community, for the community".
- 1.3 Allocating vehicles to local communities aims to help deliver the priorities in the Sustainable Community Strategy<sup>1</sup> (Ambition for All) and the associated Local Transport Plan<sup>2</sup> (LTP), particularly the policies within the LTP relating to 'Nurturing Strong Communities'.
- 1.4 When using the term "allocation" or "gifting" of vehicles in this policy, it refers to the giving of a Council vehicle to community and voluntary organisations through an application and assessment process. This policy sets out the eligibility criteria to apply, as well as the criteria for assessing applications, the process for decision-making, governance arrangements, and the monitoring requirements of the scheme.

## **2.0 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 Cohesive, empowered and active communities in which people can influence the decisions that affect their locality is at the heart of the Sustainable Community Strategy for Cheshire East. It is recognised that local communities are often best placed to identify their own transport and accessibility needs and in some cases have the capacity to develop local solutions.
- 2.2 Many communities across the borough have a history of self help and coming up with innovative ways of serving local people, whether it is giving someone a lift to a doctor's appointment, or establishing a Good Neighbour Scheme or Communicare Scheme. This can be particularly important in rural areas where access to mainstream services is more difficult.
- 2.3 The Council is seeking to work in partnership with communities to understand the range of transport needs at a local level and work together to support community-led solutions wherever possible. The gifting of a council vehicle to these groups will support the development of grass roots initiatives and empower local people to develop a range of community-led solutions.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/community\\_and\\_living/pace\\_strategic\\_partnerships/sustainable\\_community\\_strategy.aspx](http://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/community_and_living/pace_strategic_partnerships/sustainable_community_strategy.aspx)

<sup>2</sup> [www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/transport\\_and\\_travel/local\\_transport\\_plan.aspx](http://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/transport_and_travel/local_transport_plan.aspx)

### **3.0 LEGAL AND BUDGETARY FRAMEWORK**

- 3.1 This policy has been approved by Cheshire East Council's Cabinet who have delegated authority for the assessment of applications for the allocation of a vehicle to the Portfolio Holder for the Environment (or subsequent Cabinet Member with responsibility for transport).
- 3.2 On each occasion that the Council has a pool of vehicles which are surplus to requirements and ready to be gifted to community groups, a bidding round will be launched inviting applications from community and voluntary groups. Please note that the Council will not purchase vehicles with the sole aim of gifting to community groups.
- 3.3 The Council aims to benefit as many organisations as possible; however, given the limited number of vehicles available and the potential number of community groups who may wish to be gifted a vehicle, a competitive application process has been developed. The Council therefore cannot guarantee that all applications for a surplus vehicle will be successful. All decisions will be based on the assessment criteria set out in section 4.3, which provides a fair and equitable way to assess applications and allocate vehicles.
- 3.4 As part of the launch of each bidding round, a proportion of the available budget will be set aside to advertise the opportunity and ensure that potential / eligible applicants are aware of the scheme through appropriate communications.

### **4.0 APPLICATION PROCESS**

#### **4.1 Who can apply**

To qualify to apply for a vehicle, organisations must meet the criteria listed below:

- Operate within the Cheshire East Borough Council area;
- Be a voluntary or community organisation, registered charity or other not for profit organisation;
- Have a set of audited accounts, or as a minimum an organisation bank statement, and be able to provide such information as reasonably required in order to satisfy the Council as to the organisations financial position and its need for the assistance requested;
- Have a constituted management committee with a signed constitution. Informal organisations who do not yet have a signed constitution may still be eligible to apply, but must commit to establishing a management committee and submitting a signed constitution prior to any award of grant;
- Have appropriate safeguarding policies relevant to their organisation where children, young people or vulnerable adults are involved, which must include a

requirement that staff / volunteers must be cleared with the Disclosure and Barring Service; and

- Have their own bank or building society account with two signatories.

#### 4.2 How to apply

- All applications for a vehicle must be made using the “Application Form for the Gifting of a Surplus Council Vehicle”, which is available on the Council’s website or as a paper version on request;
- The application form must be completed in full – incomplete forms will be rejected;
- Applicants will need to include a copy of their signed constitution, or a written commitment to submit a signed constitution prior to any grant payment, as well as the supporting documentation listed in section 8 of the application form. If these documents are not provided then the application will be treated as incomplete;
- Applicants will be notified of the closing date for submission of applications;
- All successful applicants will be required to complete a post grant monitoring report as per section 6 of this policy.

#### 4.3 Criteria for allocating vehicles

The criteria which all applications will be assessed and scored against are:

Criteria	Description
Access to Services	The vehicle must be used to improve access to key services and make it easier for residents to get to health care, shopping, leisure facilities and other essential services. Ideas which show innovation and creativity are encouraged.
Disadvantaged Groups	Projects which have a particular focus on disadvantaged groups or areas, such as disabled people, older people, young people and those without access to public or private transport, will be scored more highly.
Community Involvement	Applications must demonstrate a high level of community involvement, or the ability to increase community involvement and attract more participants/volunteers through the project.
Sustainability	The aim is for schemes to be sustainable beyond the initial grant funding period and continue to benefit the community into the future. Applications must demonstrate the potential for the project to be sustained in the future.
Other Funding Sources	Applications which have funding contributions from the organisations own funds and/or funding support from other bodies in place or promised will be scored more highly in the assessment.

#### **4.4 General Conditions**

- The gifting of a vehicle is classed as one-off;
- Before the vehicle is released to a successful applicant, the organisation must sign an agreement to confirm that they will become the owner and registered keeper of the vehicle in the condition as of the date of transfer. The agreement will confirm that the organisation will pay all the future running costs of the vehicle, including service, maintenance, Tax, MOT and appropriately license the vehicle for the purposes outlined in their application form;
- Organisations who are in receipt of other funding from the Council may apply for a vehicle if the project is considered to provide an additional service to that already funded;
- All other sources of funding must be clearly stated in the application form;
- Any surplus from the project must be used to further develop the organisation or for any future community transport projects and not used to support other organisations;
- Organisations must notify the Council of any changes in circumstances which affect their financial position throughout the period in which the grant monies are being used;
- All conditions under which the vehicle is awarded, including any additional conditions stipulated at the time of the award, must be met;
- Vehicles are allocated specifically for the purpose stated in the application;
- A monitoring report describing the project (including photographs) and summarising the transport outputs and how the community has benefited from use of the vehicle must be submitted on completion, or within 12 months of the date of offer letter;
- Organisations must be committed to and have policies on Equal Opportunities and provide a copy of its equalities policy. Organisations must not discriminate on the grounds of age, gender, race, colour, nationality, national or ethnic origin, disability, religious belief or non belief, marital status or sexual orientation, but can direct some or all of its activities at specific groups where the intention is address discrimination or disadvantage;
- Organisations must acknowledge the support of Cheshire East Council in press releases, publicity and advertising (etc);
- The organisation will allow Cheshire East Council to use details of what the vehicle was used for together with any relevant photographs supplied, in newsletters and on the Council's website.

#### **5.0 DECISION MAKING PROCESS**

- 5.1 Following the closure of each bidding window, a detailed assessment of each application will be undertaken in line with the criteria outlined above. The Transport Team will prepare a recommendations report to be considered by the Portfolio Holder.

- 5.2 A Portfolio Holder Decision Meeting will then be held to decide on the allocation of vehicles. Following this meeting, a Portfolio Holders report is circulated to all elected members by Democratic Services, allowing for a 5 day call in period. Should any objections be made during the 5 day call in period a further Portfolio Holder meeting is held to discuss the objection(s) and adjust as is necessary.
- 5.3 There may be a need to add special conditions to the application to ensure that the purpose of the gifting is achieved. For example, if a project is dependent on other sources of funding being secured then a conditional offer may be made. These special conditions may be recommended by officers, by the Portfolio Holder or following call-in of the decision.
- 5.4 If there are no objections (or after the follow up meeting), the applicants are notified to inform them of whether they have been successful or not as soon as possible after the call in period has ended and generally within 6 weeks after the closing date for applications.
- 5.5 All decisions are final.
- 5.6 Complaints about any aspect of the Community Transport Grant Scheme process will be dealt with under the Council's Corporate Complaints Procedure. A copy of the Council's Corporate Complaints, Compliments and Suggestions Policy is available on the Council's website<sup>3</sup>.

## **6.0 MONITORING AND RECORD KEEPING**

- 6.1 The Council reserves the right to monitor the use of the vehicle and ask for evidence to support an application.
- 6.2 The organisation will allow reasonable access to premises/accounts upon request from the Council.
- 6.3 Organisations need to retain records relating to what they have used the vehicle for an appropriate period (to be advised).
- 6.4 A monitoring report will be required on completion of the project, or within 12 months of the date of offer letter, which shall include (but shall not be limited to):
- A description of the project and how the vehicle was used;
  - How many people benefitted from the project;
  - The characteristics of the people who benefitted;
  - Photographs of the project or initiative in action;
  - If a surplus was made and how it was used;

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<sup>3</sup> [www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/council\\_and\\_democracy/customer\\_services/complaints\\_and\\_feedback.aspx](http://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/council_and_democracy/customer_services/complaints_and_feedback.aspx)

- Plans for continuing the scheme in future; and
- What difference the project made to the organisation and/or local people.

**Policy & Accessibility Team  
Cheshire East Transport  
October 2013**

## **APPENDIX 3**

# **POLICY FOR THE ALLOCATION OF LOCAL SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT FUND BUSINESS TRAVEL PLANNING GRANTS**

October 2013



## **CONTENTS**

### **1.0 Introduction**

### **2.0 Legal & Budgetary Framework**

### **3.0 Application Process**

- Who can apply– eligibility criteria
- How to apply
- What can be funded
- Assessment criteria
- What cannot be funded
- General Conditions

### **4.0 Decision-Making Process**

### **5.0 Monitoring & Record Keeping**

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Cheshire East Council has been successful in securing £3.5m from the Department for Transport's Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF). In line with the original funding bid<sup>1</sup>, the Council's LSTF programme focuses on transport measures which help to unlock the growth potential of Crewe in a low carbon way.
- 1.2 As part of the LSTF programme, the Council has a formal Partnership Agreement with the South Cheshire Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SCCCI). The aim of the partnership is to encourage businesses and employers in Crewe to adopt travel initiatives which enable their staff to travel to and from work sustainably.
- 1.3 Increasing the levels of walking, cycling, public transport and car sharing at key employment sites has a range of positive benefits for the employer, employee and wider community, including:
  - Reduced car park problems on employment sites in Crewe
  - Reduced traffic congestion in and around the Crewe urban area
  - Improved health and wellbeing through increased physical activity
- 1.4 To help achieve these aims and objectives, Cheshire East Council, in partnership with the South Cheshire Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCCI), operates an LSTF Business Travel Planning Grant Scheme for organisations located within the Crewe urban area.
- 1.5 The aim of the Grants Scheme is to support businesses and employers in Crewe to implement measures that will encourage their staff to travel more sustainably. This may include improved facilities, such as cycle parking, signage and lighting, as well as promotional campaigns and incentives.
- 1.6 The LSTF funding period and associated Partnership Agreement with SCCCI end on 31 March 2015. This policy and Grant Scheme will also end on the same date as the grants which are awarded under this policy are funded by the Department for Transport in line with the LSTF Grant Agreement with the Council.
- 1.7 When using the term "grants" in this policy, it refers to the giving of a fixed amount of funds to organisations through an application and assessment process. This policy sets out the criteria applicants must meet to be eligible to apply, as well as the criteria for assessing grant applications, the process for decision-making, governance arrangements and the monitoring requirements of the Grant Scheme.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/transport\\_and\\_travel.aspx](http://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/transport_and_travel.aspx)

## **2.0 LEGAL AND BUDGETARY FRAMEWORK**

- 2.1 This policy has been approved by Cheshire East Council's Cabinet who have delegated authority for the assessment of applications and the decisions on award of grants to the Portfolio Holder for the Environment (or subsequent Cabinet Member with responsibility for transport).
- 2.2 There will be three bidding windows during the term of the LSTF programme which ends on 31 March 2015 – one in the 2013/14 financial year and two in the 2014/15 financial year. The budget available for each bidding round is fixed prior to inviting applications so that there is clarity on the limited amount of capital and revenue funding available for each funding round.
- 2.3 Given the fixed budget and the Council's aim to benefit as many organisations as possible, the Council cannot guarantee to fund the maximum amount applied for; therefore organisations must ensure that they have procedures in place to cover the balance of funding required.
- 2.4 The decisions on award of grants will be based on the assessment criteria set out in section 3.4 of this policy, which provide a fair and equitable way to assess applications and award the grants.
- 2.5 As part of the launch of each funding round, a proportion of the LSTF budget will be set aside to advertise the Grant Scheme and ensure that potential / eligible applicants are aware of the scheme through appropriate communications.

## **3.0 APPLICATION PROCESS**

### **3.1 Who can apply**

To qualify to apply for a grant, organisations must meet the criteria listed below:

- Be a business or employer located within Crewe;
- Complete the application form in full, providing all required information;
- Have not already received an LSTF Business Travel Planning grant for the same purpose within the current financial year;
- Agree to engage with the SCCC on the business travel planning project.

### **3.2 How to apply**

- All applications must be made using the Council's "LSTF Business Travel Planning Grant Application Form", which is available on the Council's website or as a paper version on request;

- The application form must be completed in full – incomplete application forms will be rejected;
- The closing dates for each funding round will be set out on the application form;
- All successful applicants will be required to complete a post grant monitoring in line with section 6 of this policy.

### 3.3 What can be funded

Under this policy, grants of up to **£4,999** can be awarded to support businesses and employers located within Crewe that are looking to address transport issues faced by their business and/or employees by implementing measures that will facilitate the uptake of more sustainable travel modes. Examples of possible measures and initiatives which may be supported through the Grant Scheme are listed below.

<u>Capital Funding – Examples</u>	<u>Revenue Funding – Examples</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision of covered, secure cycle racks</li> <li>• Improved footpath access</li> <li>• Improved signage and/or lighting</li> <li>• Provision of personal protective equipment for cyclists</li> <li>• Installation of lockers/shower facilities for walkers/cyclists</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marketing, publicity and promotional material for sustainable travel options</li> <li>• Establishing a car share scheme</li> <li>• Launch of sustainable travel initiatives</li> <li>• Incentives to encourage staff to travel sustainably (e.g. pedometers)</li> <li>• Subsidised bus tickets</li> </ul>

3.4 **Assessment criteria** – the criteria for assessing applications are set out below:

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Description</b>
Modal Shift	The measure / scheme / initiative must promote and encourage employees to walk, cycle, use public transport or car share for their journey to and from work, as well as business travel.
Evidence & Monitoring	Applications should include a process for monitoring the effectiveness of the initiative in addressing the transport issues and achieving the desired outcome.
Match Funding	Have funding contributions (financial or time resources) from the organisation's own funds and/or funding support from other bodies either in place or allocated.
Financial Sustainability	Applications should consider the sustainability of any measures (particularly revenue funded) beyond the grant funding and demonstrate the potential to sustain measures in the future.

### **3.5 What cannot be funded**

- Work which has already taken place before receipt of offer letter;
- Repair costs where deterioration is due to neglect;
- Loan against loss or debt;
- Vehicle purchase;
- Disabled facilities where there is no proven need for the work to be carried out or where upgrading is required for an existing facility to meet the statutory requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

### **3.6 General Conditions**

- Grants are classed as one-off and should not be seen as repeat funding;
- Organisations will be required to sign a Grant Offer Acceptance Form confirming that the grant will be spent in line with the application and terms and conditions of funding;
- Grants are awarded specifically for the purpose stated in the application. Should it be spent in any other way, without written approval from the Council, the organisation may become liable to return the monies paid;
- Repeat applications from the same organisation for the same purpose in one financial year will not be considered;
- Grants will be paid in advance. Invoices or receipts must be forwarded to the LSTF Programme Manager within 6 months of the date of offer letter. Failure to provide this information within the timescale will result in the Council recovering the grant paid;
- Organisations who are in receipt of other funding from the Council may apply to this grant scheme if the grant is required for a one-off project which is considered additional to that already funded;
- If planning permission is required, this must be in place before the grant application is made. The Council may ask for confirmation that planning permission is not required, or that it is required and has been granted;
- Organisations must be committed to Equal Opportunities and the Equal Opportunities Policy should be provided;
- Organisations must be able to participate in a monitoring process and provide monitoring information to evidence the implementation and uptake of the sustainable travel measures and adherence to the conditions of the grant. This must include receipts or invoices and a written report of the project, activity or event, plus photographs if possible, on completion;
- Organisations must acknowledge the support of Cheshire East Council and SCCCI in press releases, publicity and advertising etc;
- The organisation will allow Cheshire East Council and SCCCI to use details of the grant award, together with any relevant photographs supplied, in newsletters and on their respective websites;

- Expenditure must not be incurred on the project, activity or event prior to the grant decision being given. In these circumstances the Council will withdraw the grant offer/rescind the grant decision;
- If the project, event or activity is cancelled or only partially achieved, or if the organisation is wound up, any unused grant money must be returned to the Council;
- All conditions under which the grant has been awarded, including any additional conditions stipulated at the time of the award, must be met. Failure to do so could result in the organisation being asked to repay the grant award to the Council;
- The Council cannot guarantee to fund the full amount requested. In the event that the LSTF Business Travel Planning grant fund is over-subscribed, grants may be awarded on a pro-rata basis. Procedures must be in place to cover the balance of funding required, as it is necessary to provide receipts for the full amount of your project. A financial contribution from your own organisation, or match funding from another organisation, will generally be considered to be evidence of commitment to the project and its longer term viability.

#### **4.0 DECISION MAKING PROCESS**

- 4.1 Following the closure of the bidding window for each funding round, a detailed assessment of each application will be undertaken in line with the assessment criteria outlined above. The Transport Team in partnership with SCCCI will prepare a recommendations report to be considered by the Portfolio Holder.
- 4.2 A Portfolio Holder Decision Meeting will then be held to decide on the grant awards. Following this meeting, a Portfolio Holders report is circulated to all elected members by Democratic Services, allowing for a 5 day call in period. Should any objections be made during the 5 day call in period a further Portfolio Holder meeting is held to discuss the objection(s) and adjust as is necessary.
- 4.3 There may be a need to add special conditions to the award of some applications to ensure that the purpose of the funding is achieved. For example, if a project is dependent on other sources of funding being secured then a conditional offer may be made. These special conditions may be recommended by officers, by the Portfolio Holder or following call-in of the decision.
- 4.4 If there are no objections (or after the follow up meeting), the applicants are notified to inform them of whether they have been successful or not as soon as possible after the call in period has ended and generally within 6 weeks after the closing date for applications.
- 4.5 All decisions are final.
- 4.6 Complaints about any aspect of the Transport & Accessibility Grant Scheme process will be dealt with under the Council's Corporate Complaints Procedure. A

copy of the Council's Corporate Complaints, Compliments and Suggestions Policy is available on the Council's website<sup>2</sup>.

## **5.0 MONITORING AND RECORD KEEPING**

- 5.1 Following a successful application and in order to ensure that monies are used in an appropriate manner, as set out in the conditions for funding, a monitoring process will take place throughout the duration of the project.
- 5.2 The Council reserves the right to monitor the use of the grant and ask for evidence to support an application.
- 5.3 Invoices or receipts must be forwarded to the LSTF Programme Manager within 6 months of the date of offer letter. Failure to provide this information within the timescale will result in the Council recovering the grant paid.
- 5.4 The organisation will allow reasonable access to premises/accounts upon request from the Council.
- 5.5 Organisations need to retain records relating to the grant for an appropriate period (to be advised depending on the grant).
- 5.6 A monitoring report will be required on completion of the project, or within 12 months of the date of offer letter, which shall include (but shall not be limited to):
  - A description of the project and how the grant money was used;
  - Modal shift as a result of the intervention;
  - How many people benefitted from the project;
  - Photographs of the project or initiative in action;
  - Plans for continuing the project or initiative in future; and
  - What difference the project made to employees, the employer and the wider community.
- 5.7 If organisations do not supply the required monitoring reports, in full and within the set time scale they will not be eligible to apply to the scheme again and may be asked to repay the grant funding to the Council.

**Policy & Accessibility Team  
Cheshire East Transport  
October 2013**

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<sup>2</sup> [www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/council\\_and\\_democracy/customer\\_services/complaints\\_and\\_feedback.aspx](http://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/council_and_democracy/customer_services/complaints_and_feedback.aspx)



## CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

### Cabinet

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<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	15 <sup>th</sup> October 2013
<b>Report of:</b>	Head of Environmental Protection & Enhancement
<b>Subject/Title:</b>	Major Change Project 6.4 – Environmental Operations Change Programme (previously known as “Determine future delivery model for waste management services”) (Forward Plan Ref: 13/14-48)
<b>Portfolio Holder:</b>	Cllr David Topping, Environment

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#### 1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 Since the cabinet report in June 2013, significant work has been carried out to further define and scope out the overall Environmental Operations Change Programme and the five major project strands within it. The transformation team have worked closely with Members, Corporate Enablers, Trade Union representatives and Employees to consult on and further formulate the proposals. The team have also further defined the related cost of investment and capital investment required to deliver the overall programme and the projects within it, these being:
- A. Existing Service Efficiency Review
  - B. Future Service Delivery Model
  - C. Review of Depot Infrastructure
  - D. Interim Residual Waste Solutions & Longer Term Procurement
  - E. Strategy (which is being governed through the Policy Development Group (PDG) process and is likely to form a separate paper at a future date)
- 1.2 Cabinet took a decision in principle in June 2013 to progress with the development of a wholly owned company for the Waste and Recycling Management Service. As the project has progressed and in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for the Environment, it has been recognised that other operational services needed to be considered. Therefore, the scope has been broadened to include Waste and Recycling Management Services, Fleet Management Services and Streetscape Services. In addition, running in parallel to this, was the proposed transfer of the Mechanical Sweeping operation to the Highways Service. However following further investigation and engagement with Members and Trade Union Representatives, it was acknowledged that this activity offers greater opportunities by being incorporated into the scope of the new wholly owned company for Environmental Operations.
- 1.3 Significant progress has been made to move this transformation programme forward to the benefit of Cheshire East residents. In order to meet the

Council's future Business Plan objectives and outcomes around value for money and sustainability, there is a need to invest in depot and fleet infrastructure to ensure that the service can address future needs whilst retaining its current high customer satisfaction levels. To this end, a wholly owned company has now been registered with Companies House which will help to facilitate culture change, improving responsiveness and enabling a stronger focus on delivering targeted services to Cheshire East residents.

- 1.4 As per the requirements of the June 2013 cabinet report, the report tracks progress made against the various project streams and focuses specifically on agreed milestones including the recommended legal form. In addition the report clarifies the scope of the proposed alternative delivery vehicle.

## **2.0 Recommendations**

Cabinet is recommended to:

### **2.1 Programme and Project Cost of Investment**

Note and approve that the revenue cost of investment needed to support programme delivery this year is available from existing approved transformation budgets. *(See Section 7).*

### **2.2 Future Service Delivery Model**

Note and approving the findings of the options appraisal submitted to Cabinet in June 2013 and subsequent legal advice that has concluded that the most appropriate delivery model is that of a Teckal exempt, wholly owned company (WOC) limited by shares. *(See Appendix 3 for further details including an update on key milestones from the June 2013 Cabinet report).*

- 2.3 Approve the defined scope which previously focused on the Waste delivery model to include:

- Waste and Recycling Management Service
- Fleet Management Service
- Streetscape Service (Mechanical Sweepers, Grounds Maintenance & Street Cleansing - *see Appendix 3 for further details*).

- 2.4 Agree that the WOC formed in June 2013 includes the defined scope and the transfer of the Waste and Recycling Management Service, the Fleet Service and the Streetscape Service with an effective operational target date of January 2014 subject to internal and external dependencies.

### **2.5 Depot infrastructure**

Note and approve that further to the June 2013 Cabinet Report that depot infrastructure work is progressing. Feasibility work is ongoing with a detailed scope of improvements developed for Pym's Lane that include improvements

to the transfer tip along with improved welfare facilities. The Northern depot solution is still being developed (*further detail is available in section 7*).

## 2.6 Replacement of Fleet

To approve the procurement of a rolling fleet replacement programme to commence in 2014/15 which will be financed through existing revenue provision.

Recommend to Council a Supplementary Capital Estimate of £3m for the replacement of the 20 waste fleet vehicles in 2014/15. The vehicles will be procured through a framework agreement during 2013/14 to ensure delivery for June 2014 (*further detail is available in section 7*).

- 2.7 Give delegated authority to the Head of Environmental Protection and Enhancement (SRO for the Programme), the Monitoring Officer and the Section 151 Officer to commence the detailed implementation of the Environmental Operations Change Programme including the Wholly Owned Company and other project strands, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environment.

## 3.0 Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 There is a need to achieve best value for the services that the Council directly commissions and provides, and to reduce net operating cost wherever possible, whilst at the same time maintaining the best possible service for its residents in line with the Council's agreed three year plan.
- 3.2 The Environmental Operations Change Programme as a whole, delivers value for money in a sustainable way whilst also making a significant contribution to the mitigation of existing service risks around on-going service/business continuity, service delivery and contingency arrangements.
- 3.3 The revenue and capital funding requested supports programme delivery on the individual projects which in turn delivers £2.5m in savings by 2015/16 (as approved and included in the 2013-14 – 2015-16 Business Plan – Feb 2013) while also putting in place much needed fleet, depot and organisational infrastructure to support efficient operations, service/business continuity and the long term viability of the proposed WOC. The replacement vehicle programme will be procured through a framework agreement during 2013/14 to ensure delivery can commence in June 2014
- 3.4 As the project has evolved (Major Change Project 6.4), it has become apparent that the range of activities under review is wide ranging and critical to Service continuity. Therefore, it has been necessary to manage the project as a programme of change broken down into several individual project streams as outlined in 1.3 above, these being:
- A. Existing Service Efficiency Review
  - B. Future Service Delivery Model

- C. Review of Depot Infrastructure
- D. Interim Residual Waste Solutions & Longer Term Procurement
- E. Strategy

Although each project can largely be managed independently, it must be noted that none can be delivered/progressed in isolation and only when combined, will deliver the service improvements and benefits required, namely:

- Positive move away from landfill disposal methods;
- Maintaining current levels of service satisfaction (in excess of 85%) that the residents of Cheshire experience;
- Securing service cost reductions of £2.5m by 2015/16.

These inter-dependencies were acknowledged at the Executive Monitoring Board (EMB) during the quality assurance review, noting that the benefits realised in each project stream need managing at the project level but amalgamating at programme level in order to address the Council's objectives.

#### **4.0 Wards Affected**

- 4.1 All wards are affected.

#### **5.0 Local Ward Members**

- 5.1 All local ward members are affected.

#### **6.0 Policy Implications**

- 6.1 The Council's three-year plan budget principles – "We will ensure that those who provide services, whether in-house or externally, give real value for money".
- 6.2 This initiative aligns with Outcome 4 (Cheshire East is a green and sustainable place) of the Council's Three Year Plan.
- 6.3 The Council's Business Plan identifies efficiency savings linked to Waste Management services (Priority 6. Redefining the Council's role in core place-based services - 6.4: Determine future delivery model for waste management services and 6.2 Develop new delivery model for streetscape and bereavement).

#### **7.0 Financial Implications**

- 7.1 Revenue

Note that revenue cost of investment needed to support programme delivery this year is available from existing approved transformation budgets. Future

investment will be covered through the Council's business planning process. *(See Appendix 1: Programme Overview for further information)*

## 7.2 Capital

A Supplementary Capital Estimate of £3m is required for the replacement of the 20 waste fleet vehicles in 2014/15. The vehicles will be procured through a framework agreement and the procurement exercise will commence in November 2013.

Future capital investment requirements will be addressed as part of the Council's business planning process. *(See Appendix 1: Programme Overview for further information)*

## 8.0 Legal Implications

- 8.1 These were explored in detail in the June 2013 cabinet report including a commercially sensitive Part 2 paper. *(Further information is provided in the Appendix 1-5.)*

## 9.0 Risk Management

- 9.1 For specific details of the risk management factors for each strand of the programme please refer to the relevant Appendix to this report. *(Further information is provided in the Appendix 1-5.)*

## 10.0 Background and Options

- 10.1 Please refer to the June 2013 Cabinet report which contained detail on the background and options being considered. *(Further information is provided in the Appendix 1-5.)*

## 11.0 Access to Information

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer:

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## Appendix 1: Environmental Operations Change Programme Overview

### 1. Programme Activities

An Environmental Operations Change Programme Manager has been appointed in addition to Project Managers for each of the main strands together with Senior Responsible Owners. This should help manage interdependencies of activities and risks at both a project and programme level. Information and mitigation activities arising from this will also be fed into the Corporate Risk Register as appropriate.

Resource plans are now in place to support Programme delivery and detailed papers were submitted for endorsement by TEG and EMB in September 2013 as per the recommendation of the June cabinet report. Significant feasibility, project planning and risk analysis work has also taken place for each of the 5 main project strands.

### 2. Programme Financial Implications

2.1 Targeted **efficiency** savings of £2.5M at programme level by 2015/16 are on track. Detailed plans are in place for savings to be delivered in 2014/15 however further work is planned for those savings which are to be delivered in 2015/16. It is anticipated that the four main project strands will each contribute significantly to the overall savings target.

2.2 The table below gives an overview of the funding required to deliver the programme which amounts to approximately £12.4M over a three year period.

The Table Represents Revenue and Capital Requirements.	1	2	3	
Programme Funding Overview	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	Total
	£	£	£	£
<b>Approved Revenue COI Funding</b>	<b>340,000</b>	<b>200,000</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>540,000</b>
<b>Forecast Spend against original funding which includes Procurement Project</b>	<b>149,500</b>	<b>425,000</b>	<b>250,000</b>	<b>824,500</b>
<b>Further COI required:</b>				
Waste & Fleet WOC	332,700	-	-	<b>332,700</b>
Waste Strategy	44,500	-	-	<b>44,500</b>
Depot Infrastructure	-	-	-	-
Programme Level	40,370	60,000	60,000	<b>160,370</b>
<b>Total Revenue COI required (including</b>	<b>567,070</b>	<b>485,000</b>		<b>1,362,070</b>



existing budget):			310,000	
<b>Variance to Approved Revenue Budget (Bid)</b>	<b>227,070</b>	<b>285,000</b>	<b>310,000</b>	<b>822,070</b>
<b>Capital Spend (currently unfunded) Bid</b>	<b>2013-14</b>	<b>2014-15</b>	<b>2015-16</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Depot Infrastructure: North Depot &amp; WTS</b>	<b>50,000</b>	<b>3,500,000</b>	<b>3,450,000</b>	<b>7,000,000</b>
<b>Depot Infrastructure: South Depot &amp; WTS</b>	<b>1,000,000</b>	<b>1,400,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2,400,000</b>
<b>Supplementary Capital Estimate for the replacement of 20 vehicles 2014/15</b>	<b>2013-14</b>	<b>2014-15</b>	<b>2015-16</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Efficiency Project: Fleet</b>		<b>3,000,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3,000,000</b>
<b>Total Capital Required</b>	<b>2,450,000</b>	<b>6,500,000</b>	<b>3,450,000</b>	<b>12,400,000</b>

### 3. Programme Legal Implications

There are significant legal risks across the project in relation to the Wholly Owned Company model, the Procurement Strategy and the Depot Infrastructure Project in particular. These risks are being carefully managed with significant input from the Corporate Enabler team, particularly Legal Services. Currently although the risks remain high, these are considered manageable. The main legal implications remain unchanged from the June 2013 cabinet paper including the part 2 paper.

### 4. Programme Risks

Given the sheer scale of change that is proposed in the Environmental Operations Change Programme, the transformation team will need to balance business continuity needs with project demands. Business Continuity, Capacity, Ambitious Timescales, Long Term Viability, Reputation Management, Legal Challenge, Inability to deliver required cost savings are all risks to be managed at project and programme level. Careful consideration will be made at Programme Board level of interdependencies between risks and projects at a project, programme and corporate level and risks will then be deal with accordingly.

## **Appendix 2: Existing Service Efficiency Review**

1. This is on track to deliver £0.9M of the £1.1M of savings targeted from this project ahead of schedule. Further work is being undertaken to close the gap and it is anticipated that this will be completed ahead of the target dates in 2014/15 and 2015/16.
2. To support the delivery of this project up to £170K investment will be required to support one off project costs, in-cab technology and resourcing costs however this will be funded through in-year savings which have been brought forward ahead of schedule.
3. Instituting a rolling Fleet replacement programme: This will significantly reduce down time, management time, missed bins, rework and related customer complaints. The service currently experiences about 10% of its fleet breaking down on a daily basis due to the ageing nature of the current fleet which is beyond the recommended life for the vehicles. Already quantified are £168K of savings related to this specific measure however we anticipate the actual benefits being realised from this investment being significantly higher and helping to close the gap in the £2.5M savings target.
4. Please note while initial purchase will be through capital it will be financed through the existing revenue budget provision.

### **5. Risk Implications**

Top Risks for the Efficiency Project are Capacity, Ambitious Timescales, Inability to achieve forecast savings, Public Resistance to Change potentially undermining long term company viability and delivery of anticipated benefits. Strenuous efforts are being made to mitigate these while balancing the need to ensure service continuity as the top priority.

### **6. Legal Implications**

No legal implications currently anticipated other than need to comply with OJEU procurement regulations in relation to Fleet purchase.

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**Appendix 3: Future Service Delivery Model**

1. Specific actions relating to the proposed Alternative Delivery Vehicle that were endorsed at cabinet in June 2013 and subsequent progress is given below:

<b>Action description</b>	<b>Progress</b>
B.1 Review the legal advice and define the appropriate legal vehicle for the Company by 31/7/13	<p>Luan Kane (CEC Interim Company Lawyer) has advised the set up of the WOC as a Teckal exempt company, limited by shares.</p> <p>The Project Objective is therefore to create a wholly owned company (WOC), limited by shares, to deliver Environmental Operations and Fleet based services on behalf of the Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. That is Teckal exempt,</li> <li>b. That operates in a performance based environment (performance framework to be developed) that delivers high quality services to the residents of Cheshire East at market tested rates;</li> <li>c. That is commercially viable in the longer term;</li> <li>d. That contributes to the £2.5M in efficiency savings required at programme level;</li> <li>e. With a planned go live date of January 2014.</li> </ul> <p>This option recognises the benefits and dis-benefits set out in the options appraisal provided in the June cabinet report. (Further details are available from the report author). It seeks to mitigate risks to the council of any state aid allegations while still offering the option of up to 10% trading capability.</p>
B.2 Define and draw up the Company objects; set up the Company as a separate legal entity and establish its Memorandum and Articles of Association by 31/8/13	Company now incorporated.
B.3 Define the HR; Financial and Legal implications of the company set up; transfer of	Work has been on-going from mid July onwards to understand the implications of the new delivery model.

staff and the service contractual agreements;	<p>Work stream activities have been identified and in-year funding is available for this from existing transformation budgets.</p> <p>Benefits: Compared to pursuing an outsourced model, forming a WOC offers better value for money in both the short term (up to £500K less cost) and speed of set up is significantly quicker. In the longer term the benefit of any on-going efficiency savings and trading capability would be fed back to the council in the form of dividends lowering the real cost of delivering the service and offering value for money for residents without compromising on quality. We anticipate being able to make savings relating to Support Services costs in the region of 5-15% once the proposed “incubation period” has expired.</p>
B.4 Develop a three year business plan for the company and set objectives against which its performance will be measured	This will be completed with a view to Shareholder Board approval no later than December 2013 assuming a planned go live date of January 2014.
B.5 Define and develop the arrangements between the Council and the Company for all/any support services required and draw up any required service agreement(s).	This will be completed prior to proposed TUPE transfer, currently forecast as January 2014.

**2. In scope for the proposed Environmental Operations Wholly Owned Company (WOC) are:**

- a. Waste & Recycling Management Services
- b. Fleet Management Services
- c. Streetscape (previously part of major change project 6.2) including the Mechanical Sweepers, Grounds Maintenance and Street Cleansing
- d. In addition, we are still defining, with the relevant service areas, where it would make sense to transfer staff from the Corporate Support Services and alternatively which services will be provided on a “buy back” basis in line with the proposed Corporate Core “incubation period”. HR and Legal advice will be taken on this prior to final

decisions being made as to which staff are eligible to transfer to the proposed WOC.

**3. Out of Scope:**

- a. Bereavement (which is the subject of a separate project)
- b. Public Rights of Way
- c. Countryside

- 4. Start date:** The proposed wholly owned company is expected to start formally trading from January 2014. The company has now been incorporated. We anticipate TUPE transfer of staff during January 2014. The proposed WOC will have responsibility for delivering the forecast efficiency savings that are to be realised during 2014/15 and 2015/16 with further savings anticipated as the company becomes less reliant on the Council's corporate services and begins to penetrate new market opportunities on a commercial basis achieving greater utilisation of resources and annual dividend payments back to the Council.

**5. Risk Implications**

Top Risks for the WOC are Capacity, Ambitious Timescales, Business Plan Formulation, Scope and ICT causing delays and potentially undermining long term company viability and delivery of anticipated benefits. Strenuous efforts are being made to mitigate these, partly through funding from the transformation budget which will allow the project to be appropriately resourced.

**6. Legal Implications**

Working closely with the Legal Services team to minimise the risk of any State Aid allegations. In addition, actively monitoring any new business development proposals to mitigate the risk of not fulfilling the criteria for Teckal exemption.

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#### Appendix 4: Procurement

1. Interim Residual Waste Solutions are expected to deliver £510K in benefits back to the council in line with the Part 2 paper included in the June Cabinet Report. While Cost of Investment for the procurement of long term supply contracts for the Waste Disposal elements are significant depending on whether a restricted or competitive dialogue process are followed, it is anticipated that this process will deliver major year-on-year budget benefits through lower supplier costs and waste to energy initiatives. This will form the subject of further work and will be reported through the monthly highlight reporting process.
2. **Risk and Legal implications:** There are risks associated with the proposed procurement strategy including legal risks which were highlighted in a Part 2 Paper in June 2013. The biggest remaining risks relate in Interim Residual Waste Solution Failure and associated costs of relaying waste from North to South which could be in the region of £22K per week. The project is intended to mitigate this risk supported also by the Depot Infrastructure Projects.



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## **Appendix 5: Strategy**

1. Work on the Strategy project has been divided into 2 phases with the first phase being to produce a high level strategy to inform the programme and its deliverables and the second phase being to produce a detailed strategy to take the Council through to 2030. It is anticipated that this will incur costs in the region of £45K including some external consultancy, environmental impact assessment work and public consultation. This strategy will then be reviewed every 5 years. It is anticipated that the governance of this project, particularly for phase 2, lies with the Policy Development Group with a paper to cabinet once options, costings and impacts are more developed prior to formal implementation.
2. The biggest risk to this project is that PDG could delay the formulation of the strategy impacting on the ability to deliver other elements of the Programme. The second biggest risk is that in a desire to be a leader across all elements of the Waste Strategy that the proposed strategy could be too expensive to be implemented. The intention is to mitigate this through discussion with PDG, informal cabinet and cabinet to ensure that the approach to Waste Strategy is aligned with Business Plan outcomes balancing the sustainability agenda with offering value for money.

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## CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

### Cabinet

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<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	15 <sup>th</sup> October 2013
<b>Report of:</b>	Head of Environmental Protection and Enhancement
<b>Subject/Title:</b>	Future Delivery Model for Bereavement Services (Forward Plan Ref: 13/14-32)
<b>Portfolio Holder:</b>	Cllr David Topping, Environment

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#### 1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 The report seeks Cabinet's approval to progress with the registration of a Wholly Owned Company (WOC) limited by shares to act as the Council's agent in managing the provision of Bereavement Services for the Council whilst work continues to develop the Business Case for future implementation.
- 1.2 The catalyst for change is driven by the need to invest in our buildings and services and to improve the quality of this service for local residents. This exciting opportunity will ensure that our services remain sustainable and able to provide high quality services in a dignified and sensitive manner for our local residents.

#### 2.0 Recommendations

It is recommended that

- 2.1 Cabinet approve the formation of a new wholly owned company that is limited by shares, benefiting from the Teckal exemption principles as the future management model for delivery of Bereavement Services.
- 2.2 Cabinet give delegated authority to the Head of Environmental Protection and Enhancement, the Borough Solicitor and the Section 151 Officer (and officers that are devolved those powers) to commence the detailed implementation of the WOC, (including, but not limited to, identifying the optimum procurement route) in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environment and is subject to the corporate project quality assurance process governed by the Executive Monitoring Board (EMB) to ensure that the project is reviewed prior to any future implementation.
- 2.3 Following the outcome of the actions contained within 2.2 above, Cabinet agree to the establishment of a Board of Directors for the company and the Portfolio Holder for Environment work with the Leader of the Council and Chief Executive to define the appointments of the Non Executive Directors,

nominating three Board Members to act as the Chairman, Vice Chairman and Director on the new Company Board of Directors.

### **3.0 Reasons for Recommendations**

- 3.1 The Council has realised the need to change the way future services are provided in order to create opportunities for innovation and provide service efficiencies. As a result, the Council has determined to take a more commissioning role.
- 3.2 The aspirations to deliver services and redefine our role in core place-based services are set out in the Three Year Plan. The development of a new delivery model for Bereavement Services forms part of that major Change Programme.

### **4.0 Scope of Services for the New Delivery Model**

- 4.1 Bereavement Services offer burial, cremation, memorial and bereavement support and currently provide a high quality, professional, caring and sensitive service. The service is responsible for two crematoria sited at Macclesfield and Crewe, and eleven cemeteries located within the boundaries of Cheshire East and the maintenance of the closed churchyards.
- 4.2 The Policy Development Group (PDG) considered various different options for the future delivery of this service. These included
- Continued In House Delivery
  - Outsourcing to a Private Contractor
  - Joint Venture Agreement
  - Wholly Owned Company
- 4.3 PDG concluded that a WOC would offer one of the quickest means of delivering change, promoting cost efficiencies and effectiveness whilst retaining control of a sensitive service area and managing the reputational risks associated with service delivery. It would also improve the speed of decision making and allow staff to develop and implement their entrepreneurial skills.
- 4.4 Whilst the Council would remain in control of the Company, the service would be able to operate with greater autonomy and pursue other innovative and creative opportunities that would otherwise be difficult for the service to secure in its current form.
- 4.5 The preferred legal solution for this WOC is a company that is limited by shares and this model is also being adopted for other new delivery vehicles within the Major Change Programme.
- 4.6 The Project is being presented to EMB on the 31<sup>st</sup> October and will be Governed in accordance with the corporate project quality assurance process.

## **5.0 Business Case - Why the project is needed?**

- 5.1 The operating model has historically proved effective although the changing operating environment and customer expectations mean that constraints do exist which can hamper performance and innovation. In recent years the service has also suffered from a lack of investment whilst facilities in neighbouring authorities have benefited from improvements in facilities/services. A private new facility will shortly be built in Northwich providing new and modern facilities and a broader range of services.
- 5.2 In reviewing the options, the focus remains on identifying a means of providing the service in a way which creates greater flexibility, is more commercially focused and yet retains and enhances existing relationships with local communities and community/voluntary and charitable groups.
- 5.3 There is a need to achieve best value for the services that the Council directly provides and reduce net operating costs wherever possible, whilst at the same time maintaining the best possible service for its residents in line with the Council's three year plan.
- 5.4 It is envisaged that there will be significant business development opportunities arising from having a trading arm and the income from the Company could either be reinvested in the company (with shareholder agreement) or shared with employees as part of a profit sharing agreement).
- 5.5 It is also anticipated that a variety of further benefits such as local employment opportunities and investment within local communities will be generated by the creation of a WOC.
- 5.6 Without direct intervention, we anticipate service standards and service users will decline as the continuing financial and operating constraints impact on the service over the coming years.
- 5.7 On 4<sup>th</sup> February 2013, the Council announced its three year plan, which consists of 29 Major Change Programmes covering 8 key priorities. The three year plan identifies the core purpose of the Council, reflects the changing role of local government, responds positively to the challenge of major funding reductions, and is in line with policy changes at both national and local levels. The Change Programme is a significant undertaking by the Council reflecting the need to ensure that we provide the right service that is value for money. This project is in line with the Council's three year plan: Priority six: Redefining the Council role in core place-based services and also the Major Change Programme 6.2 "Developing new delivery model for Streetscape and Bereavement Services"
- 5.8 Benefits

Moving to a wholly owned company model with Teckal exemption offers the following benefits:

- The continued provision of a sensitive and dignified service which is designed to help meet the needs of the individual.
- Aligns with the Council's objective and ambition to invest in innovative ways to deliver services and to be a commissioning organisation.
- Ability to operate under commercial terms and greater autonomy for the services
- Retention of jobs within the local economy.
- Benefits of improvements in service delivery are retained by the service, Council or WOC not shared with private sector.
- Core Council work can legitimately be devolved without a lengthy procurement exercise being required – benefit from Teckal exemption
- Opportunities for co-ownership with other Councils and a Teckal exempt model will provide opportunities for shared delivery
- Ability to generate surpluses to reinvest in the growth of the business or pass back to the Council as dividends
- Implementation of different terms and conditions for staff thus potential reduction in costs to the Council.
- Ability to influence and drive the direction of the service and attract partners
- Incentivisation of the team to drive the business forward.
- Opportunity to develop a new culture/brand
- Opportunities to reduce the core cost of the service

#### 5.9 Benefits realisation

Anticipated net benefits will start to be realised in 2014/15 increasing by approximately £5k - £10k a year until year 5. This project is anticipated to deliver net benefits of £261k, spread over the initial 5 year period, enabling the Council to continue to deliver Bereavement Services, while delivering best value to its residents.

This includes incremental savings on corporate costs of 5% each year for years 2 - 4.

#### 6.0 Wards Affected

6.1 All Wards are affected.

#### 7.0 Local Ward Members

7.1 All local Ward Members.

#### 8.0 Policy Implications

- 8.1 The project is identified in the Council's Three Year Plan as part of the major Change Programme to re-define the Council's role in core place-based services.

## 9.0 Financial Implications

- 9.1 The creation of the new legal entity should produce benefits, spread over the initial 5 year period, as shown in the table below.

	£k
Costs	(357)
Benefits	618
Net benefits / (Costs)	261
Payback	2.89 years
NPV	214
IRR	151%

- 9.2 This assumes that capital expenditure is incurred by Cheshire East Council (CEC) to ensure the cremators are replaced during 2013-14 and that the Crewe crematorium refurbishment scheme is taken forward.
- 9.3 The new company will provide Bereavement Services on behalf of CEC but all "existing" income streams will go directly to CEC.

## 10.0 Legal Implications

- 10.1 The services provided by the bereavement service are Part B services for the purposes of the Public Contracts Regulations 2006. A contract to provide such services does not have to comply with the full public procurement regime required by those regulations. However, case law has established that the Council would still be liable to ensure that the so-called treaty obligations (e.g. transparency and non-discrimination) are complied with. It is generally felt that the best way of ensuring that those duties are discharged is to carry out a full public procurement exercise. Were the Council to carry out a full public procurement exercise, then unless the Company was able to take advantage of the Teckal exemption, the Council could only award a contract to the Company if the Company was the successful tenderer.
- 10.2 However, the treaty obligations only apply if the service concerned was one, the procurement of which would be likely to attract interest from undertakings based in other member states. In practice, most people like to be buried close to where they or other family members live which suggests that cremation and cemetery services are not services that would be likely to attract interest from undertakings in other member states. If this is the case, the question of whether or not the Company qualifies for the Teckal exemption is irrelevant.
- 10.3 To qualify for the Teckal exemption, the Company must have no private sector ownership and provide at least 90% of its services to the public sector.



- 10.4 If the Council were to transfer the provision of the service to the Company this would result in the Company providing services to funeral directors and members of the public; thereby losing the Teckal exemption. Of course, such a transfer would not require the Teckal exemption in the circumstances set out in paragraph 10.2.
- 10.5 Were the Council to award the Company a contract to manage/operate the facilities on behalf of the Council (such that, for example, fees were payable to the Council and not to the Company) such a contract could be structured to be Teckal exempt.
- 10.6 The award of such a contract would trigger a TUPE transfer and both the Council and the Company would need to be mindful of the need to inform and consult those engaged in providing the service as to the manner in which they would be affected by the transfer.
- 10.7 The Council has power to award such a contract under statute including Part 1 Chapter 1 the Localism Act 2011 and s111 Local Government Act 1972.

#### **11.0 Risk Management**

- 11.1 The risks associated with this Project are captured in the Risk Log and will be reviewed and challenged at EMB.
- 11.2 There is one major risk to the Council that needs to be noted at this stage and it relates to the construction of a new private crematorium in Northwich, which, will be managed by Westerleigh Group LTD. It will principally serve the old Vale Royal area and may impact on funerals from Winsford and Middlewich.
- 11.3 To help mitigate a wider impact, the Council should undertake further works to the Crematoriums to ensure they can provide a similar standard of customer service and reduce leakage from a wider catchment area. An allowance for this should be included in the Asset Management Programme.
- 11.4 This risk would occur whether the service is transferred or remained in-house.

#### **12.0 Access to Information**

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer:

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## CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

### Cabinet

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<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	15 <sup>th</sup> October 2013
<b>Report of:</b>	Brenda Smith, Director of Adult Social Care and Independent Living
<b>Subject/Title:</b>	Domiciliary Care Framework (Forward Plan Ref: 13/14-19)
<b>Portfolio Holder:</b>	Cllr. Janet Clowes - Health and Adult Care

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#### 1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 Cheshire East Council is committed to helping people to live and die within their own home and will support them to remain active and independent for as long as possible. Domiciliary Care is the range of care and support services provided in peoples own home to enable them to remain independent. These services can range from a short call to assist with medication up to 24 hour live-in care.
- 1.2 In 2011/12 995,000 hours of domiciliary care were delivered to 764 service users at a cost of £16.5 million. 97% of these hours were provided by the independent sector. In response to customer preference and demand the Council are committed to developing this type of care provision as an alternative to residential based care services.
- 1.3 Residents of Cheshire East are given the opportunity to have a direct payment to enable them to buy their own care or employ a personal assistant. If they do not wish to exercise this right, however, Cheshire East Council procures the assessed services on their behalf. These services are currently procured by the Council via Personal Support Contracts (PSC) but could be procured more effectively using a framework agreement.
- 1.4 The 2006 EU Regulations define a framework agreement as “an agreement or other arrangement between one or more contracting authorities and one or more economic operators, which establishes the terms under which the economic operator will enter into one or more contracts with a contracting authority in the period during which the framework applies”.

#### 2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that Cabinet approve the establishment of a framework agreement through which it will purchase future domiciliary care services.

- 2.2 It is recommended that Cabinet approve the transfer of all current Personal Support Contracts to the new framework agreement.
- 2.3 It is recommended that Cabinet delegate authority to Director of Adult Social Care and Independent Living (Brenda Smith) to approve the providers admitted to the framework agreement following a legally compliant procurement exercise and to subsequently enter into agreements with providers.

### **3.0 Reasons for Recommendations**

- 3.1 A framework agreement will remove the need to undertake a wide competitive process in relation to each individual. A fast and efficient response can be provided as services can be called off a framework almost immediately.
- 3.2 The establishment of a framework agreement will further extend customer choice in relation to domiciliary care providers with increased capacity enabling Adult Social Care to better meet increasing demand for this type of care provision.
- 3.3 The framework agreement will support the Council to maintain the quality of care provision through a sustainable care market. All providers will be signed up to the terms and conditions of the framework agreement and any provider who does not meet the required standards will be removed from the framework agreement.
- 3.4 The establishment of the framework agreement will ensure that the Council complies with the Public Contracts Regulations 2006 and the Council's Finance and Contract Procedure Rules.
- 3.5 The framework agreement will ensure a more effective use of assessment and care management resources as they will be able to make any required changes to the commissioned care package without the need to set up a new individual agreement and thereby freeing up much needed resources for face to face contact with service users and carers

### **4.0 Wards Affected**

- 4.1 All wards.

### **5.0 Local Ward Members**

- 5.1 All ward members.

### **6.0 Policy Implications**

- 6.1 The recommendations within this report support the delivery of outcomes three and five of the Cheshire East Council Three Year Plan.

Outcome 3 – People have the life skills and education they need to thrive - everyone is equipped to live independent, self-sufficient lives, and to realise their particular talents and abilities;

Outcome 5 – People live well and for longer - care services focus on prevention, early intervention and physical and mental wellbeing.

## **7.0 Legal Implications**

- 7.1 The aggregate value of the requirement for specialist care placements is such that these services must be procured in accordance with EU legislation and the Council's Finance and Contract Procedure Rules.
- 7.2 A framework agreement enables the Council to meet its need for a service for a set period of time in order to obviate the need to undertake a wide competitive process in relation to each individual procurement. It complies with EU requirements and the Council's rules.
- 7.3 The Public Contracts Regulations 2006 allow local authorities to enter into framework agreements with a number of service providers, following a competitive tendering process, and to thereafter select from those service providers to provide particular services, as and when required for a maximum period of four years. The Council can choose to appoint a supplier directly based on the pricing and/or other information established in the original tender process or if the price cannot be directly determined or in order to ensure best value it can hold a mini-competition between the suppliers appointed to the framework in or to make an award.
- 7.4 The Public Services Social Value Act 2012 applies to framework agreements. It requires the Council to:
- consider how what is proposed to be procured might improve the social economic and environmental well-being of the relevant area
  - how in conducting a procurement process it may act with a view to securing that improvement whether to undertake a consultation on this matters.
- 7.5 In order to evidence value for money the service should engage with the legal section to ensure that call-off contracts contain provisions which enable continuing value for money to be tested and to contain provisions such that the contract can be terminated in the event that the service cannot be provided on terms which remain acceptable to the Council.
- 7.6 The proposals include transferring all current Personal Support Contracts on to the new framework agreement. The Legal Section has advised the Service that in view of the impact that the changes

may have on current service users it is likely that the duty to consult arises. Officers have expressed concern as to how meaningful consultation will be given that this is a high level decision about the mechanisms by which the service will be provided and that the end result may not be all that noticeable to service users. However, recent in case law (R (On the Application of Nash) v Barnett LBC) the Judge noted that Section 3 of the Local Government Act 1999 required the local authority to consult on the way in which it exercised its functions and that this included high-level choices about how an authority went about performing its functions.

- 7.7 The Legal Section's advice is that the proposal to transfer services onto new contracts under the framework agreement is a high level decision and if consultation does not take place there is a risk that service users and current/potential providers may be able to challenge the final decision, although that risk is likely to be low
- 7.8 The Council must have due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty as set out at S149 of the Equality Act 2010, which states:

"(1) A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to—

- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it...

and consideration needs to be given to carrying out an Equality Impact Assessment in respect of the proposal to transfer current contracts in order to assist the Council in meeting its Public Sector Equality Duty.

- 7.9 If the transfer of contracts onto the framework results in a change of service provider the consideration will need to be given as to whether any obligations under TUPE arise.

## **8.0 Finance**

- 8.1 The framework will be used to procure services for people identified as having a need which is eligible under the Cheshire East Council's Fair Access to Care Services (FACS) criteria. No additional budget will be required for the transfer of services to a framework agreement.
- 8.2 There is no obligation for the Authority to purchase services through the framework agreement.

## **9.0 Risk Management**

- 9.1 The services provided enable the Council to fulfil its statutory duty under the Health & Social Care Act.
- 9.2 There is no obligation for the Authority to purchase packages via the framework agreement.
- 9.3 Initially there will be a need for increased administrative support to assess the providers that wish to be part of the framework agreement.
- 9.4 The framework agreement will increase capacity and will enable Adult Social Care to better meet increased demand for domiciliary care provision.
- 9.5 As providers are signed up to the framework agreement as a whole it will be easier for the Authority to monitor service quality and address poor performance than is currently the case using the Personal Support Contract arrangement.

## **10.0 Access to Information**

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the Officer named below:

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## CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

### Cabinet

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<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	15 <sup>th</sup> October 2013
<b>Report of:</b>	Brenda Smith, Director of Adult Social Care and Independent Living
<b>Subject/Title:</b>	Universal Information and Advice Services (Forward Plan Ref: 13/14-25)
<b>Portfolio Holder:</b>	Cllr. Janet Clowes - Health and Adult Care

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#### 1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 In 2012-13 following a strategic review all contracts for adult services with Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector (VCFS) providers were retendered to focus on Prevention and Early Intervention. Services which were low in cost and could clearly evidence that they either promoted independence leading to avoidance or delay in entering the social care system or reduce or maintained current levels of support were prioritised for funding.
- 1.2 Due to the introduction of the Welfare Reform Act 2012 on 1 April 2013 and the unknown impact of these changes, Universal Information and Advice Services were excluded from this tender exercise. Following external legal advice, Cabinet agreed to directly Grant Aid Cheshire East Citizens Advice Bureau and Cheshire East Citizens Advice Bureau North for twelve months from 1 April 2013 – 31 March 2014, without competition. This has ensured the continued provision of universal, free, independent, confidential and impartial advice and support on debt, welfare benefit and housing related matters across Cheshire East.
- 1.3 Prevention and Early Intervention Services are now due to be retendered for a three year period from 1 April 2014 – 31 March 2017 (further details are contained within a separate Cabinet Report). The Welfare Reform Act 2012 will not be fully implemented until April 2017- people on relevant existing benefits will move to Universal Credit when contacted by the Department for Work and Pensions or when there is a significant change in their circumstances. The impact of these changes therefore remains unknown and the Council's requirements for universal information and advice services cannot be accurately specified to inform the current formal tendering process.
- 1.4 The use of competitive grant has also been considered. Due to the inability to accurately specify the Council's requirements for universal information and advice services this approach is also problematic and in the absence an overarching Council policy/framework by which grant



funding should be allocated this option could result in an increased risk of challenge to the council from unsuccessful bidders.

- 1.5 The Council has the powers to award a grant to the CAB to support the organisation using its general power of competence in Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011. It is therefore proposed that Grant Aid for Universal Information and Advice Services is continued on a time limited basis to address this specific set of circumstances and that the service will be tendered when this is determined to be appropriate by Cabinet.

## **2.0 Recommendations**

- 2.1 To agree to continue to Grant Aid Cheshire East Citizens Advice Bureau and Cheshire East Citizens Advice Bureau North for the provision of universal information and advice services across Cheshire East without competition for a period of 12 months from 1 April 2014 to 31 March 2015.

## **3.0 Reasons for Recommendations**

- 3.1 The Welfare Reform Act 2012 legislates for the biggest change to the welfare system for over 60 years. The Act provides for the introduction of a 'Universal Credit' to replace a range of existing means-tested benefits and tax credits for people of working age, starting from April 2013.

Key areas of the Act include the:

- Introduction of Personal Independence Payments to replace the current Disability Living Allowance
  - Restriction of Housing Benefit entitlement for social housing tenants whose accommodation is larger than they need
  - Uprating of Local Housing Allowance rates by the Consumer Price Index
  - Amending the forthcoming statutory child maintenance scheme
  - Limiting the payment of contributory Employment and Support Allowance to a 12-month period cap the total amount of benefit that can be claimed
- 3.2 Since its inception in 2009 Cheshire East Council has grant funded Citizens Advice Bureau North and Cheshire East Citizens Advice Bureau to provide independent, confidential and impartial advice and support on debt, welfare benefit and housing related matters to the residents of Cheshire East. These services are delivered from dedicated premises in Macclesfield and Crewe, at satellite locations throughout the Cheshire East, by telephone and on line. Moreover the services provided are universal - access to services is not restricted by client group or eligibility criteria and they are free at the point of access.

- 3.3 As referenced in paragraph 1.1 in 2012-13, following a strategic review, it was recommended that all grants for adult services with Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector (VCFS) providers be withdrawn and services tendered to focus on Early Intervention and Prevention. A public consultation on the proposals established that whilst the majority of respondents were supportive of the proposed changes there was some concern about the inclusion of Universal Information and Advice Services in a tender process focused on adult services. The Equality Impact Assessment also highlighted that the Council must be mindful of the impact of its decision on service users that have a protected characteristic detailed in the Equalities Act 2010.
- 3.4 Cabinet therefore agreed that whilst it supported the principle of retendering services to focus on Prevention and Early Intervention, due to the introduction of the Welfare Reform Act 2012 on 1 April 2013 and the unknown impact of these changes, Universal Information and Advice Services were to be excluded from this tender exercise. Following external legal advice, Cabinet agreed to directly Grant Aid Cheshire East Citizens Advice Bureau and Cheshire East Citizens Advice Bureau North for twelve months from 1 April 2013 – 31 March 2014, without competition.
- 3.5 Six months on and the full impact of the Welfare Reform Act 2012 is still unknown. Prevention and Early Intervention Services are now due to be retendered for a three year period from 1 April 2014 – 31 March 2017 but it is not possible to accurately specify the council's requirements for Universal Information and Advice Services to inform a formal tendering process at this time.
- 3.6 Failure to commission Universal Information and Advice Services would result in no services of this nature being available to residents of Cheshire East from 1 April 2014. Whilst this could be considered a loss to all residents of Cheshire East this is likely to have a particularly negative impact on service users that have a protected characteristic detailed in the Equalities Act 2010.
- 3.7 It should also be noted that any reduction in income to the Citizens Advice Bureau from the decommissioning of this service would take effect at the same time as the withdrawal of Legal Aid and Learning Skills Council funding by central government. The cumulative financial impact could result in the closure of both CABs from April 2014 resulting in the loss of investment in previous infrastructure as approved by the Chief Officer.
- 3.8 An absence of Universal Information and Advice Services at a time of fundamental and wide reaching changes to the whole benefits system will inevitably result in increased pressure upon the Council to compensate for this reduction in capacity and volume, with implications relating to the need for the provision of additional services to residents and the corresponding cost implications.

- 3.9 In the absence of a satisfactory contractual remedy, the provision of Grant Aid is a mechanism through which Cheshire East Council can ensure the continued provision of universal information and advice services during the financial year 2014/15.

#### **4.0 Wards Affected**

- 4.1 All

#### **5.0 Local Ward Members**

- 5.1 All

#### **6.0 Policy Implications**

- 6.1 As outlined earlier in the paper Cheshire East Council are committed to the move from grants to contracts for services. Clearly the continuation of Grant Aid for this service is at odds with the decision to retender all other services. This is a time limited measure, however, to address a specific set of circumstances which circumstances will be revisited when as this grant award comes to end in March 2015. It is expected that this service will also be tendered when this is determined appropriate or that a grant will be awarded in accordance with the criteria put in place by any subsequent overarching grant policy.

#### **7.0 Financial Implications**

- 7.1 The current funding for the provision of these services is £250,442. This spend is already accounted for through the Strategic Commissioning budget.
- 7.2 This funding is split between Cheshire East Citizens Advice Bureau North (£63,994) and Cheshire East Citizens Advice Bureau (£186,448).

#### **8.0 Legal Implications**

- 8.1 In deciding whether to directly award a grant Cabinet must consider the facts and circumstances in which a direct grant award is being proposed as set out in paragraph 3 (as opposed to awarding a grant following a competitive bidding process or going out to tender) together with the identified risks (paragraph 9) and be satisfied that in making a direct award the Council's is meeting its public law duties.
- 8.2 The Council has the powers to award a grant to the CAB to support the organisation using its general power of competence in Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011. In exercising the power the Council must satisfy its public law duties. In essence this means that in making the decision the Council must have taken into account only relevant considerations, followed procedural requirements, acted for proper motives and not acted unreasonably.

- 8.3 The Council must also be mindful of public sector equality duties and the impact of its decision on service users that have a protected characteristic detailed in the Equalities Act 2010.
- 8.4 There is currently no overarching Council policy/framework by which grant funding should be allocated and in principle a direct grant award can be made. However, it is also noted that the Council is moving to a commissioning model and that direct grant awards without competition are considered to be an exception.
- 8.5 In awarding a grant the Council cannot exhibit the same amount of control over the organisation as is commensurate with a contract. Essentially the terms of the grant should set out with what the purpose of the grant is for and only claim claw back provisions in the case of the grant funding being used for other purposes or otherwise improperly. The Council will not be able to assess the quality of the services that are being provided to those requiring welfare advice and determine to withdraw grant funding on that basis (except at the end of the period of the grant funding).

## **9.0 Risk Management**

- 9.1 Whilst the Council has the powers to award a grant to the CAB to support the organisation using its general power of competence in Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011, there is currently no overarching Council policy/framework to assist in determining the mechanism by which grant funding should be allocated and there remains therefore a risk that this decision may be challenged by other providers.
- 9.2 In deciding whether to directly award a grant the Council must therefore consider the facts and circumstances in which a direct grant award is being proposed as set out in paragraph 3 together with the identified risks and be satisfied that in making a direct award the Council's is meeting its public law duties.

## **10.0 Background and Options**

- 10.1 In the absence of a satisfactory contractual remedy, the provision of Grant Aid is a mechanism through which Cheshire East Council can ensure the continued provision of Universal Information and Advice Services during the financial year 2014/15.

## **11.0 Access to Information**

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer:

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## CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

### Cabinet

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<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	15 <sup>th</sup> October 2013
<b>Report of:</b>	Principal Manager HR Delivery
<b>Subject/Title:</b>	Terms of Voluntary Redundancy and Voluntary Early Retirement (Forward Plan Ref: 13/14-24)
<b>Portfolio Holder:</b>	Councillor Barry Moran, Performance

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#### **1.0 Report Summary**

- 1.1 The terms that the Council offers to employees volunteering for redundancy/ early retirement are regularly reviewed to ensure that they provide value for money in enabling the Council to reduce its workforce in a way that is efficient, cost-effective and conducive to a positive employee relations climate.
- 1.2 The last review took place in August 2012 and Cabinet is now requested to consider retaining the existing terms for a further period.

#### **2.0 Recommendation**

- 2.1 It is recommended that Cabinet retain the existing terms as outlined below and that a further review be carried out in May 2014.

#### **3.0 Reasons for Recommendations**

- 3.1 To enable Cabinet to review how future workforce change is to be managed. Taking account of; the likely scale of change, the costs associated, value for money alongside the importance of striking the right balance in facilitating organisational change and maintaining our constructive employee relations and levels of employee engagement.
- 3.2 To provide clarity for employees whose future employment with the Council is uncertain due to workforce change.
- 3.3 To facilitate the ongoing management review and restructure within the Council,

#### **4.0 Wards Affected**

- 4.1 None

## **5.0 Local Ward Members**

- 5.1 None

## **6.0 Policy Implications**

- 6.1 Should Cabinet elect to change the current arrangements, this will represent a change to the Council's policy as to how it applies the Local Government (Early Termination of Employment) Discretionary Compensation) (England and Wales) Regulations 2006. In this event the policy will be updated to reflect the changes and published in accordance with the requirements.
- 6.2 In addition, the Council's Pay Policy Statement will need to be amended to take account of those changes and referred to Council with a recommendation that the revised Pay Policy Statement be adopted. Following any such Council decision, any amendments that the Council makes to its application of the discretionary regulations must be published for a month before any new terms are implemented.. Traditionally changes to the scheme have also been considered by Staffing Committee.

## **7.0 Financial Implications**

- 7.1 The medium term financial strategy assumes costs of redundancy will be met on existing terms, so the option not to change this will have no financial implications to the current plan.
- 7.2 Each case of voluntary redundancy is scrutinised to evaluate the ongoing financial implications to the Council, and this process will remain in place. This reduces risks and promotes value for money in the process.
- 7.3 The legal implications, and background, clarified in this report, in the face of continuing organisational change, support the recommendation to retain the existing terms until the next review.

## **8.0 Legal Implications**

- 8.1 The current voluntary severance terms exceed statutory redundancy requirements, are in accordance with pension regulations and are therefore legally compliant.
- 8.2 The voluntary redundancy process is handled in such a way as to minimise the risk of employment and breach of contract claims and no settlements will be paid unless an approved settlement agreement had been executed.
- 8.3 Managing workforce change through a compulsory process will inevitably result in the Authority being open to greater legal challenge. Such challenge will initially be by way of appeals/grievances from

employees who consider that they have been unfairly selected for redundancy and/or that there have been procedural flaws and thereafter by way of Employment Tribunal claims. As it would not be a voluntary process it would not be possible to minimise the risk of claims by the use of settlement agreements. All of this would lead to managers requiring greater support from HR and Legal Services than they would for a voluntary process.

## **9.0 Risk Management**

- 9.1 There is a risk that, if the staffing reductions which arise from organisational change are not managed or achieved in a timely way, the Council will overspend its staffing budgets.
- 9.2 Employers can manage changes to the size of their workforce through compulsory or voluntary means. The availability of and application of a voluntary scheme acts to support staff, minimise the disruption caused by organisational change and reduce the effects on staff morale during a lengthy period of organisational change. Voluntary arrangements can help to achieve the required workforce reductions through redeployment, re-skilling and voluntary redundancy. In offering voluntary terms, employers need to strike the right balance in facilitating organisational change, maintaining constructive industrial relations and employee engagement, alongside managing the costs involved and demonstrating value for money.
- 9.3 The availability and use of a voluntary scheme also sets out the organisation's commitment to its workforce, supports its reputation and can minimise any prospect of industrial action.
- 9.4 Should a voluntary scheme be offered, the Council would still need to consider making staff compulsorily redundant if the voluntary terms offered are not sufficient to attract the necessary number of volunteers.
- 9.5 In releasing staff, risks are mitigated by the use of a settlement agreement for staff leaving on a voluntary basis. The settlement agreement includes a clause that it is in full and final settlement of all claims (excluding any personal injury claims) against the Council or its successors. It also includes a confidentiality agreement that binds officers and Members to treat its contents insofar as they relate to the terms of any negotiation and the terms of the settlement, as confidential. There is a requirement for independent advice to be given to employees who sign such agreements and reimbursement of up to £250 per individual is provided in order that they acquire this advice.

## **10.0 Background and Options**

- 10.1 On 28<sup>th</sup> May 2012, Cabinet resolved that in relation to the Council's workforce change and severance/ termination arrangements, a multiplier of 1.80 times would be applied to a week's pay up to a



maximum of 50 weeks, with effect from 20 August 2012, and that these arrangements would be reviewed after a period of twelve months.

The potential options available to Cabinet are to:-

- 10.1.1 Retain the existing terms as outlined above and review further at a later date.
- 10.1.2 Increase the current terms; or
- 10.1.3 Reduce the current terms to a more economical model e.g. to reduce the multiplier.
- 10.2 Councils have two key discretions as to how they can manage voluntary redundancies, firstly the ability to pay up to 104 weeks pay, with the Council having elected to pay up to a maximum of 50 weeks. Secondly Councils can elect to base the payment on the employee's actual weekly wage, a statutory upper limit or to use an amount in between the two. The Council applies the actual weekly wage.
- 10.3 Given the current financial situation, there is no requirement or incentive to increase the current voluntary termination package. This could also lead to perceptions of unfairness in regards to staff who had left on the earlier lesser terms.
- 10.4 To assist with consideration of whether or not to further reduce the terms, a comparison has been carried out of the voluntary termination costs for the employees who left in 2011/12 against what they would have received in compulsory redundancy costs, pension and notice payments. This confirmed that moving to a voluntary redundancy multiplier of 1.80 last year reduced the costs to 92% of the previous scheme and had compulsory arrangements applied this would have equated to 81%. The change last year therefore reduced costs whilst maintaining an incentive for employees to consider volunteering, the incentive being the difference of 11%.
- 10.5 Further reductions to the voluntary severance scheme would have the effect of making the scheme less financially attractive for some employees than compulsory terms (as notice payments only accrue in compulsory redundancy situations) and only marginally more attractive for others.
- 10.6 Whilst being more cost effective, changes to the workforce through compulsory arrangements would have disadvantages. The removal of the voluntary scheme could have a consequential negative impact on levels of motivation and employee engagement, with the potential for industrial action. There would be a greater risk of claims of unfair dismissal and a greater call on Legal Services and HR time / support. Any such claims would also not be protected against through the use of settlement agreements.

- 10.7 The Council is going through a significant amount of organisational change with the introduction of the new operating model, the related review of the senior management structure and the establishment of a number of new vehicles to deliver key services. The VR scheme over recent years has been instrumental in facilitating and supporting organisational change. Cabinet may therefore wish to continue to support the ambitious change programme with the current scheme and review it during May 2014 when the programme will have been mainly completed. This would also provide a degree of consistency and equity for the workforce during this period of change.

#### **11.0 Access to Information**

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer:

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