

Cabinet Agenda

Date: Tuesday, 31st March, 2015
Time: 10.00 am
Venue: Committee Suite 1,2 & 3, Westfields, Middlewich Road,
Sandbach CW11 1HZ

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 body in question. 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.

4. **Questions to Cabinet Members**

Contact: Paul Mountford, Democratic Services Officer
Tel: 01270 686472
E-Mail: paul.mountford@cheshireeast.gov.uk

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 3rd March 2015.

6. **Notice of Motion - Corporate Tax Management** (Pages 11 - 14)

To consider and respond to the motion.

7. **Congleton Public Realm Enhancement Scheme** (Pages 15 - 24)

To consider a proposal to invest in public realm enhancements in Congleton Town Centre.

8. **Neighbourhood Planning Grants Scheme** (Pages 25 - 34)

To consider a policy for the allocation of Neighbourhood Planning Grants.

9. **Revision of the Cheshire East Common Allocations Policy** (Pages 35 - 42)

To consider proposed changes to the Cheshire East Common Allocations Policy.

10. **Determination of Local Authority Coordinated Scheme and Admission Arrangements** (Pages 43 - 88)

To consider the co-ordinated scheme and admission arrangements for 2016 and subsequent years.

11. **Better Care Fund - Section 75 Partnership Agreements** (Pages 89 - 104)

To consider a report providing an update on the implementation and delivery of the Cheshire East Better Care Fund.

12. **Accountable Body for the Local Enterprise Partnership** (Pages 105 - 112)

To consider a report seeking approval for Cheshire East Council to act as Accountable Body for all Government funding streams channelled through the Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership.

13. **Digital Customer Services** (Pages 113 - 160)

To consider a report on the future digital by default operating model for customer contact.

14. **Integrated Digital Care Record**

Report to follow.

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CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **Cabinet**
held on Tuesday, 3rd March, 2015 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, L Gilbert, B Moran, P Raynes,
D Stockton and D Topping

Members in Attendance

Councillors Rhoda Bailey, S Corcoran, I Faseyi, D Flude, S Gardiner,
M Grant, P Groves, S Hogben, L Jeuda, W Livesley, R Menlove, A Moran,
B Murphy, J Saunders, M Simon, L Smetham and A Thwaite

Officers in Attendance

Mike Suarez, Lorraine Butcher, Peter Bates, Anita Bradley, Caroline
Simpson, Brenda Smith, Heather Grimbaldston, Steph Cordon and Paul
Mountford

Apologies

Councillors J P Findlow, L Brown and K Edwards

132 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor S Corcoran declared a non-pecuniary interest on the basis that his wife was a GP and he would be asking a pertinent question under Members' Questions. Councillor D Flude declared a non-pecuniary interest as a retired member of UNISON.

133 PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME/OPEN SESSION

There were no members of the public wishing to speak.

134 QUESTIONS TO CABINET MEMBERS

Councillor S Corcoran asked if the blank referral form for child safeguarding concerns could be made available to enable GP referrals to be speeded up. The Portfolio Holder for Safeguarding Children and Adults undertook to pursue the matter in liaison with Primary Care. She stated, however, that the LSCB deliberately wished to encourage conversations over safeguarding to get better insight into the issues.

Councillor D Flude asked if the Council had received a report from KPMG on the Health Economy and if so she could receive a copy. The Portfolio

Holder for Care and Health in the Community was not aware of the report but would make enquiries.

Councillor R Menlove referred to a recent outbreak of bovine TB in the north of the Borough which appeared to be badger-related with the suspicion that the works on the new SEMMMS motorway in the Handforth area had given rise to the spread of infected badgers. He asked that the Council make representations to Stockport MBC as the lead authority for the SEMMMS works with a view to preventing any further spread of infected badgers. The Leader asked the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Jobs to pursue the matter; he also asked the Chief Executive to discuss the matter with his counterpart at Stockport. The Portfolio Holder for Safeguarding Children and Adults suggested that Councillor Menlove might wish to attend with her a meeting of the cross working group of the NFU and Badger Wildlife Trust.

135 **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 11th February 2015 be approved as a correct record.

136 **NOTICE OF MOTION - OPEN AND TRANSPARENT ON LYME GREEN DIP REPORT**

Cabinet considered the following motion which had been moved by Councillor S Corcoran and seconded by Councillor K Edwards at the Council meeting on 11th December 2014 and referred to Cabinet for consideration:

“The Council commits to being open and transparent and welcomes the comments of Judge Fiona Henderson in the information tribunal on the Lyme Green DIP report.”

It was noted that the first tier tribunal had evidenced that the Council had disclosed as much information as it was able to do lawfully and fairly in respect of the DIP report.

The Council was committed to working openly and transparently and had designated the Chief Operating Officer as its Transparency Champion; a number of positive changes were explained. There was a Transparency Project in place to ensure that the Council was able to meet its commitment to openness, as well as to fulfil the requirements of the Local Government Transparency Code.

Councillor Corcoran, as mover of the motion, spoke on the matter.

RESOLVED

That

1. Cabinet notes the decision of the first tier tribunal and, in particular, that it supports the Council's actions in respect of the level of disclosure of the Lyme Green DIP Report; and
2. Cabinet notes the work being undertaken on the transparency agenda and confirms that this evidences the Council's commitment to putting residents first in ensuring openness and transparency to enable effective involvement and scrutiny by residents.

137 **NOTICE OF MOTION - UNISON'S ETHICAL CARE CHARTER**

Cabinet considered the following motion which had been moved by Councillor D Flude and seconded by Councillor L Jeuda at the Council meeting on 11th December 2014 and referred to Cabinet for consideration:

"That the Council consider signing up to UNISON's Charter, and becoming an Ethical Care Council; and that Cheshire East Borough Council pledge to commission care only from providers who:

- § *Give workers the freedom to provide appropriate care and be given the time to talk to their clients.*
- § *Allocate clients the same homecare worker(s) wherever possible.*
- § *Do not use zero hour contracts.*
- § *Pay the Living Wage.*
- § *Match the time allocated to visits to the particular needs of the client. In general, 15-minute visits will not be used as they undermine the dignity of the clients.*
- § *Pay homecare workers for their travel time, their travel costs and other necessary expenses such as mobile phone use.*
- § *Schedule visits so that homecare workers are not forced to rush their time with clients or leave their clients early to get to the next one on time."*

A summary of the Charter was appended to the report.

It was noted that some of the commitments within the Charter were things that the Council was already doing.

Councillor J Clowes, Portfolio Holder for Care and Health in the Community, commented that the Cabinet would consider each of the proposals within the Charter but she added that preliminary studies had indicated that some proposals, such as the Living Wage to external contractors, were likely to have significant cost implications.

Councillors Flude and Jeuda, as mover and seconder of the motion respectively, spoke on the matter.

RESOLVED

That the motion is noted and Cabinet will give further consideration to the proposals within the Ethical Care Charter.

138 **HEALTH AND ADULT SOCIAL CARE OVERVIEW AND
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - CARERS TASK AND FINISH GROUP
REPORT**

Cabinet considered the report of the Carers Task and Finish Group.

The Group had undertaken a review to consider the changes in the legislative framework arising from the Care Act 2014 with a view to supporting the development of the Carers Strategy.

The Group's recommendations were set out in paragraph 6.1 of its report.

Councillor M Simon presented the report as Chairman of the Task and Finish Group. She thanked her fellow Group members, Councillors J Saunders and L Jeuda, for their work on the review. Councillors Saunders and Jeuda also spoke on the matter.

RESOLVED

That

1. the Task Group's report be received;
2. the Task Group's recommendations, as contained in paragraph 6.1 of the report, be noted; and
3. a response to the Task Group's report be submitted to the Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee once the recommendations have been fully considered.

139 **HEALTH AND ADULT SOCIAL CARE OVERVIEW AND
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY TASK AND
FINISH GROUP REPORT**

Cabinet considered the report of the Assistive Technology Task and Finish Group.

The Group had undertaken a review to consider how assistive technology could be used and developed through adult social care services to help people remain independent and healthy within their own homes for longer. The Group had considered three policy areas: effectiveness, accessibility and charging.

The Group's recommendations were set out in paragraphs 6.1-6.11 of its report.

Councillor J Saunders presented the report as Chairman of the Task and Finish Group and thanked her fellow Group members, Councillors C Andrew and L Jeuda, for their work on the review. Councillor Jeuda also spoke on the matter.

RESOLVED

That

1. the Task Group's report be received;
2. the Task Group's recommendations as contained in paragraphs 6.1-6.11 of the report be noted; and
3. a response to the Task Group's report be submitted to the Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee once the recommendations have been fully considered.

140 **DEVELOPMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES HUB**

Cabinet considered a report on the Environmental Services Hub Programme.

Following Cabinet's decision to purchase the former Ideal Standard site in Cledford Lane, Middlewich, work was now underway to assess the suitability of the site for an Environmental Services Hub. The work would include engagement and consultation with the local community, and preparation of the necessary documents to inform a planning application to be submitted later in the year.

The report sought delegated approval to appoint the main contractor for the entire scheme, details of which were set out in the report.

RESOLVED

That

1. the two projects agreed in February 2014 to address the waste transfer and depot requirements in the North and the South of the Borough be merged into one project to create a single Environmental Hub;
2. in consultation with the Leader and Portfolio Holder (Service Commissioning), delegated authority be given to the Executive Director for Strategic Commissioning, the Head of Legal Services and the Chief Operating Officer to appoint the preferred supplier of the tender exercise as the main contractor and finalise the agreements required

for the two phased contract to deliver the Environmental Hub and such other documentation that is required for ANSA to operate at the site;

Phase 1: to consolidate activities including site surveys and investigations, together with demolition, site clearance activities and reconnection of utilities as well as further work required to enable submission of applications for planning permission.

Phase 2: Construction, Redevelopment and Refurbishment of facilities at Cledford Lane and relocation of staff from the current depots to the new site subject to achieving an agreed target cost and all statutory approvals.

3. it be noted that:

Phase 2 of the contract shall not be implemented until planning permission has been obtained.

A budget of £14 million has been included in Council's Capital Programme for 2015/18 for Phase 2 of the project.

The Council does not yet have a confirmed date for exiting Pym's Lane site, the implications of this are referenced in paragraph 10.1 of the report.

141 **GRANT FUNDING CITIZENS ADVICE SERVICES**

Cabinet considered a proposal to award grant funding for the provision of universal information and advice services across Cheshire East.

The Council was working with the two Citizen Advice Bureaus (CABs) to design a financially sustainable service for the future. The goal was to move away from an annual funding arrangement, which was restrictive to medium term planning and investment, to a longer term commissioned arrangement from April 2016.

The proposed grant to the two CABs for 2015/16 was £317,990. The current funding for the two CABs for 2014/15 was £287,990, split between the two bureaux £90,778 to the north and £197,212 to the south. To provide further time for the two bureaux to reach agreement it was proposed that an additional £30,000 of grant funding be brought forward from future years and allocated to CECAB North for 2015/16.

RESOLVED

That grant funding for the provision of universal information and advice services across Cheshire East be awarded as follows:

1. Cheshire East Citizens Advice Bureau: £197,212 in 2015/16

2. Cheshire East Citizens Advice Bureau North: £120,778 in 2015/16 on the understanding that the funding allocation for CECAB North, and as a consequence the overall funding for 2016/17, 2017/18 and 2018/19, will be reduced by £10,000 each year.

142 **THE CARE ACT 2014 IN CHESHIRE EAST**

Cabinet considered a report providing an overview of the Care Act 2014 and its implications for the Council.

The Act brought together in a single statute the majority of legislation governing Adult Social Care.

The report detailed the new policies which Cheshire East Council needed to introduce in order to be fully compliant with the legislation from 1st April 2015. The policies were set out at Appendices A-D to the report.

RESOLVED

That

1. the implications of the new statutory framework for Adult Social Care services and the broader Council, including financial and other risks to the Council for 2015/16 and beyond, be noted;
2. the proposal not to apply charges to care services for carers be approved; and
3. the revised policies attached at Appendices A-D to the report, which are required for Cheshire East Council to be Care Act compliant, be approved, the policies being:

Pricing and Charging Policy
Deferred Payment Scheme Policy
Direct Payment Policy
Care Top Up Policy

143 **ASSESSMENT OF WASTE COLLECTION COMPLIANCE WITH NEW LEGISLATION (TEEP)**

Cabinet considered a report providing evidence that the Council's kerbside collection of recycled materials was compliant with recent changes to waste collection legislation.

The revised Waste Framework Directive in respect to the Waste (England and Wales) regulations 2011, Regulation 13 required that if an authority collected recyclable glass, metal, paper and plastic from householders then from Jan 2015 it should collect these separately.

As Cheshire East Council collected dry recyclables in one bin (co-mingled, not separate), it needed to demonstrate that it would be unnecessary and uneconomic to switch to a separate collection and that the quality of its recycling was of the same standard as if it had been kerbside sorted.

The report demonstrated that, were the Council to change its collection scheme, this would cost nearly £650,000 more and would see a reduction in the amount of recycled materials collected. There was therefore no necessity to collect the four materials separately in that it would not be 'technically, environmentally and economically practicable' (TEEP) to do so.

RESOLVED

That the 'Note for Cheshire East Council: TEEP assessment' be received and accepted.

144 ENERGY PROCUREMENT

Cabinet considered a proposal that the Council continue to use a fully flexible method of energy procurement and enter into a contract with West Mercia Energy as the preferred provider.

The Pan Government Energy Project recommended that it was best practice for public sector organisations to buy energy through Central Purchasing Body frameworks that had aggregated volumes, could offer flexible purchasing and enabled best practice risk management.

West Mercia Energy continued to offer a fully holistic service along with a unique commercial business model that had delivered lower than market unit rates, and shared trading gains which gave confidence to Cheshire East Council and its stakeholders that it was securing value for money.

RESOLVED

That

- 1 Cheshire East Council continue to use a 'fully flexible' procurement method as recommended in the report; and
- 2 a contract be entered directly with West Mercia Energy as the preferred provider for a maximum period of three years (two years with an option to extend for a further one year period).

145 COMMUNITY EQUIPMENT SERVICE - PROVISION OF LARGER EQUIPMENT

Cabinet considered a proposal to procure two frameworks for the provision of larger equipment, one for adult equipment and a second for children's equipment suppliers.

The Cheshire Community Equipment Service provided a service which allowed the purchase of equipment to enable people of all ages and their carers to remain in their homes safely. The purpose of the procurement was to ensure that larger items of equipment could be purchased effectively and to ensure compliance with EU procurement regulations. Further details were set out in the report.

RESOLVED

That

1. the procurement of equipment for adult and children via either one overarching framework agreement or two framework agreements be approved; and
2. authority be delegated to the Director of Adult Social Care and Independent Living to approve the number of framework agreements to be procured, and determine the suppliers admitted to the framework agreement(s), following a legally compliant procurement exercise, and to subsequently enter into framework agreements with each supplier.

146 **DISPOSAL OF LAND OFF EARL ROAD, HANDFORTH**

Cabinet considered a proposal to dispose of the Council's landholding at Earl Road, Handforth to CPG Development Projects Ltd.

Engine of the North had led a comprehensive marketing exercise, undertaken between June and September 2014, to bring the site to market. Following several bidding rounds, it was recommended that CPG Development Projects Ltd be selected as the Council's preferred purchaser. The proposal from CPG unlocked a key development site for an exemplar mixed use development scheme which should generate a substantial number of jobs.

RESOLVED

That the Chief Executive or his identified nominee be authorised, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance, to take all necessary action to dispose of the Council's landholding at Earl Road, Handforth to CPG Development Projects Ltd or one of their group companies, in order to maximise capital receipts and deliver jobs on an accelerated timescale.

The meeting commenced at 2.00 pm and concluded at 3.36 pm

Councillor M Jones (Chairman)

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CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Cabinet

Date of Meeting:	31 st March 2015
Report of:	Chief Operating Officer
Subject/Title:	Notice of Motion – Corporate Tax Management
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Peter Raynes, Finance

1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to consider and respond to the following motion which had been moved by Councillor S Hogben and seconded by Councillor K Edwards at the Council meeting on 11th December 2014 and referred to Cabinet for consideration:

“Nationally, nearly half of local authority funding comes from central government – financed from general taxation which includes corporation tax. This makes corporate tax avoidance an issue directly relevant to the provision of local government services, as well as to the provision of public services around the world.

This Council calls upon the UK government to listen to the strength of public feeling and act to end the injustice of tax avoidance by large multinational companies, in developing countries and the UK.

While many ordinary people face falling household income and rising costs of living, some multinational companies are avoiding billions of pounds of tax from a tax system that fails to make them pay their fair share. Local governments in developing countries and the UK alike would benefit from a fairer tax system where multinational companies pay their fair share, enabling authorities around the world to provide quality public services.”

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 That Cabinet consider and respond to the motion referred to in paragraph 1.1.

3.0 Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 HMRC through the annual finance bill continually improve the tax system to remove loop holes.
- 3.2 While the spirit of the motion is not contentious it gives a misleading picture as collection of the entire estimated tax loss is only 5% of the budget deficit.

- 3.3 Cabinet can fully support the approach being taken by HMRC, and can refer anyone wishing to find further details to the HMRC website. This shows how government is tackling this important issue. The HMRC website address is:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/reducing-tax-evasion-and-avoidance>.

4.0 Wards Affected

- 4.1 All

5.0 Local Ward Members

- 5.1 N/A

6.0 Policy Implications

- 6.1 None

7.0 Implications for Rural Communities

- 7.1 None

8.0 Financial Implications

- 8.1 None

9.0 Legal Implications

- 9.1 None

10.0 Risk Management

- 10.1 Not applicable

11.0 Background and Options

- 11.1 This report addresses the issues raised by the motion referred to in paragraph 1.1.

- 11.2 Cabinet should note a few facts and figures about tax avoidance:

- The Government are well aware of this issue. HMRC have already acted by introducing the General Anti Abuse Rule into the 2013 Finance Act. The Act establishes the principle that any "abuse" of loop-holes in

previous legislation can be overruled if it goes against the principle of the legislation.

- Most companies either have no wish to use aggressive tax planning or cannot because of the nature of their business.
- No-one knows how much tax is lost but HMRC estimates it may be about £4 billion.
- The UK budget deficit is £110 billion. Should HMRC be 100% successful and raise the extra £4 billion it will help reduce the deficit, it will not necessarily have any effect on public spending.
- Social issues, such as household income, need to be dealt with through other aspects of the tax system, for example raising tax thresholds to £10,000 has a direct positive impact on household income.
- Public services will be affordable if we encourage higher quality jobs and create future tax revenues. This is one reason Cheshire East is so passionate about support for Life Sciences and highly skilled Manufacturing in our towns.

12.0 Access to Information

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

Name: Peter Bates
Designation: Chief Operating Officer
Tel No: 01270 686013
Email: peter.bates@cheshireeast.gov.uk

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CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Cabinet

Date of Meeting:	31 st March 2015
Report:	Executive Director of Economic Growth & Prosperity – Caroline Simpson
Subject/Title:	Congleton Public Realm Enhancement Scheme
Portfolio Holder:	Cllr David Topping, Service Commissioning

1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 Congleton is one of the key sustainable growth towns in Cheshire East and to reflect this importance a £1million investment has been allocated in the Council's capital programme to enhance the public realm in the town centre.
- 1.2 This project will boost the vibrancy and vitality of the town centre as a place to visit and do business and create a greater sense of local community pride.
- 1.3 The Council is committed to working with its local communities and this funding will support the delivery of the Public Realm Strategy developed by Congleton Town Council in 2011. The concept plans are shown in Annexes A and B, which reveals how this transformational project could look. The Council's £1million support will go a long way to delivering the strategy.
- 1.4 This commitment builds on the Council's other major planned investments to revitalise and regenerate Congleton, such as Congleton Link Road and M6 Junction 17 improvements.
- 1.5 The combined impact of these changes will ensure Congleton is a place where people will want to come and live and visit and businesses will want to create and bring in new local jobs. Creating this platform for the town will secure and sustain its future prosperity.
- 1.6 This paper seeks approval for the £1 million funding and the commencement of work to identify the optimum public realm scheme based on the concepts developed by the Town Council.

Recommendations

2.1 Cabinet is recommended to

- Approve the prioritisation of the £1 million allocation to invest in public realm enhancements in Congleton Town Centre.
- Approve the first phase of work necessary to establish a preferred option for the public realm improvements (up to a maximum of £120k) and that, following consultation with Congleton Town Council and endorsement through the Council's Project Gateway process, this be reported back to a future Cabinet meeting for approval.

3.0 Reasons for Recommendations

3.1 The concept plans for the enhancement works were originally developed and costed in 2011. Since that date increases in base materials, consultancy fees and associated expenses have occurred.

3.2 A high level review of the costs was undertaken in the January 2015 which assumed construction would be undertaken in the fourth quarter of 2015

3.3 It was agreed, in conjunction with Congleton Town Council, to develop detailed designs for both Bridge Street and Festival Square using three options i.e. low, medium and Strategy compliant for

- Material
- Signage
- Street Furniture
- Lighting
- Green Environment (planting)

4.0 Wards Affected

4.1 Congleton East and West

5.0 Local Ward Members

5.1 Cllrs David Topping, David Brown, Andrew Thwaite, Peter Mason, Gordon Baxendale and Roland Domleo

6.0 Policy Implications

6.1 The scheme seeks to enhance the vitality of the town centre and increase retail footfall in line with the Council's vision to stimulate investment opportunities in Congleton. The enhancement scheme 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.

- 6.2 The proposal in this report relates directly to three of the five key outcomes identified in the council five year plan

Outcome 1 Our local communities are strong and supportive

Outcome 2 Cheshire East has a strong and resilient economy

Outcome 4 Cheshire East is a green and sustainable place

7.0 Financial Implications

- 7.1 The scheme is included in the 2015/16 capital programme approved by Council on 26th February 2015 with a budget allocation of £1m. This allocation will be funded from the Council's own resources, and therefore can only be spent once such funding has been specifically identified and earmarked (e.g. via a capital receipt and/or prudential borrowing). By prioritising this scheme there is a greater certainty that project deadlines will be met. External funding will also be sought towards this project.
- 7.2 A revised and expanded high level business case will be submitted to the Technical Enabler Group and Executive Monitoring Board (Gate 1) in due course, detailing the outcome of the initial scoping works (up to £120k maximum). Following the selection of the preferred scheme, an expanded design stage and detailed business case will be prepared for Technical Enabler Group and Executive Monitoring Board (Gate 2) prior to submission to cabinet for approval.

8.0 Legal Implications

- 8.1 Both the design services and the scheme works need to be procured in compliance with the Councils Finance and Contract Procedure Rules and the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.
- 8.2 The Consultation with local stakeholders must be conscientiously taken into account in finalising the design and scope of the scheme.

9.0 Risk Management

- 9.1 The approach to construction and delivery needs to be carefully managed in consultation with the local community, particularly businesses and residents who would be directly affected by the scheme. There will be operational utility works for at least 18 weeks through the area of the scheme - thus affecting the acceptability of further works to local traders and residents.
- 9.2 The intention is to determine the total costs and delivery plan through preliminary and detailed design stages. The cost options being considered at preliminary design stage will help determine whether the budget funding is sufficient to deliver both, or either, Bridge Street and Festival Square enhancements.

- 9.3 Initial site investigations will help determine the extent and level of contamination that is recognised and will be accommodated as part of the preliminary design stage.

10.0 Background and Options

- 10.1 Congleton Town Council published their Congleton Town Centre Plan in March 2008 which outlined their preferred development strategy for the Town. This plan was then used to inform a Public Realm Strategy which was published in 2011. As part of the 2011 strategy conceptual designs were published which included enhancing the pedestrianised Bridge Street /Little Street area and creating a Shared Space at the intersection between Bridge St /High Street and Moody St / Market Street, referred to as Festival Square.
- 10.2 In December 2014 Cheshire East Council confirmed that in principle £1m was available for these enhancements and instructions to progress the scheme were issued.
- 10.3 Initial site investigations are needed to be undertaken which will include ground condition tests, external property surveys, drainage investigations and traffic surveys.
- 10.4 An indicative Programme for both preliminary design, detailed design, consultation stages and procurement is outlined in Annexe C.

11.0 Access to Information

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

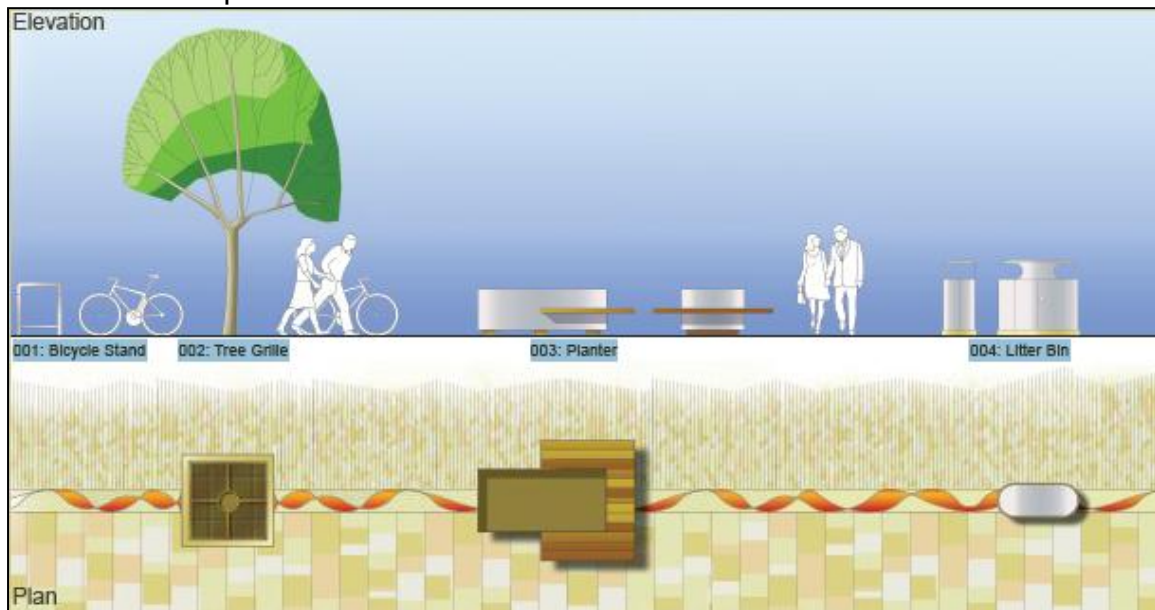
Name: Fay Price
Designation: Project Manager
Tel No: 01270 686338
Email: Fay.price@cheshireeast.gov.uk

Annexe A – Scheme concept and indicative layout

Artists Impression – View of Festival Square through to Bridge St



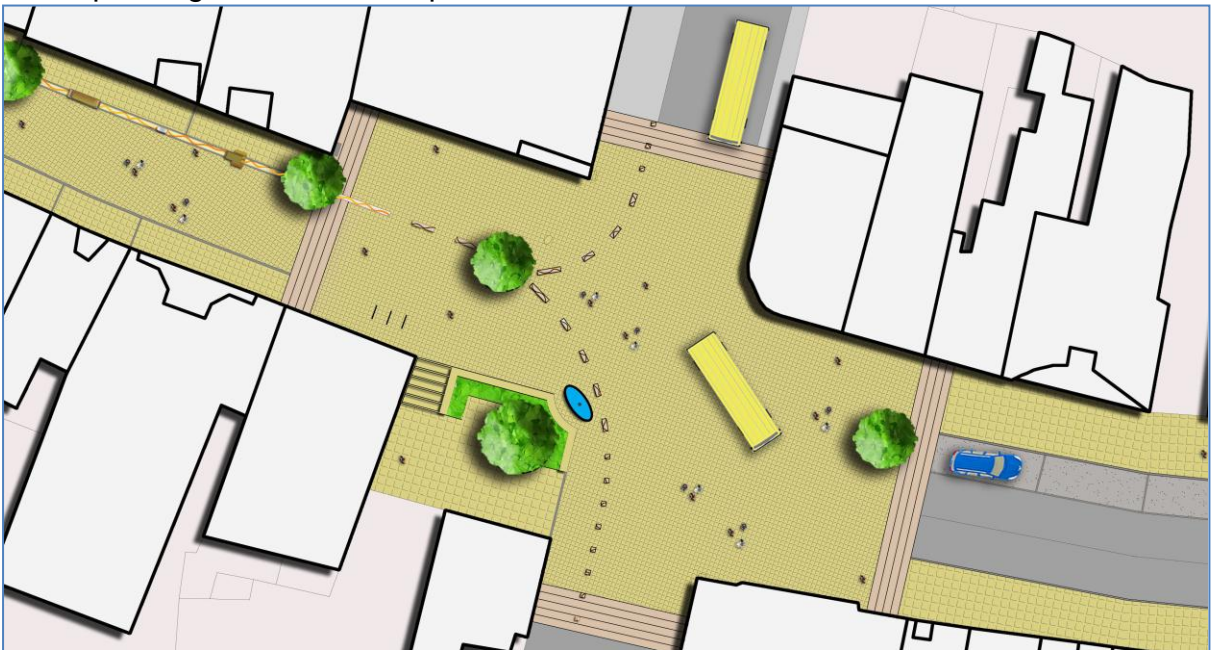
Scheme Concept



Concept design for Bridge Street / Little Street



































Concept design for Festival Square



The map shows a network of roads in Kaniyapuram. A prominent orange-colored road runs diagonally from the top left towards the bottom right. It features several red circular markers along its length, possibly indicating specific locations or points of interest. To the right of this main road, there is a smaller road with a series of red circular markers. The background is a light grey map showing building footprints and other street layouts. A north arrow is located in the top left corner, pointing upwards. A black rectangular box highlights a specific section of the orange road, which is further detailed in the inset map.

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Annexe C – Indicative Delivery Programme

	Month												
Workstage	Jan-15	Feb-15	Mar-15	Apr-15	May-15	Jun-15	Jul-15	Aug-15	Sep-15	Oct-15	Nov-15	Dec-15	Jan-April-16
Project Management													
Budget Cost Plan review	 Complete												
Project team meeting													
Briefing of Local Members		 Complete											
Briefing CTC (scheme scope discussions)		 Complete											
Governance													
Briefing of Portfolio Holder	 Complete												
Cabinet	FWD PLAN 									FWD PLAN 			
Project Governance (TEG / EMB)			 Gateway 1									 Gateway 2	
Site work													
Topographical Survey													
Initial Site investigations													
Preliminary Design													
Consultation / Engagement						 Inc public	 Ongoing			 Inc public			
Detail Design													
Tender													
Construction													

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CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Cabinet

Date of Meeting:	31 st March 2015
Report of:	Caroline Simpson (Director of Economic Growth and Prosperity)
Subject/Title:	Neighbourhood Planning Grants Scheme
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Don Stockton, Housing and Jobs

1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 Since July 2014 Cheshire East has launched a programme of support for Neighbourhood Planning which has seen 20 communities formally begin the process and excellent progress toward draft plans already being made, with two communities, Bunbury and Sandbach now formally entering into consultation. Requests for further information and advice have been received from over 40 of the 116 parishes within Cheshire East and the programme is anticipated to grow significantly over the coming months.
- 1.2 Neighbourhood Plans offer communities the opportunity to formally prepare planning policy that helps shape local development. Whilst this tier of plans is relatively new, the community views expressed in Neighbourhood Plans are increasingly being upheld at appeal and by the Secretary of State in decision making on major applications.
- 1.3 The proposals in this report are to enable Cheshire East Council to further support residents in Cheshire East to establish local planning policy that is relevant to their communities. To help communities achieve this, the implementation of a Neighbourhood Planning Grants Scheme is proposed.
- 1.4 Establishing a Neighbourhood Planning Grants Scheme, and associated policy to closely manage the scheme, will enable Cheshire East Council to continue to provide a transparent and clear approach to funding local councils and relevant organisations that prepare Neighbourhood Plans in the Borough.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 To approve the policy for the allocation of Neighbourhood Planning Grants, as described in the report.
- 2.2 That the funding of grants to local town and parish councils be met by resources set aside from the grants income received from DCLG for Cheshire East's supporting role in Neighbourhood Planning.

3.0 Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 Neighbourhood Planning forms a key element of the Government's Localism agenda. 1300 communities are now preparing Neighbourhood Plans across the country with 43 plans now approved by referendum. A series of high profile planning appeals, Secretary of State interventions and High Court Judgements are confirming that Neighbourhood Plans are increasingly being given considerable weight in the development process. There is cross-party support for the agenda and committed funding is in place beyond the current parliament.
- 3.2 The Neighbourhood Planning Team work with local councils across the Borough. The purpose of the funding is to increase the capacity and capability of Local Councils to prepare Neighbourhood Plans to shape future development in their localities through the formation of statutory planning policy.
- 3.3 Cheshire East Council receives grant income from DCLG (£30,000 per plan) to support Neighbourhood Planning. This funding is to recognise costs incurred by the Council in its supporting role, particularly the Council's responsibility to fund an independent examination and referendum for each Neighbourhood Plan. From this funding, it is proposed to establish a grants scheme to enable local councils the discretion to fund activities most valuable to their own plan making process.
- 3.4 Where local council's objectives complement those of the Corporate Plan, and the emerging Cheshire East Local Plan, it is proposed that such organisations may apply for a grant of up to £7,000 from Cheshire East Council. A demand for funding is present now, and anticipated in the future. The draft Policy is appended to this report.
- 3.5 Parish Councils can also access a direct grant of £8,000 per plan from DCLG; the proposed grant from Cheshire East Council would be in addition to this funding.

4.0 Wards Affected

- 4.1 All wards

5.0 Local Ward Members

- 5.1 All ward members

6.0 Policy Implications

- 6.1 Positive Impact.

- 6.2 Neighbourhood Plans establish policies that affect land use and community development. Once formally adopted by CEC, such policies will be used to assist with determining planning applications within the relevant Neighbourhood Plan area. Once adopted, Neighbourhood Plans form a statutory part of the Development Plan for Cheshire East and must be given full weight in decision making.

7.0 Implications for Rural Communities

- 7.1 Neighbourhood Plans enable rural communities to participate in the plan making process and develop policies to address those planning matters that affect their interests and well being. The process allows greater engagement of rural communities and for such communities to take ownership of planning policy which directly affects their futures. Implementation of a policy to support this process will have a positive impact on rural communities

8.0 Financial Implications

- 8.1 Cheshire East Council receives grant income from DCLG (£30,000 per plan) to support Neighbourhood Planning. This funding is to recognise costs incurred by the Council in its supporting role, particularly the Council's responsibility to fund an independent examination and referendum on each Neighbourhood Plan.
- 8.2 From this funding, it is proposed to establish a grants scheme to enable local town and parish councils the discretion to fund activities most valuable to their own plan-making process. Where local councils' objectives complement those of the Corporate Plan, and the emerging Cheshire East Local Plan, it is proposed that such organisations may apply for a grant of up to £7,000 from Cheshire East Council.

9.0 Legal Implications

- 9.1 In awarding grants, the Council must ensure that in each case it has the legal power to fund the proposed scheme. In all cases there is a condition requiring a report back to the Council on the expenditure of the grant. Consideration should also be given in each case to the imposition of other appropriate conditions.
- 9.2 The Council's legal powers for awarding these grants are contained in various statutes, including Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972, and Section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000. In addition the Council should ensure that there is a transparent process and policy in respect of determining the level of grant subsidy to any community group.

10.0 Risk Management Implications

- 10.1 Neighbourhood Plans are a significant policy tool to shape and control development in the host area, this is particularly useful in the interim

period until the Council can adopt its emerging Local Plan Strategy (currently suspended from Examination in Public). The risk of not agreeing an approach to funding Local Councils, and relevant bodies preparing Neighbourhood Plans, is that some organisations may be unable to continue their activities toward producing a Neighbourhood Plan therefore resulting in a loss of community benefit and missed opportunities to strengthen the planning policy framework at a local level.

- 10.2 There is a need to carefully monitor and engage with emerging neighbourhood plans to ensure they coordinate and strengthen our key development aims identified in the emerging Local Plan Strategy.

11.0 Background and Options

- 11.1 A decision is required to enable the allocation of grants to local councils and other relevant bodies related to Neighbourhood Planning in 2014/15.
- 11.2 This proposed policy introduces a framework to ensure a consistent and transparent approach to support for Neighbourhood Plans for elected members of CEC, CEC officers and local councils.
- 11.3 The final decision to award grants, and the level of grant funding awarded, will be taken by the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Jobs and the Director of Economic Growth and Prosperity, in accordance with the Constitution and the Neighbourhood Planning Grants Policy.

12.0 Access to Information

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

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Appendix Draft Neighbourhood Planning Grants Policy

POLICY FOR THE ALLOCATION OF NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING GRANTS 2014/15 **30.01.15**

BACKGROUND

Cheshire East Council operates a Neighbourhood Planning Grants Scheme within the boundaries of Cheshire East. This Policy addresses the governance arrangements, procedures and monitoring process to facilitate the scheme.

The aim of the Neighbourhood Planning Grants Scheme is to support Local Councils or Neighbourhood Forums with the preparation of Neighbourhood Plans, specifically to support the commissioning of support for technical planning advice, consultation, community engagement and the commissioning of relevant evidence necessary toward plan making.

Grants will be awarded that meet the priorities in the Sustainable Community Strategy – [Ambition for All](#), and support the Strategic Priorities held within the emerging Local Plan Strategy for Cheshire East. Both documents are available from the Council's website in the Community and Living section.

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 which takes place on a rolling basis across the financial year.

LEGAL AND BUDGETARY FRAMEWORK

The Housing and Jobs Portfolio Holder, (or whichever Portfolio Holder has responsibility for Neighbourhood Planning Grants at the time of making the grants decisions), will be responsible for the Neighbourhood Planning Grants Scheme and has delegated authority to approve applications for grants from Local Organisations (Local Councils and Neighbourhood Forums) to assist in developing Neighbourhood Plans, subject to the maximum amounts set out in paragraph 3.3 of this Policy.

The Neighbourhood Planning Grant budget is fixed and so there is a limited amount of money from which to pay Neighbourhood Planning Grants under this policy.

Funding may not be available in future financial years and is dependent on future budget allocations.

All grant decisions will be made based on the set of principles, set out in this Policy, and within the agreed budget approved by Council each year. The budget for the grants is managed carefully and flexibly to ensure that the Council has money available throughout the year. As far as possible the Council try to ensure that no one is disadvantaged due to the time of year they apply.

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. The Council will not pay a grant unless the Organisation can demonstrate that the balance of the funding is available.

The Portfolio Holder will be responsible for setting aside a proportion of the available budget for promotion and publicity purposes, as required.

APPLICATION PROCESS

The Cheshire East Neighbourhood Planning Grants Scheme operates within set criteria, agreed by the Portfolio Holder and relevant Council Officers in line with the Council's Corporate Priorities as follows:

HOW TO APPLY

Applications for Community Grants must be made using the Council Neighbourhood Planning Grant application form and associated guidance notes that are available online on the Council's website and as a paper version on request.

The application form must be completed in full. Incomplete application forms will be rejected. A copy of the Organisation's signed Constitution must be sent with the application form or within 7 days of submitting the application. If this is not received the application will be deferred and may result in the application being declined. Supporting documentation (listed under section 8 of the application form) may also be requested prior to the application being fully considered. Failure to supply all required documentation will result in the application being treated as incomplete.

Grants may be paid retrospectively where it can be evidenced that any work commenced prior to acceptance of the grant offer was for the purposes of preparing a Neighbourhood Plan. In such circumstances, grant applications will be considered but there is no presumption that the grant will be awarded

Organisations that have received existing financial support from Cheshire East Council toward preparing a Neighbourhood Plan will not be eligible for support from this grant scheme.

All successful applicants will be required to complete a post grant monitoring report as per section 5.0 of this Policy.

WHAT CAN BE FUNDED

Grants up to £7,000 are available to support Organisations who are preparing Neighbourhood Plans. Grants are specifically awarded to support the following:

Personnel support:

- Technical support i.e., project planning and management, evidence review, policy writing.
- Facilitation i.e., hosting public meetings, workshops
- Specialist advice and training

Activities:

- Community engagement and consultation i.e., promotional materials, venue hire, equipment hire

Evidence:

- Commissioning of specialist studies to support Neighbourhood Plan policies

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;
- Assistance with providing transport;
- Refreshments and/or accommodation;
- Outings, day trips;
- Travel expenses;
- Events which do not involve members of the local community participating;
- Loan against loss or debt;
- Administration expenses i.e. postage, telephone, utilities etc.
- Running costs i.e. gas, electricity, water, salaries, insurance etc.
- Land purchase;
- Vehicle purchase;
- Organisations which are not based in Cheshire East, unless they can demonstrate significant community benefits within Cheshire East.

WHO CAN APPLY

To qualify for a grant Organisations must meet the criteria listed below:

- Be a Local Council or Neighbourhood Forum, or Business Neighbourhood Forum
- Operate within the Cheshire East area;
- Provide value for money
- Have a set of audited accounts, or as a minimum an Organisation bank statement, and are able to provide such information as the Council reasonably requires 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;
- 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;
- Have their own bank or building society account with two signatories;
- Complete the application form in full, providing all required information;
- Have not already received a Neighbourhood Planning grant, or CEC funded assistance specifically for Neighbourhood Planning.

CRITERIA FOR FUNDING

Priority will be given to applications for projects and activities which:

- Are based in Cheshire East;
- Enhance the quality of life for Cheshire East residents;
- Support the priorities identified in the Sustainable Community Strategy, Ambition for All, available from the Council's website in the Community and Living section;
- Support the strategic planning priorities as established in the draft Local Plan Strategy
- Increase involvement in the community;
- Attract more participants/volunteers;
- Demonstrate the potential to be sustained in the future;
- Show innovation and creativity;
- Have funding contributions from the Organisations own funds and/or funding support from other bodies in place or promised;
- Demonstrate a knowledge and understanding of their community.
- Demonstrate a willingness and desire to submit a draft Neighbourhood Plan to Cheshire East Council within one calendar year

GENERAL CONDITIONS

Grants are classed as one-off and should not be seen as repeat funding; Annual applications from the same Organisation for the same purpose will not be considered.

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 the service already funded.

Any profits from events must be used to further develop the Organisation or for any future events and not used to support other Organisations.

Organisations must be committed to and have policies on equalities and inclusion and in delivering the services or activity the Organisation must not unlawfully discriminate, directly or indirectly against any of the nine protected characteristics which are: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex and

sexual orientation. The Organisation can direct some or all of its activities at specific groups where the intention is to address discrimination or disadvantage.

Organisations must be able to participate in a monitoring process and provide monitoring information to evidence how the grant money has been spent 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 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.

It must be recognised that the Council holds the right to refuse grant applications. Expenditure incurred on a project, activity or event prior to the grant decision being given by the Council, is the sole responsibility of the Organisation responsible for entering into such an agreement.

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.

The grant must only be used for the purposes specifically stated in the application form, should it be spent in any other way, without written approval from the Council, the Organisation may be asked to return some or all of the monies paid.

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 Special Conditions, must be met. Failure to do so could result in the Organisation being asked to repay the grant monies to the Council.

DECISION MAKING PROCESS

The Neighbourhood Planning Grant applications will be considered on a rolling basis at the earliest opportunity once an application is received.

Having assessed an application a Recommendations Report is prepared for consideration by the Portfolio Holder at a public decisions meeting.

Following the public meeting, a decisions report is circulated to all elected members who must make any comments within 5 days (the "Call-in Period").

Should any comments/objections be made during the 5 day Call-in Period a further public meeting is held to discuss the comments/objection(s) and adjust as necessary.

Special Conditions may be added in the recommendations report, by the Portfolio Holder following the public meeting and/or following comments received during the Call-in Period if considered necessary in order to ensure that the purpose of the grant funding is achieved. If the project is dependent on other factors such as securing match funding a Conditional Offer may be made subject to these conditions being met.

If there are no objections (or after the follow up public meeting), the decisions will be treated as final and Organisations will be 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 each round of applications.

Complaints about any aspect of the Community Grant 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 from the Council's website.

MONITORING AND RECORD KEEPING

Following a successful application and in order to ensure that monies are used in an appropriate manner, as set out in this Policy, a monitoring report will be required following project completion. This report shall include, but shall not be limited to, how many people benefitted from the project, if a profit was made and how it was used, how the grant money was used and what difference the project made to the Organisation and/or local people.

The Council reserves the right to monitor the use of the grant and ask for evidence to support an application.

The Organisation must allow reasonable access to premises/accounts upon request from the Council.

Organisations must retain records relating to the grant for an appropriate period (to be advised depending on the grant).

If Organisations do not supply the required monitoring reports and supporting information in full and within the set time scale they may be asked to repay the grant funding to the Council. Failure to comply with the conditions of this grant may be taken into account when considering any further applications for grant funding made by the same Organisation in the future.

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Cabinet

Date of Meeting:	31 st March 2015
Report of:	Executive Director for Economic Growth and Prosperity – Caroline Simpson
Subject/Title:	Revision of the Cheshire East Common Allocations Policy
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Don Stockton, Housing and Jobs

1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 Cheshire East currently has an Allocations Policy in place which was approved in 2012 and sets out how social housing will be allocated across the authority in accordance with Part VI of the Housing Act 1996. The way in which social housing is allocated is key to creating strong, prosperous, sustainable communities.
- 1.2 As a further reflection of Cheshire East Council's commitment to put Residents First in all we do, we have undertaken a period of public consultation relating to a number of changes proposed to the existing policy.
- 1.3 The Localism Act 2011 gives Local Authorities the freedom to manage their waiting list to meet local needs and local circumstances whilst maintaining the protection provided by the statutory reasonable preference criteria, ensuring that priority still goes to those most in need.
- 1.4 The proposed changes do not impact on the current priority banding system which will remain in place.
- 1.5 The proposed changes to the existing policy include giving priority to those with a local connection, and rewarding those in work on all new developments, at first let only, with the aim of creating mixed sustainable communities. In addition we want to bring the policy in line with current legal requirements and give flexibility for Registered Provider to undertake affordability and capital limit checks as well as giving priority to our cared for children in housing need for a longer period of time.
- 1.6 Through the consultation process we have established that there is significant support from both residents and partners in relation to these changes.

- 1.7 We will also seek to engage further with our rural communities to ensure that residents are aware of arising vacancies and the mechanisms to take up opportunities to continue to reside within their local communities.

- 1.8 The full list of proposed changes is contained within Appendix 1 of this report.

2.0 Recommendation

- 2.1 To grant permission to incorporate the eight changes outlined with Appendix 1 of the report into the Cheshire East Common Allocations Policy.

3.0 Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1 Local Authorities are required to regularly review their allocations policy to ensure that they are in line with not only recent legislation changes but that they meet local needs.
- 3.2 Approval was received by Cheshire East Cabinet to undertake a period of consultation on eight potential changes to the policy in order to reflect changes in legislation and local views.
- 3.3 Following completion of the consultation period permission is now being sought to incorporate these changes into the existing allocations policy.

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 role of the Strategic Housing service is to evaluate local housing requirements, setting out policies and programmes to reflect varied housing markets and address the needs of current and future residents across all tenures. Our vision for housing is articulated through our Housing Strategy and the Cheshire East's Allocations Policy is a key policy that helps us to deliver our ambition to create mixed sustainable communities.

7.0 Implications for Rural Communities

- 7.1 Protecting and preserving the vibrancy of our rural communities is a priority for Cheshire East. Ensuring that communities are able to thrive

and that local facilities are retained can be achieved by creating mixed sustainable communities. The way in which social housing is allocated has a part to play in this, ensuring that housing is allocated to those who wish to remain living in the communities in which they live or work but due to continued increases in house prices feel that the market is in fact pushing them out. Affordable housing provides the opportunity to remain in communities.

Proposed changes will ensure that on all new developments priority will be given in the first instance to those with a local connection as defined in the existing policy.

- 7.2 Further work will be undertaken to strengthen links through Rural Networks with the aim of raising the profile of Cheshire Homechoice and the mechanism in which housing is allocated. Opportunities will be provided for Parish Councils to identify those in housing need and to provide advice including signposting to relevant services.

8.0 Financial Implications

- 8.1 The proposed amendments to the policy will ensure we continue to deliver best value for money and can be accommodated within the existing budgets.

9.0 Legal Implications

- 9.1 Under Part VI of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011 on the 18th June 2012) local authorities are required to have an allocations policy and procedure in place in order to allocate social housing and under Part VII of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended by Homelessness Act 2002) to make provision for homeless households.
- 9.2 The Localism Act 2011 gives local authorities the freedoms to better manage their housing waiting list by giving them the power to determine which applicants do or do not qualify for an allocation of social housing. Authorities will be able to operate a more focused list which better reflects local circumstances and can be understood more readily by local people.
- 9.3 Whilst the Act gives the local authority more freedom it is still a requirement to maintain the protection provided by the statutory reasonable preference criteria to ensure that priority for social housing goes to those in the greatest housing need.

- 9.4 An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken.

10.0 Risk Management

- 10.1 It is a statutory requirement that the Local Authority has an Allocations Policy in place that will prescribe who is eligible for an allocation of

social housing as well as identifying and prioritising different needs. Failure to have a policy in place will lead to challenge.

- 10.2 We are required to regularly review our policy and due to recent legislation changes plus local and economic impacts that have and will affect people's eligibility for social housing as well as ensuring our housing market remains vibrant and creates sustainable communities the policy needs to be revised.

11.0 Background and Options

- 11.1 Appendix 1 outlines the proposed changes to the Allocations Policy.

12.0 Access to Information

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

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Appendix 1

Proposed changes to Cheshire East's Common Allocations policy

Proposed change	Public Opinion	Provider opinion	Benefits	Recommendation
1.New build properties to be prioritised to applicants with a local connection	80% in favour	From survey the opinion is balanced	Local town/ village residents feel the benefit of a new development	<p>A local letting policy is drawn up for all new build developments – for first let only.</p> <p>Of the people whom place a bid on a property those whom have a connection to the town in which the development is situated will be considered first. Once exhausted then allocations may be made to people without a connection.</p>
2. New build properties to be prioritised to those in employment including voluntary employment of 10 hours per month which has been undertaken for a period of longer than six months and is evidence based. (This will not apply to elderly or disabled applicants)	72% in agreement	84% in agreement	Residents are rewarded for working.	<p>A local letting policy is drawn up for all new build developments – for first let only.</p> <p>Priority under a local letting policy will be given to those with a local connection and working in the first instance.</p> <p>Once exhausted then allocations may be made to people with a local connection and not working and then those who are working without a local connection.</p>

applying for purpose built properties)				
3.Key workers to be considered as a priority for new build developments	56% in favour	63% in favour Board – 4 out of 4	Create mixed sustainable communities	<p>These are to be included in the Local lettings policy as outlined above – on first let for new build properties only.</p> <p>As part of a local lettings policy for new build properties, to include key workers in the list of those whom would demonstrate a local connection to a town and therefore permit keyworkers to be considered before those whom do not have a local connection.</p>
4. Capital limits and income checks to be assessed prior to allocation	<p>Income checks 81% - felt this was fair</p> <p>Capital limits 82% felt this was fair</p>	<p>Income checks - 91% in agreement</p> <p>Capital limits – 94% in agreement</p>	Allocations are made fairly to applicants whom have a genuine need for affordable housing and can afford to sustain the financial costs of maintaining the home	<p>A small paragraph is inserted into the policy to reflect the assessments and limits that may be conducted by housing providers.</p> <p>Providers will work with Cheshire East to develop a transparent policy/ procedure for assessment. Once agreed they will be submitted to homechoice and made publicly available.</p>
5. To ensure that the policy conforms to the legal requirements for	85% in agreement	100% in agreement Board – 4 out of 4	The policy is legal and allocations conducted fairly	The policy is to be amended to identify that it will be continually aligned with future legislative changes – to avoid the need for consultation and to permit the service to operate with a legal policy in the future.

EEA nationals			in line with reforms to immigration and residency requirements	<p>The finer details of legislative assessments will be outlined in the procedures document, used alongside the policy.</p> <p>EEA nationals will be formally assessed to ensure they have been engaged in Genuine and effective work before being offered a property.</p>
6. Longer term housing priority for Cheshire East cared for children	75% in agreement	<p>100% in agreement</p> <p>Board – 4 out of 4</p>	Cheshire East cared for children have easier access to social and affordable housing up to their 26 th birthday	<p>The policy is aligned with this recommendation and the statements pertaining to Cared for Children are amended to state that, where appropriate, priority will be awarded to care leavers in housing need up to the day before their 26th birthday.</p>
7. Applicants whom are subject to bankruptcy & debt relief orders are to be considered along with all other applicants and are not to be penalised with reduced preference	53% in agreement	<p>40% in agreement</p> <p>Board – 4 out of 4</p>	Applicants whom have taken positive action to resolve outstanding debts will not be prevented from accessing social/ affordable housing	<p>The policy in relation to rent arrears and property related debt is amended to reflect the relaxed approach of all applicants whom have a formal order to resolve the debt.</p> <p>This should mean that all providers engage with this regardless to which provider the historic debt relates.</p> <p>Providers would like the flexibility to over look people whom cannot demonstrate affordability and also to require applicants with a history of poor money management to engage with financial support services.</p>

8. Amend the under occupation	Has spurred this change	All in agreement	Those whom have elected to rent or buy a home larger than they need are not awarded priority unless their welfare is affected by the size of the home	<p>To amend the under occupation criteria so that it reflects the statutory requirement, to enable smaller household to release larger properties.</p> <p>Amendments will also be made to the welfare and medical criteria to reflect the impacts that larger accommodation may be having on home owners and tenants of private landlords.</p>
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CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Cabinet

Date of Meeting:	31 st March 2015
Report:	Director of Children's Services
Subject/Title:	Determination of Local Authority Coordinated Scheme and Admission Arrangements.
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Rachel Bailey, Safeguarding Children and Adults

1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 Cabinet are recommended to approve the coordinated scheme and admission arrangements (attached) for 2016 and subsequent years, subject to any review.
- 1.2 The coordinated scheme (**Annex 1**), which all local authorities are, under section 88M of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 (SSFA), required to have in place, will apply to applications for places in all publicly funded mainstream primary and secondary schools (i.e. including academies) for the school year 2016-17.
- 1.3 The proposed admission arrangements (**Annex 2**) include the overall procedure, practices, criteria, published admission number (PAN) and supplementary information to be used in deciding on the allocation of school places. Current admission numbers and proposed changes for community and voluntary controlled schools for 2016 (which the Local Authority is responsible for as the admission authority for these schools) are set out in **Appendix 1**.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 Cabinet is recommended to approve
 - The proposed **coordinated admission scheme**, which all local authorities are required by section 88M of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 (SSFA) to have in place (**Annex 1**).
 - The proposed **admission arrangements** for Cheshire East community and controlled schools, which are the overall procedure, practices, criteria and supplementary information to be used in deciding on the allocation of school places (**Annex 2**).

3.0 Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 The recommendation will enable the Local Authority to meet its statutory duty to determine by 15 April 2015 a coordinated admissions scheme and

admission arrangements to apply for 2016 and subsequent years, subject to any further review.

4.0 Wards Affected

- 4.1 Once determined, the coordinated scheme will apply to all Cheshire East publicly funded mainstream primary and secondary schools, including academies and the admission arrangements will apply to all Cheshire East community and voluntary controlled schools.

5.0 Local Ward Members

- 5.1 All wards members.

6.0 Policy Implications

- 6.1 The Coordinate Scheme and Admissions Arrangements are key policy documents for the Council and are a statutory requirement. The process for applying for school places is contained within the coordinated scheme and this applies to all Cheshire East publicly funded schools. How parents' preferences are then considered is set out within an admission authority's admission arrangements. The policy on admission arrangements will apply to applications for community and voluntary controlled schools only, for which the Local Authority is the admission authority.

7.0 Implications for Rural Communities

- 7.1 The Local Authority's coordinated scheme will apply to all publicly funded schools across the Borough and the admission arrangements will apply to applications received for Cheshire East community and voluntary controlled schools. Determination will therefore benefit all communities equally by ensuring that arrangements are in place for families who will be applying for admission in the 2016/17 academic year.

8.0 Financial Implications

- 8.1 Members should note that the costs of School Admissions are charged to the Dedicated Schools Grant within the element for central expenditure.

9.0 Legal Implications

- 9.1 The Authority has a duty to comply with the mandatory requirements imposed by all relevant legislation including the School Admissions Code (or by statutory provisions). The School Admissions Code has been issued under Section 84 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 ('SSFA 1998') Chapter 1 of Part 3 of the School Standards and Framework Act (SSFA) 1998 contains the key provisions regarding schools admissions, including the statutory basis for the Code. The Code reflects changes to the law made by the Education Act 2011 and Regulations.

- 9.2 The Regulation that applies for the purpose of this report is the School Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2014.

10.0 Risk Management

- 10.1 The Local Authority must determine its coordinated scheme and admission arrangements before 15 April 2015 otherwise it will be in breach of its statutory duty to comply with the provisions of the School Admissions Code.
- 10.2 The Local Authority must inform the Secretary of State whether it has secured the adoption of a qualifying scheme by 15 April. The Secretary of State may impose a scheme where a scheme has not been adopted.
- 10.3 Objections to determined admission arrangements can be referred to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator by 30 June in the determination year. The Adjudicator must consider whether the arrangements comply with the Code and the law relating to admissions. Arrangements must therefore be compliant with the provisions set out in the School Admissions Code 2014. An Adjudicator's determination is binding and enforceable.
- 10.4 Community and voluntary controlled schools have the right to object to the Schools Adjudicator if the PAN set for them is lower than they would wish. There is a strong presumption in favour of an increase to the PAN to which the Schools Adjudicator must have regard when considering any such objection.
- 10.5 An Equality Impact Assessment is attached as **Annex 3**

11.0 Background and Options

- 11.1 The Local Authority's school admission arrangements and coordinated scheme are for implementation from September 2016.
- 11.2 If changes are proposed, consultation is required by 1 March (determination year) in accordance with the requirements set out in the School Admissions Code. Where the admission arrangements have not changed from the previous year there is no requirement to consult, subject to the requirement that admission authorities must consult on their admission arrangements at least once every 7 years, even if there have been no changes during that period. Arrangements must nevertheless be determined by **15 April** every year, even if they have not changed from previous years and a consultation has not been required.
- 11.3 The **Coordinated Scheme**, once determined, will apply to applications for places in all Cheshire East publicly funded schools including Academies. The scheme planned for 2016-17 is not substantially different to the current scheme, which was adopted by the Local Authority in April 2014 for admission in September 2015-16. There are a small number of minor changes to the policy, which are highlighted in the policy and these include:

- I. Rewording to further explain that residency is based on the address of the child and the parent with whom the child is permanently resident and that where care is shared jointly, this will be the address of the parent considered to be the primary carer. This is expanded to confirm that the child will be resident at that address for the majority of the week between Monday to Friday and not including weekends.
- II. The definition of a late applicant is unchanged. However, to ensure that all late applications are treated equally, the scheme has been amended slightly to explain that late applications will not be processed until after all on-time applicants have been notified of their decision.
- III. To ensure compliance with changes included in the new School Admissions Code 2014, the wording has been changed to reinforce the responsibility of admission authorities for making decisions on applications and a minor change to the process by making mandatory the requirement that decision letters are sent out by admission authorities. This is particularly relevant to community and voluntary controlled schools for which the Local Authority has that role. This change has already been communicated to these schools and feedback so far has been very positive.

11.4 The **Admissions Arrangements** once determined, will apply to community and voluntary controlled schools only. The following changes are inserted into the admission arrangements for clarification. These are not a change in process other than in relation to special educational needs, which is a legal requirement and therefore not subject to consultation.

- I. The definition of a child with special educational needs has been extended to include children with Education Health and Care Plans, as defined under section 37 of the Children and Families Act 2014.
- II. A more detailed explanation about how straight line distance measurements are calculated confirming that addresses outside the UK that cannot be obtained using Ordnance Survey Address Point Data are measured using latitude and longitude published at www.gridreferencefinder.com
- III. An explanation is inserted to feeder/partner primary school status, which is a level of priority within the Council's oversubscription criteria for children 'attending' the primary school. The additional wording is considered necessary to ensure that the 'attendance' condition is clear for parents and that it is understood that if a child no longer attends the named feeder/partner primary school, the advantage no longer applies.
- IV. Changes to published admission numbers (**Appendix 1**).
- V. Wording is inserted into the policy to make it clear that address checks will be made against Council Tax records. The wording that states that copies of Council Tax may be requested from the applicant is therefore removed.

- VI. Sixth form admission arrangements have been reviewed with representatives of Wilmslow High and Poynton High schools. The published admission numbers for these two schools remain unchanged, as do the oversubscription criteria. However, additional information is included within the admission arrangements this year to fully explain the academic entry criteria for admission in 2016-17 for the two schools, as required under the school Admissions Code 2014, paragraph 2.6. The requirement to have a minimum of 5 GCSEs remains, with additional explanation that this must include 4 full GCSEs. Feedback on the arrangements has therefore been invited from parents of children attending the high schools but no comments have been received.

- 11.5 Governing bodies of community and voluntary controlled schools have the right to object to the Schools Adjudicator if the PAN set for them by the Local Authority is lower than they would wish. There is a strong presumption in favour of an increase to the PAN to which the Schools Adjudicator must have regard when considering any such objection.

12.0 Access to Information

- School Admissions Code 2014
- School Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2014

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

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LOCAL AUTHORITY COORDINATED ADMISSIONS SCHEME 2016-17

1 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 This scheme applies to the school year 2016-17 and subsequent years, subject to any review.
- 1.2 The scheme meets the requirements for a scheme for co-ordinating admission arrangements under the School Admission (Admission Arrangements and Co-ordination of Admissions Arrangements) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014, made under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, for the area of Cheshire East Council (the Local Authority).
- 1.3 In the normal admissions round (i.e. October - end February), parents apply to the local authority in which they live for places at their preferred primary or secondary schools. For late applications outside the normal round of admissions (i.e. March - end August), parents apply to the local authority. Applications for school places received 'in year' (i.e. those received after the first day of the school year into the relevant age group or into any other year group) and for the normal admission round into the relevant age group (i.e. reception at 4+ and secondary transfer at 11+) shall be determined in accordance with the provisions set out in this scheme.
- 1.4 This coordinated scheme applies to all publicly funded schools in Cheshire East and to preferences expressed by Cheshire East parents, including applications for schools in other Local Authorities. This scheme does not apply to applications for special schools or independent schools.
- 1.5 Parents making applications as part of the normal admission round for publicly funded schools in other authorities with a different age of transfer (i.e. middle and upper schools) will also be included within these arrangements.

NORMAL ADMISSION ROUND

2 GENERAL INFORMATION

- 2.1 Section 86 of the SSFA/98 provides that local authorities must make arrangements for parents to express a preference as to the school they wish their child to be educated at. Parent is defined within s.576 of the Education Act 1996 as being those who are natural parents whether they are married or not; any person who has PR for a child; and any person who has care of the child.
- 2.2 All parents **resident** in the area administered by Cheshire East Council will be asked to make their application on the common application form provided by this Local Authority (as the 'home' authority). Parents making applications on a maintaining authority's application form will be advised to contact their 'home' authority. Parents seeking places at independent (i.e. fee paying) schools must apply direct to the school.

- 2.3 Applications for places sent direct by parents to individual schools cannot be accepted and must be sent by the school to the Local Authority for inclusion within these arrangements.
- 2.4 For community and voluntary controlled schools, in its role as the admission authority, Cheshire East Council will be responsible for determining who can be allocated a place in accordance its agreed published admission arrangements.
- 2.5 For Academies, Free Schools, Voluntary Aided, Foundation and Trust schools, decisions on applications will normally be made by the governing body. The exception to this will be where the governing body has made arrangements for another body to consider the application and to determine by reference to the school's admission criteria if a place can be allocated.
- 2.6 For applications for schools outside Cheshire East, the relevant local authority will be responsible for coordinating decisions on applications through liaison, where relevant, with admission authorities in its area.
- 2.7 The Local Authority will collate and publish all admission arrangements in its composite prospectus, which will be published on the Local Authority's website in line with the requirements set out in the School Admissions Code. For parents without internet access, a hard copy of the agreed admissions arrangements will be available on request.
- 2.8 All preferences made in accordance with the Local Authority's arrangements will be met except where this would prejudice the provision of efficient education or the efficient use of resources e.g. normally where the year group in question is full. The duty to comply with parental preference is, however, removed for a period of two years where the child has been permanently excluded from two or more schools from the date on which the latest exclusion took place.
- 2.9 If the pupil is a Cheshire East resident and Cheshire East Council is not able to offer any of the preferences stated on the application form a place will normally be allocated at the nearest Cheshire East school with a vacancy using the Local Authority's Ordnance Survey address point data system for measuring straight line distances from the address point of the home to the address point of the school in miles. This will include allocating vacancies at Academies, Free schools, Voluntary Aided and Foundation schools in liaison and agreement with the governing bodies of these schools.
- 2.10 Where a preference has been received from a parent resident in another local authority and a place cannot be offered, Cheshire East Council will not allocate a place.
- 2.11 Written offers will be made by Cheshire East Council to residents in its area, in its role as the home authority, on behalf of the admissions authority for the school allocated as follows:

Admissions authority**Category of school**

Cheshire East Council

All community and voluntary controlled schools in Cheshire East

- | | |
|------------------------------|---|
| Maintaining Local Authority | All non-Cheshire East community and voluntary controlled schools. |
| Governing Body of the school | All Academies and Voluntary Aided, Foundation and Free Schools |
- 2.12 Schools must not notify parents that a place has become available but must inform their maintaining local authority in order that an offer can be made by the home authority.
- 2.13 In accordance with statutory requirements, a governing body, in its role as the admission authority for a school, **must** comply with the following procedures:
- a) Forward to their maintaining local authority details of any application made to the school direct, together with any supporting information provided by the parent (regardless of whether the parent who made the application resides in that local authority's areas);
 - b) Determine or make arrangements for another body (including the maintaining local authority) to determine by reference to the school's admissions criteria the order of priority in which each application for the school is ranked;
 - c) To notify their maintaining local authority of their determination, or arrange for the body appointed by them to notify the Local Authority on their behalf.
- 2.14 Parents will be informed in writing of their legal right of appeal against any decision not to offer them a place at a school stated as a preference on their application form and their right to be supported by a friend or adviser. Further information on the appeals process will be available on the Local Authority's website and by contacting the Local Authority.
- 2.15 Parents can submit an appeal in respect of each school for which admission has been refused. All appeal applications should be sent to the admission authority for the school for which admission has been refused.
- 2.16 Waiting lists, where held, will be in criteria order and not on a 'first come, first served' basis. Placing a child's name on a waiting list does not affect the statutory right of appeal.
- 2.17 Waiting lists will be held **for all schools** until the end of the autumn term in the normal year of admission **as a minimum**. Waiting list arrangements implemented after the end of term will be determined by individual admission authorities. For community and voluntary controlled schools, waiting lists will be closed at this point and parents of children held on the waiting list will receive written confirmation of this.
- 2.18 Repeat applications will not be considered within the same school year, unless the parent's or the school's circumstances have changed significantly since the original application was made. Full details of the change of circumstances must be provided for consideration by the Local Authority.

3 APPLICATION PROCESS

- 3.1 Children reach compulsory school age at the beginning of the term following their 5th birthday. Under the Local Authority's policy, children may start school in the reception class in the September following their 4th birthday. For transfer to secondary, children will usually transfer at the beginning of the autumn term following their eleventh birthday.
- 3.2 Parents can request that the date their child is admitted to the primary school is deferred until later in the school year or until the child reaches compulsory school age in that school year. Applications for deferred admissions must be made by the published closing date. Parents will not however, be able to defer admission beyond the academic year for which the original application was accepted or beyond the beginning of the term after the child's fifth birthday.
- 3.3 There is no statutory barrier to children being admitted outside their normal year group. Paragraph 2.17 of the School Admissions Code enables a parent to request that their child is admitted outside of their normal age group, providing flexibility for children whose parents do not feel they are ready to begin school before they reach compulsory school age. Admission authorities are responsible for making the decision on which year group a child should be admitted to but are required to make that decision based on the circumstances of the case. In cases where parents will be delaying admission until the following year, an application must be submitted in accordance with the dates published for that application round.
- 3.4 To help younger children adjust to school, schools may phase full-time admission, admitting these children on a part-time basis. Arrangements are decided at school level.
- 3.5 Requests can also be made for early or late transfer to secondary school. Parents considering such a request must in the first instance speak to the headteacher of the child's primary school.
- 3.6 The application process will commence on **1 September** in the year preceding the admission year.
- 3.7 The common application form will invite parents to express 3 school preferences ranked in order of priority. Parents will be provided with the opportunity to give reasons for their preferences and can, if appropriate, provide any additional documents in support of their preference/s.
- 3.8 **The child's place of residence will be the address of the parent with whom the child is permanently resident** on the date published for the receipt of supporting documentation (see part two below). Supporting information may be requested to verify the place of residence. **To ensure a fair process, administrative checks may be undertaken, which will include verifying addresses against Council Tax records.**
- 3.9 Where care is shared jointly **the primary carer will be taken to be the parent with whom the child lives for the majority of the week (Monday to Friday) and it is this address that will be used for admissions purposes.** If it is not possible to determine which parent is the ~~principle~~ primary carer, the Local

Authority will determine **primary** residence based on where the child is registered for purposes of child benefit or (where no benefit is claimed) where the child is registered for GP purposes. **Full details must be submitted in writing to enable the Local Authority to determine which address will be used. A panel of officers will consider the information provided.** The School Admissions Code states at paragraph 2.23 (a) that local authorities can only make one offer per child. Therefore, where parents are unable to reach an agreement and more than one application is submitted, the Local Authority will process the application of the parent who is the primary carer. ~~i.e. where the child lives for the majority of the week including weekends.~~

- 3.10 Parents will be asked to submit the completed application form directly to this Local Authority by the statutory closing dates published in part two.
- 3.11 Parents will be asked to provide details, where applicable, of any siblings attending the preferred school at the time of application and who will be attending at the time of admission, details of the current school attended and the length of time resident at the address provided.
- 3.12 If a parent expresses a preference for a school designated as having a religious character (faith school) they will be asked to state the religious denomination of their child on their application form. Parents will be advised to contact the school as they may also be required to complete a supplementary information form. Forms will be available on the Local Authority's website or direct from the school. Supplementary information forms (SIFs) will request information in addition to that provided on the common application form. Such request must be made in accordance with paragraphs 2.4 of the School Admissions Code (2014). Examples of additional information that can lawfully be requested include membership of, or relationship with the church, or a reference from a priest or other religious minister as proof of religious commitment.
- 3.13 All preferences will be considered on the basis of the **equal preference model** for allocating places, in accordance with legal requirements. This means that in the first instance, all preferences will be considered against the relevant published oversubscription criteria **only**, i.e. without reference to the preference ranking. Thereafter, where a pupil can potentially be allocated more than one school place stated on the application form, the **single offer**, determined by the home local authority, will be for the school ranked highest by the parents.
- 3.14 Preference ranking will not be shared with admission authorities in accordance with paragraph 2.7 of the School Admissions Code 2014 as this cannot lawfully be used when applying oversubscription criteria.
- 3.15 Where a school receives a supplementary information form, this Local Authority will not consider it to be a valid application unless the parent has also listed the school on their home LA's Application Form, Supplementary information forms should be returned direct to the school concerned.
- 3.16 When a parent has submitted their application on the common application form but has not also submitted a supplementary information form (where relevant), the admission authority must nevertheless consider the application in accordance with legal requirements (Para 4.3 of Section 86(2) of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998). In circumstances where a SIF has been received the

admission authority must be proactive in ensuring that there is an application, in order for the preference to be considered. In circumstances where a SIF has not been completed the application will be assessed on the basis of the information submitted to the governing body on the home local authority's common application form.

- 3.17 For secondary transfer only, the Local Authority will have records for all children resident within its area who attend Cheshire East primary schools. In order to make sure that all resident pupils are included in the co-ordinated admissions process, this Local Authority will also request data from neighbouring authorities and from independent schools in the area at the end of the summer term in the year preceding admission for details of resident pupils who attend their schools.
- 3.18 The Local Authority's composite prospectus will be available electronically on its website from the 1 September. Hard copies will be available on request from the Local Authority at the start of the autumn term.
- 3.19 The composite prospectus will include information on the application process including key dates, a copy of the common application form, details of Cheshire East schools and allocation data relating to applications for the previous year.

4 CHANGING PREFERENCES

- 4.1 After the closing date for applications, the Local Authority will not accept a change of preference unless it is satisfied that there is a genuine reason for doing so, such as a recent house move. Full details must be provided to the Local Authority for consideration and by the published deadline for receipt of supporting information.
- 4.2 Any parent wishing to change a preference after the closing date for applications without a genuine reason for doing so in the opinion of the Local Authority will be advised that the application will be treated as a late application.
- 4.3 In the case of a recent house move, evidence such as a letter from the solicitor confirming the completion date or a signed rental agreement* showing the start of the tenancy will be required. Further confirmation may also be required including evidence of disposal of previous property and recent utility bills to confirm the actual place of residency. *A signed rental agreement must cover the date published as the deadline for receipt of supporting information.
- 4.4 A panel of officers will consider information presented in support of the late change of preference. The parent will be notified of the decision.

5 PROCESSING APPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The following actions will be implemented in accordance with the dates published in part two of these arrangements.
- 5.2 Cheshire East Council will exchange applications for schools in other local authorities' areas with all relevant local authorities and will provide reports containing details of applications to its voluntary aided and foundation schools for consideration by governing bodies in accordance with the school's own published admission arrangements.

- 5.3 Cheshire East voluntary aided and foundation schools will inform the Local Authority of the pupils eligible for a place under its admissions criteria and provide lists of pupils in criteria order who cannot be offered places.
- 5.4 Cheshire East Council will inform other local authorities of offers to be made to pupils resident within their boundaries and request details of offers they will be making to Cheshire East residents.
- 5.5 Places will normally only be offered up to the published admission number, which applies to the normal year of entry. A child cannot be refused admission to the normal year of entry on the grounds of prejudice to the provision of efficient education and efficient use of resources unless the published admission number has been reached. In respect of admission to year groups other than the normal point of entry, it is expected that the admission number will continue to be applied. However, if circumstances have changed since the year of entry, a place may be refused even if the admission number has not been reached.
- 5.6 Admission authorities that intend to admit above the published admission number (PAN) where it is considered that further admission/s would not have a detrimental effect on the school, should notify the Local Authority by the dates specified in part two of these arrangements to enable the local authority to deliver its coordination responsibilities effectively.
- 5.7 The Local Authority will finalise allocations on the basis of equal preferences and in line with the agreed dates, as far as possible:

6 NOTIFYING PARENTS OF DECISIONS

- 6.1 Cheshire East Council will send the parents of pupils who reside in Cheshire East written confirmation of the decision on the application. This will include offers for places in Cheshire East schools and schools in other local authorities, as appropriate. Where online applications have been received, the parent making the online application can logon to their online account on the published date to view the school place offered and can also request to receive their offer by e-mail. Offers confirmed by letter will be sent out on the published offer day by second class post.

7 LATE APPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Applications received after the closing date will be recorded as 'late' and considered after all on-time applications unless the Local Authority confirms that the reasons presented in support of the late submission justify the application being considered alongside on-time applications. Reasons can include exceptional medical reasons preventing an earlier application or late removal into the area. Reasons must be presented at the time of application and supporting documentation **must** be provided, which must be received by the dates specified in part two.
- 7.2 In the case of a recent house move, the Local Authority will require supporting evidence to show that the place of residency has changed. This should include a letter from the solicitor confirming the completion date, or if relevant, a signed rental agreement showing the start date of the tenancy. Any rental agreement must include residency on the date published as the deadline for receipt of

supporting information. Further information may be requested to confirm residency, for example, recent utility bills or evidence of disposal of previous property.

- 7.3 In respect of medical reasons preventing an earlier application, a letter of confirmation from a medical practitioner will be required.
- 7.4 Late applications received after the published deadline for the receipt of supporting information will be **classified as** late **and processed** after all on-time applications even if there is a good reason for the late submission.

7.5 All applications categorised as late will be processed at the time waiting lists are prepared and in accordance with the dates published in part two below.

~~7.3 The initial (provisional) allocation date will vary and any late applications received after this date may not be processed until after offers have been made and in accordance with the dates set out in part two. There is therefore no guarantee that a late applicant will receive an offer of a school place on the published offer day.~~

8 MOVING HOUSE

8.1 Parents must inform the Local Authority immediately of a change of address, even if details of a future change of residency were included on the application form. The Local Authority will require supporting evidence to show that the place of residency has changed. This should include a letter from the solicitor confirming the completion date, or if relevant, a signed rental agreement showing the start date of the tenancy. Any rental agreement must include residency on the date published as the deadline for receipt of supporting information. Further information may be requested to confirm residency, for example, recent utility bills or evidence of disposal of previous property.

8.2 Proof of residency received after the deadline published for the receipt of supporting information will not be used to assign a higher criterion for admission, but will be used to send the decision on the published offer date.

9 ACCEPTING AND DECLINING PLACES

- 9.1 Parents will be required to **accept or decline** the school place offered by the dates published in part two. The Local Authority reserves the right to withdraw places not accepted by this date.
- 9.2 For late applications notified after the offer date parents will be required to accept the place offered within **10 working days** of the date of the offer.

10 WAITING LISTS

- 10.1 Waiting lists for oversubscribed schools will consist of those children whose parents have specifically requested in writing (including e-mail) that they remain on the waiting list, along with late applicants and those for whom an appeal application has been received. Waiting lists will be held in criteria order and not on a first come first served basis.

- 10.2 Vacancies will be re-allocated to children held on the school's waiting list in line with the dates published in part two.
- 10.3 After the start of the school term in September, the Local Authority will hold up-to-date information on waiting lists through liaison with schools until the end of the autumn term only. After this date all waiting list information will be closed. Admission authorities that have published that they will continue to hold waiting lists after this date will be responsible for maintaining their waiting lists in accordance with their own published admission arrangements.

11 ADMISSIONS APPEALS

- 11.1 The application decision letter/e-mail will explain the parents' right of appeal and how appeals may be made. Applications for appeal should be received by the dates published in part two.
- 11.2 Parents can submit an appeal in respect of each school for which admission has been refused.
- 11.3 Appeals against decisions notified after the published offer day will be heard within 40 days of the published appeals deadline where possible, or if received too late, within 30 school days of the appeal being lodged.
- 11.4 Appeals for late applications should be received within 20 school days from the date of notification that the application was unsuccessful.
- 11.5 All appeal applications should be sent to the admission authority for the school for which admission has been refused.

'IN YEAR' ADMISSIONS

12 APPLICATION PROCESS

- 12.1 'In year' applications are those made during the school year into any year group other than the normal point of entry (i.e. normal admission round). This will include applications from parents of children moving into Cheshire East from another local authority's area, moving within Cheshire East, or seeking to transfer to an alternative school for other reasons.
- 12.2 Parents seeking Cheshire East school places 'in year' will be required to complete the Cheshire East Council 'in year' application form. Forms will be published on the Council's website and will be available in hard copy on request.
- 12.3 In all cases, parents will be advised to contact their preferred school to progress their application.
- 12.4 Parents will be invited to provide additional information in support of their application. Application details will be shared with the relevant schools.
- 12.5 Parents will be asked to provide details, where applicable, of any siblings attending the preferred school at the time of application and who will be attending at the time of admission, details of the current school attended and the length of time resident at the address provided.

- 12.6 Personal or sensitive information provided for the purpose of school admissions will be held in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and its eight principles, details of which are published on the Council's website. In order that applications can be processed in accordance with parents' wishes, personal information may be shared within the Local Authority, with other relevant local authorities and with relevant schools. Relevant local authorities include the home local authority (where resident) and local authorities where the schools named on the application form are located; relevant schools include the schools listed as preferences and the current or most recent school.
- 12.7 In order to ensure that a place is offered at a suitable school as quickly as possible, some applications will be processed in accordance with the Local Authority's agreed Fair Access Protocol. The operation of Fair Access Protocols is outside the arrangements of co-ordination and is triggered when a parent of an eligible child has not secured a school place under in-year admission procedures. In all cases, where this is deemed necessary to ensure a positive outcome for the family, parents will receive full information before this procedure is implemented. The Local Authority's Fair Access Protocol; agreed in partnership with the headteachers of both primary and secondary schools, will only progress with agreement of parents and will not affect the parent's right to express preferences for schools of their choice or to challenge unsuccessful applications through the appeals process. All permanently excluded pupils ready to be admitted into a new school will be offered admission under the Fair Access Protocol. Full information about the process is published on the Council's website.
- 12.8 If a parent expresses a preference for a school designated as having a religious character (faith school) they will be asked to state the religious denomination of their child on their application form. Parents may be required by the school to complete a supplementary information form. Forms will be available from the school or on the Local Authority's website. Supplementary information forms (SIFs) will request information in addition to that provided on the common application form. Such request must be made in accordance with paragraphs 2.4 of the School Admissions Code (2014). Examples of additional information that can lawfully be requested include membership of, or relationship with the church, or a reference from a priest or other religious minister as proof of religious commitment.
- 12.9 The Local Authority will publish on its website a list of the vacancies in Cheshire East publicly funded schools for parents seeking places outside the normal admission round.
- 12.10 Parents of children who are seeking a transfer to an alternative school for reasons other than a house move will be strongly advised to discuss the proposed transfer with the current school before submitting an application.
- 12.11 The Local Authority will maintain up-to-date records of applications and their outcomes through liaison with schools.
- 12.12 The process of completing the application for a school place can be facilitated by the school by inviting the parent to complete an online application during a school visit or by the parent prior to contacting or visiting the school. Hard copy application forms are available on request from the Local Authority.

- 12.13 Parents making applications for schools in other local authorities' areas will be advised to contact the relevant local authority for advice about their own application process.
- 12.14 Applications will not normally be accepted more than 6 school weeks prior to the intended date of admission. An exception to this is where an application is made during the summer term, for admission at the beginning of the following September. In this case, applications will be accepted up to 8 school weeks prior to intended date of admission.

13 PROCESSING APPLICATIONS

- 13.1 All applications should be processed within no more than 10 working days from the receipt of application. Different time scales will apply to applications processed in accordance with the Local Authority's Fair Access Protocol.
- 13.2 Where there are spaces in the relevant year group a place will normally be offered to the parent.
- 13.3 **If the year group in question is full, a decision to refuse admission ~~must be referred to the admission authority will be made by~~ the admission authority.**
- 13.4 In cases where a school is oversubscribed, the admission authority will rank the applications in accordance with their published oversubscription criteria.
- 13.5 **All decisions will be confirmed ~~by the school~~ in writing to the parent ~~by the admission authority~~ and the letter/e-mail will include information about the legal right of appeal and a start date, where relevant.** Optional letter/e-mail templates will be made available online for admission authorities that choose to use them.
- 13.6 Where a preference has been unsuccessful, written correspondence will confirm the decision on the application and will advise the parent to contact the Local Authority for advice about alternative schools with vacancies.
- 13.7 Written correspondence confirming offers will advise the parent to contact the school to accept or decline the school place within no more than 10 school days from the offer date.
- 13.8 In cases where a school feels that further admissions can be agreed on the basis that to do so will not result in a breach of infant class size legislation or will not prejudice the provision of efficient education or efficient use of resources, the application must be referred to the admission authority for a decision.
- 13.9 Decisions on applications will be notified to the Local Authority to enable the Local Authority to keep up-to-date records.
- 13.10 **Admission will normally take place for primary school admissions within 10 school days from the date of offer and for secondary school admissions within 20 school days from the date of offer.**

- 13.11 Repeat applications will not be considered within the same school year, unless the parent's or the school's circumstances have changed significantly since the original application was made. Full details of the change of circumstances must be provided on the applications form for consideration.

14 WAITING LISTS.

- 14.1 Waiting lists will not be held for community or voluntary controlled schools other than in accordance with legal requirements, which require that they are held up until the end of the autumn term for the normal year of admission (i.e. reception and year 7 admissions). Where waiting lists are held by other admission authorities, children will be added to waiting lists in criteria order and not on a first come first served basis.
- 14.2 For 'in year' waiting lists only, children who are subject of a direction by a local authority to admit, are part of a managed transfer from a closing school or who are allocated to a school in accordance with the Local Authority's Fair Access Protocol will take precedence over those on the waiting list.

15 'IN YEAR' APPEALS

- 15.1 Applications for appeal should be submitted within 20 school days from the date of notification that the application for admission was unsuccessful.

16 Part Two – Key Dates

Process	Secondary Transfers	Primary Admissions
Application process starts	1 September 2015	1 September 2015
Closing date for applications	31 October 2015	15 January 2016
Preferences forwarded to other LAs	16 November 2015	5 February 2016
Preferences forwarded to Academies, Free, VA and Foundation Schools	23 November 2015	12 February 2016
Deadline for receipt of supporting documentation	7 December 2015	19 February 2016
Academies and Free Schools, VA and Foundation Schools to respond	14 December 2015	4 March 2016
Representations from schools re admission over PAN	14 December 2015	4 March 2016
Provisional allocations of places at Cheshire East schools sent to other LAs for their residents	Around 22 January 2016	Around 18 March 2016
Responses to other LAs on potential offers of places in their schools for Cheshire East residents (so far as possible)	29 January 2016	24 March 2016
Allocations to be finalised	12 February 2016	31 March 2016
Offers released	1 March 2016	18 April 2016
Deadline for accepting or declining places	15 March 2016	3 May 2016
Waiting lists prepared, late applications processed and vacancies allocated. Waiting lists will be held in criteria order. Parents offered places on this basis will be required to accept or decline the place offered within 10 schools days.	After 15 March 2016	After 3 May 2016
Appeals Application Deadlines	30 March 2016	18 May 2016
Appeal Hearings	By 17 June 2016	By 21 July 2016
Appeal Hearings – late Applications	Within 40 days of deadline where possible, or 30 school days of appeal being lodged	
Appeal Applications – ‘In Year’ Admissions	Within 20 school days from the date of notification that the application for admission was unsuccessful.	
Appeal Hearings – ‘In Year’ Applications	Within 30 school days of appeal being lodged	Within 30 school days of appeal being lodged
Please note: Deadline for Admission Authorities to publish Appeal Timetables on their website		28 February of relevant year

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LOCAL AUTHORITY ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS 2016-17 COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED SCHOOLS.

These admission arrangements apply to applications for all Cheshire East **community and voluntary controlled schools** in the school year 2016-2017 and for subsequent years, subject to any review. In its role as the admission authority for these schools, Cheshire East Council (the Local Authority) will be responsible for determining who can be allocated a place in accordance with these arrangements.

Applications for school places received for the normal admission round (i.e. into reception at 4+ and secondary transfer at 11+) and 'in year' (i.e. into any year group outside the normal admission round) shall be considered in accordance with the arrangements set out below and in accordance with the provisions set out in the Local Authority's agreed scheme, full details of which are published on the Local Authority's website at www.cheshireeast.gov.uk.

PUBLISHED ADMISSION NUMBERS (PANs)

The Local Authority has agreed admission numbers (PANs) for its community and voluntary controlled schools, which is the number of children that will normally be admitted into the *relevant age group* (e.g. into the reception year in a primary school and into year 7 as a secondary transfer in September for the first time). The admission number is set based on the number of pupils the school can accommodate and therefore normally, PANs will continue to be applied i.e. to all subsequent year groups in addition to the relevant age group. Admission numbers for schools in Cheshire East are published on the Local Authority's website at the start of the application process on 1 September. Hard copies can be requested.

The Local Authority, in its role as the admission authority for community and voluntary controlled schools, may agree (through consultation with the governing body) admission over PAN where to do so would not result in prejudice to the provision of efficient education or efficient use of resources at the school. The Local Authority will not normally be able to agree admission over the published admission number where to do so would result in a breach of infant class size legislation, which requires that infant classes (those classes where the majority of children will reach the age of 5, 6, or 7) contain no more than 30 pupils with a single qualified teacher.

The published admission number will continue to be applied as the relevant age group progresses through school, unless the circumstances for the school have changed since the PAN was agreed.

Admission numbers to be published for 2016 and subsequent years, subject to any review, are set out in **Appendix 1**.

STATEMENT of SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS/ EDUCATION, HEALTH and CARE PLANS.

All children whose statement of special educational needs (SEN) or Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan names the school must be admitted.

A Statement of Special Educational Need is a statement made by the local authority under Section 324 of the Education Act 1996 that specifies the special educational provision required for that child.

An Education, Health and Care plan is a plan made by the local authority under Section 37 of the Children and Families Act 2014 specifying the special education provision required for that child.

OVERSUBSCRIPTION CRITERIA

Where more applications are received than there are places available, after Children with Statements of Special Educational Needs, priority for admission will be based on the Local Authority's published oversubscription criteria as follows:

- i) **'Cared for Children' and Children who were 'Previously Cared for'.**
 - § A 'cared for child' is a child who is in the care of a local authority or provided with accommodation by that local authority (as defined in section 22 of the Children Act 1989).
 - § Children previously 'cared for' are children who were 'cared for' as defined above, but immediately after being 'cared for' became subject to an adoption, child arrangements order (formerly residence order), or special guardianship order. A child arrangements order is as an order settling the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live under section 8 of the Children Act 1989 amended by Children and Families Act 2014. Section 14A of the Children Act 1989 defines a 'special guardianship order' as an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child's special guardian (or special guardians).
- (ii) **Siblings** – pupils with brothers or sisters, step-brothers or step-sisters, foster brother or sisters, half-brothers or half-sisters, adopted brothers or adopted sisters living together as part of one household, already attending the preferred school (in years *Reception* through to *Year 10*) and expected to continue at the school in the following school year. (i.e. at the time of admission)
- (iii) **Children resident within the designated catchment area of the school.** Children will be classed within this criterion if they and their parents are resident within the area served by the school. (see notes below)
- (iv) **Children** not resident within a school's designated catchment area but **attending a school nominated as a feeder/partner primary school for admissions purposes.**

- (v) **Pupils living nearest to the school** measured using an Ordnance Survey address-point system which measures straight line distances in miles from the address point of the school to the address point of the place of residence.

Notes:

For residency addresses outside the UK where the Ordnance Survey address point system cannot be used to calculate the straight line distance, the measurement will be produced using latitude and longitude points published at www.gridreferencefinder.com.

Children eligible for priority due to their attendance at a named feeder/partner primary school (criterion IV) will only remain eligible for this priority whilst on roll at the primary school. If the child leaves the school, including transferring to high school, this priority within the oversubscription criteria will no longer apply.

Where a school cannot accommodate all pupils qualifying under one of the criteria stated above, the next criteria will also be applied to determine priority for admission. For example, if a school cannot accommodate all *children resident within the catchment area (criterion iii)*, the priority will be in the order of:

- § Resident in the catchment area (criterion iii) attending a feeder school (iv) and living nearest to the school (v)
- § Resident in the catchment area (criterion iii) not attending a feeder school (iv) and living nearest to the school (v)

All applicants within each criterion will be put into a distance order with priority being given to those that live nearest to the school, as stated in criterion v above. Where it is identified that there are a limited number of places available and the Local Authority cannot differentiate between the applications using the distance criterion (criterion v) a random allocation tie-breaker will be applied. This may be required for example, where applicants reside in the same block of flats or are children of a multiple birth living at the same address.

In the case of previously looked after children (criterion i) admission authorities may request a copy of the adoption order, residence order or special guardianship order and a written correspondence from the local authority that last looked after the child confirming that he or she was looked after immediately prior to that order being made.

Children will be considered within criterion (iii) if they and their parents are resident on the date published for the receipt of supporting documentation (see part two below). Supporting information may be requested to verify the place of residence. **To ensure a fair process, administrative checks may be undertaken, which will include verifying addresses against Council Tax records.**

For children of UK service personnel (UK Armed Forces) a Unit postal address or quartering area address will be accepted in advance of removal into the area, subject to official written confirmation of the address and relocation date. Preferences for the catchment area school for the confirmed address will be considered under criterion iii, unless a higher criterion is applicable.

PARENTS WITH SHARED RESPONSIBILITY FOR A CHILD

Where parents have shared responsibility for a child the place of residency will be determined as the address where the child lives for the majority of the week (e.g. where the child wakes up between Monday to Friday). Full details must be submitted in writing to enable the Local Authority to determine which address will be used for the purpose of admission. A panel of officers will consider the information provided. Where care is shared jointly and it is not possible to determine which parent is the principle carer and no Child Benefit is claimed, the LA will consider the primary residence as the address where the child is registered for GP purposes.

CHILDREN OF MULTIPLE BIRTHS

In relation to children of multiple births, exceptionally it may be necessary to offer places over the published admission number to ensure that, as far as possible, siblings (i.e. twins, triplets or children from other multiple births) can attend the same school.

MOVING HOUSE

Parents must inform the Local Authority immediately of a change of address, even if details of a future change of residency were included on the application form. The Local Authority will require supporting evidence to show that the place of residency has changed as follows:

- § A letter from the solicitor confirming the completion date;
- § A signed rental agreement showing the start of the tenancy (in accordance with the arrangements set out in the Local Authority's Coordination Scheme)

In addition the Local Authority may request further information including copies of **council tax and** utility bills. Other information may be required, such as evidence of disposal of previous property. **In all cases, information will be verified by officers using Council Tax records.**

In respect of applications made as part of the normal admission round, (e.g. into the reception class in a primary school and into year 7 as a secondary transfer in September for the first time) information and supporting evidence must be received by the dates stated in part two of these arrangements. Satisfactory confirmation of residency at the property (as aforementioned) will result in the application being processed on the basis of the new address. Proof of residency received after the published dates will not be used to process the application, but will be used to send the decision letter/e-mail on the published offer date.

WAITING LISTS

Waiting lists will only be held for the normal admission round (September admissions into the reception class and year 7) and only until the end of the autumn term. They will be held in criteria order and not on a 'first come, first served' basis. Placing a child's name on a waiting list does not affect the statutory right of appeal. Waiting lists for oversubscribed

schools will consist of those children whose parents have specifically requested in writing (including e-mail) that they remain on the waiting list, along with new applicants and those for whom an appeal application has been received. Vacancies will be re-allocated to children held on the school's waiting list in line with the dates published in part two of these arrangements.

LATE APPLICATIONS – NORMAL ADMISSION ROUND ONLY

Late applications will be considered after all on-time applications unless the Local Authority considers that there are good reasons for the application being late, which must be stated at the time of application, i.e. exceptional medical reasons preventing an earlier application, late removal into the area. Supporting documentation **must** be provided. Where supporting documentation has been received by the dates specified in part two of these arrangements and the Local Authority has accepted reasons stated for the late application, the application will be considered as if it had been received on-time. Late applications and supporting documentation received after the dates specified will be considered after all on-time applications and in accordance with the Local Authority's Coordinated Admissions Scheme. This will apply even where the Local Authority accepts that there are good reasons for the late application and as such these applications may be disadvantaged.

ACCEPTING AND DECLINING PLACES

All parents will be required to **accept or decline** the school place offered by the published date as stated in part two of these arrangements. The Local Authority reserves the right to withdraw places not accepted by this date.

RIGHT OF APPEAL

Parents who are not offered a place for their child at a school stated as a preference have a right of appeal to an independent appeals panel. Parents can submit an appeal in respect of each school for which admission has been refused. For appeals against decisions on preferences for community and voluntary controlled schools, forms are available on the Local Authority's website. Hard copies can be requested. Outside the normal admissions process, completed forms should be returned to the Local Authority within 20 school days from the date of notification that the application for admission was unsuccessful.

REPEAT APPLICATIONS

Repeat applications will not be considered within the same school year, unless the circumstances for the parent or school have changed significantly since the original application was made. Full details must be provided to the Local Authority for consideration.

PART TWO - TIMETABLE FOR APPLYING FOR PLACES

Process	Secondary Transfers	Primary Admissions
Application process starts	1 September 2015	1 September 2015
Closing date for applications	31 October 2015	15 January 2016
Deadline for receipt of supporting documentation	7 December 2015	19 February 2016
Allocations to be finalised	12 February 2016	31 March 2016
Offers released	1 March 2016	18 April 2016
Deadline for accepting or declining places	15 March 2016	3 May 2016
Waiting lists prepared, late applications processed and vacancies allocated. Waiting lists will be held in criteria order. Parents offered places on this basis will be required to accept or decline the place offered within 10 schools days.	After 15 March 2016	After 3 May 2016
Appeals Application Deadlines	30 March 2016	18 May 2016
Appeal Hearings	By 17 June 2016	By 21 July 2016
Appeal Hearings – late Applications	Within 40 days of deadline where possible, or 30 school days of appeal being lodged	
Appeal Applications – ‘In Year’ Admissions	Within 20 school days from the date of notification that the application for admission was unsuccessful.	
Appeal Hearings – ‘In Year’ Applications	Within 30 school days of appeal being lodged	Within 30 school days of appeal being lodged
Please note: Deadline for Admission Authorities to publish Appeal Timetables on their website		28 February of relevant year

PART THREE - SIXTH FORM ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS

The following admission arrangements apply to entry to the sixth form of Wilmslow High School and Poynton High School and Performing Arts College.

Pupils already on roll in the school's own year 11 are not admitted to a school's sixth form because they are already on the school roll. They move up to the 6th form from year 11. They can therefore only be refused progression to the sixth form if they fail to meet the academic criteria for progression/entry. Admissions law requires that the same academic criteria must be applied to all pupils, whether they are internal pupils seeking progression/entry or external applicants seeking admission. Schools have the choice of admitting pupils into year 12 or operating a sixth form primarily for pupils already on roll in the school. Wilmslow High School and Poynton High School and Performing Arts College have opted to admit pupils to their sixth forms from other schools.

Applications for admission to the Sixth Form of a Cheshire East school are dealt with by the school in accordance with the published admissions arrangements and not by Cheshire East Council. The schools will not interview pupils or their families for entry to year 12, although meetings may be held to provide advice on options and entry requirements for particular courses.

In the event that a course cannot be run due to low student take-up, the school may withdraw the course. This will not influence a decision to agree admission to the sixth form. In such cases, alternative courses will be offered.

PUBLISHED ADMISSION NUMBERS – EXTERNAL CANDIDATES ONLY

This number relates to the admission of **external candidates only**. The admission numbers included in the table are based on an estimate of the minimum number of external candidates likely to be admitted, although it would be acceptable to exceed this if demand for available courses can be met.

School	September 2016
Poynton High School And Performing Arts College	50
Wilmslow High School	50

Additional places may also be offered to external candidates if the number of children transferring from the school's own year 11 is lower than planned. An indication of the number of students that can be admitted is shown in the table below. This is based on an estimate of the number of children already attending the school who are likely to take up places in the sixth form and the overall capacity of the sixth form accommodation.

School	Sixth Form Capacity		
	Internal places	External places	Total places
Poynton High School And Performing Arts College	X	50	X
Wilmslow High School	X	50	X

OVERSUBSCRIPTION CRITERIA

In the event that the number of eligible applicants exceeds the number of places available, the oversubscription criteria to be applied are:

- i) **Eligible ‘cared for children’ and children who were previously ‘cared for’.**
 - § A ‘cared for child’ is a child who is in the care of a local authority or provided with accommodation by that local authority (as defined in section 22 of the Children Act 1989).
 - § Children previously ‘cared for’ are children who were ‘cared for’ as defined above, but immediately after being ‘cared for’ became subject to an adoption, child arrangements order (formerly residence order), or special guardianship order. A child arrangements order is as an order settling the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live under section 8 of the Children Act 1989 amended by Children and Families Act 2014. Section 14A of the Children Act 1989 defines a ‘special guardianship order’ as an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child’s special guardian (or special guardians).
- ii) **Eligible pupils resident within the designated catchment area of the school.** Pupils will be classed within this criterion if they and their parents are resident within the area served by the school. (Refer to previous notes regarding Children of UK Service personnel).
- iii) **Eligible pupils living nearest to the school** measured using an Ordnance Survey address-point system which measures straight line distances in miles from the address point of the school to the address point of the place of residence.

NOTES

An ‘eligible’ pupil is a pupil who has met the academic entry requirements.

All children whose statement of special educational needs (SEN) or Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan names the school must be admitted. A Statement of Special Educational Need is a statement made by the local authority under Section 324 of the Education Act 1996 that specifies the special educational provision required for that child. An Education, Health and Care plan is a plan made by the local authority under Section 37 of the Children and Families Act 2014 specifying the special education provision required for that child.

For residency addresses outside the UK where the Ordnance Survey address point system cannot be used to calculate the straight line distance, the measurement will be produced using latitude and longitude points published at www.gridreferencefinder.com.

Distance criterion will be applied as a tie breaker if the number of pupils applying under criterion (ii) exceeds the number of available places. To differentiate between two equal distance measurements, a random allocation tie-breaker will be applied. This will be

administered under independent supervision, in accordance with the requirements of the schools Admissions Code at paragraph 1.35.

In the case of previously looked after children (criterion i) a copy of the adoption order, residence order or special guardianship order may be requested and a written correspondence from the local authority that last looked after the child confirming that the pupil was looked after immediately prior to that order being made.

For children of UK service personnel (UK Armed Forces) a Unit postal address or quartering area address will be accepted in advance of removal into the area, subject to official written confirmation of the address and relocation date. Preferences for the catchment area school for the confirmed address will be considered under criterion ii, unless a higher criterion is applicable.

PARENTS WITH SHARED RESPONSIBILITY FOR A CHILD

Where parents have shared responsibility for a child the place of residency will be determined as the address where the child lives for the majority of the week (e.g. where the child wakes up between Monday to Friday). Full details must be submitted in writing in order that a decision can be taken on which address will be used for the purpose of admission. A panel will consider the information provided. Where care is shared jointly and it is not possible to determine which parent is the principle carer and no Child Benefit is claimed, the primary residence will be taken to be the address where the child is registered for GP purposes.

SIXTH FORM ADMISSION APPEALS

Any applicant refused a place in Year 12 is entitled to make an appeal to an independent appeal panel, whether the child is already attending the school or is an external candidate.

Parents or children* refused admission to a sixth form in a Cheshire East community or voluntary controlled school will be advised to contact the Local Authority for an appeal application form and details on the appeals process.

*The Education and Skills Act 2008 made changes to the law relating to admissions and appeals placing a duty on local authorities to make arrangements:

- a) for children to express a preference as to the school at which they wish to receive sixth-form education (i.e. secondary education suitable to the requirements of pupils who are over compulsory school age); and
- b) for children who are above compulsory school age, or will be above compulsory school age by the time they start to receive education at the school, to express a preference as to the school at which they wish to receive education other than school sixth-form education.

Regulations give a corresponding right of appeal to a child who expresses a preference for a school place. This right is in addition to the rights of parents to express a preference as to the school at which they wish their child to receive education.

ACADEMIC ENTRY CRITERIA

Poynton High School and Performing Arts College

Entry to the Sixth Form requires students to have gained good qualifications in a range of subjects. **A minimum of five subjects at GCSE¹ at grade A* - C are required.** These must include at least four full course GCSEs. This ensures that students have a successful background in a range of academic subjects. Where students have followed a GCSE equivalent course which leads to more than two passes in one subject, passes in four additional full course GCSE subjects are required.

A final decision on admission to the Sixth Form cannot take place until the student's results are known. Sixth Form offers will therefore be conditional upon gaining the minimum academic entry criteria, as stated above. This will be made explicit at the time of offer.

Most students follow a four subject programme of courses in Year 12. Individual subjects require a specific level of attainment. This applies to all eligible students, whether transferring to the sixth form from year 11 or as an admission from another school. Eligible students are therefore advised that even if they are offered a place in the sixth form having achieved the academic entry criteria, they will only be able to study their preferred subjects if they meet the specific level of attainment required for that course. Courses are reviewed annually to take into account any changes in education legislation, availability of courses and required attainment levels and therefore, students and parents are advised to consider the information published by the school at the start of the application process.

Any eligible student that enters the sixth form who fails to meet the specified grade in their chosen subjects will, where practicable, be offered an alternative course or offered a referral to an alternative post 16 education provider that may be able to offer their preferred course of study.

Wilmslow High School

Wilmslow High School offers a range of level 3 courses ('A' level or BTEC – which includes BTEC Level 3 Extended Diploma in Sport, Performance and Excellence). In order to ensure that students enrol on courses that they will be able to complete and in which they will gain success, academic entry criteria has been set for all students. This includes those seeking to transfer to the sixth form from year 11 and students new to the school.

Entry to the Sixth Form requires students to have gained good qualifications in a range of subjects. **A minimum of five subjects at GCSE² at grade A* - C are required.** These must include at least four full course GCSEs. This ensures that students have a successful background in a range of academic subjects. Where students have followed a GCSE equivalent course which leads to more than two passes in one subject, passes in four additional full course GCSE subjects are required.

¹ Applicants can request consideration of equivalent qualifications, for example IGCSE.

² Applicants can request consideration of equivalent qualifications, for example IGCSE.

A final decision on admission to the Sixth Form cannot take place until the student's results are known. Sixth Form offers will therefore be conditional upon gaining the minimum academic entry criteria, as stated above. This will be made explicit at the time of offer.

Individual subjects require a specific level of attainment. This applies to all eligible students, whether transferring to the sixth form from year 11 or as an admission from another school. Eligible students are therefore advised that even if they are offered a place in the sixth form having achieved the academic entry criteria, they will only be able to study their preferred subjects if they meet the specific level of attainment required for that course. Courses are reviewed annually to take into account any changes in education legislation, availability of courses and required attainment levels and therefore, students and/or parents are advised to consider the information published by the school at the start of the application process.

Any eligible student that enters the sixth form who fails to meet the specified grade in their chosen subjects will, where practicable, be offered an alternative course or offered a referral to an alternative post 16 education provider that may be able to offer their preferred course of study.

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Equality impact assessment is a legal requirement for all strategies, plans, functions, policies, procedures and services under the Equalities Act 2010. We are also legally required to publish assessments.

Section 1: Description

Department	Children and Family Services		Lead officer responsible for assessment		Tony Crane	
Service	School Admissions		Other members of team undertaking assessment		Barbara Dale	
Date	3 March 2015		Version		1	
Type of document (mark as appropriate)	Strategy	Plan	Function	Policy v	Procedure	Service
Is this a new/existing/revision of an existing document (mark as appropriate)	New		Existing		Revision	
<p>Title and subject of the impact assessment (include a brief description of the aims, outcomes, operational issues as appropriate and how it fits in with the wider aims of the organisation)</p> <p>Please attach a copy of the strategy/plan/function/policy/procedure/service</p>	<p><u>LOCAL AUTHORITY ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS 2016-17, COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED SCHOOLS.</u></p> <p>The Local Authority must comply with statutory deadlines and regulations as set out in School Admissions Code 2014.</p> <p>These admission arrangements apply to applications for all Cheshire East community and voluntary controlled schools in the school year 2016-17 and for subsequent years, subject to any review. In its role as the admission authority for these schools, Cheshire East Council (the Local Authority) will be responsible for determining who can be allocated a place in accordance with these arrangements.</p> <p>Applications for school places received for the normal admission round (i.e. into reception at 4+ and secondary transfer at 11+) and 'in year' (i.e. into any year group outside the normal admission round) shall be considered in accordance with the arrangements set out below and in accordance with the provisions set out in the Local Authority's agreed scheme, full details of which are published on the Local Authority's website at www.cheshireeast.gov.uk.</p> <p>The arrangements and scheme sets out the priority criteria for allocating places to an oversubscribed school</p>					

	<p>together with information and advice on the application process, processing applications, changing preferences, notification of decisions, late applications, moving house, accepting and declining places, waiting lists, and admission appeals.</p> <p>The Authority has a duty to comply with the mandatory requirements imposed by all relevant legislation including the:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Admissions Code (or by statutory provisions). The School Admissions Code has been issued under Section 84 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 ('SSFA 1998') Chapter 1 of Part 3 of the School Standards and Framework Act (SSFA) 1998 contains the key provisions regarding schools admissions, including the statutory basis for the Code. The Code reflects changes to the law made by the Education Act 2011 and Regulations. • The Regulation that applies is the School Admissions (Admission Arrangements and Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2014.
Who are the main stakeholders? (eg general public, employees, Councillors, partners, specific audiences)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents/ Carers • Children and Young People • Headteachers and Governors of Cheshire East Council's Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools

Section 2: Initial screening

Who is affected? (This may or may not include the stakeholders listed above)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children aged 4 to 18 • Parents and Carers • Head Teachers/Governing Bodies • other LAs
Who is intended to benefit and how?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents/ Carers • Children and Young People • Headteachers and Governors of Cheshire East Council's Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools

Could there be a different impact or outcome for some groups?											
Does it include making decisions based on individual characteristics, needs or circumstances?			Admissions to the schools are made in accordance with the published admission arrangements and over subscription criteria. All applications are considered against the over subscription criteria on a equal basis and in line with the School Admissions Code 2014.								
Are relations between different groups or communities likely to be affected? (eg will it favour one particular group or deny opportunities for others?)			<p>Some schools will receive more applications than there are places available and inevitably some parents will not secure a place at their preferred school which leads to dissatisfaction with the service.</p> <p>However, admission arrangements must comply with the regulations in the School Admission Code 2014 and must be fair and administered consistently.</p> <p>The coordination scheme requires that Cheshire East children are allocated a place at their nearest school with a vacancy in the event that an application for a preferred school is unsuccessful. All unsuccessful applicants are entitled to their legal right of appeal to an independent appeal panel.</p>								
Is there any specific targeted action to promote equality? Is there a history of unequal outcomes (do you have enough evidence to prove otherwise)?											
Is there an actual or potential negative impact on these specific characteristics? (Please tick)											
Age	Y	N	Marriage & civil partnership	Y	N	Religion & belief	Y	N	Carers	Y	N
		✓			✓			✓			✓
Disability	Y	N	Pregnancy & maternity	Y	N	Sex	Y	N	Socio-economic status	Y	N

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM

ANNEX 3

		✓			✓			✓			✓
Gender reassignment	Y	N	Race	Y	N	Sexual orientation	Y	N			
		✓			✓			✓			
What evidence do you have to support your findings? (quantitative and qualitative) Please provide additional information that you wish to include as appendices to this document, i.e., graphs, tables, charts										Consultation/involvement carried out	
										Yes	No
Age			Admissions Policy applies to all school age children whose parents/carers are requesting a place in a mainstream school. It sets out the process and procedure which is adopted and also the criteria used for allocating places to an oversubscribed school.								
Disability			The Local Authority and schools are bound by the School Admissions Code 2014, Regulations and Disability Discrimination Act and these do not allow for any discrimination in this respect.								
Gender reassignment			<p>The Local Authority and schools are bound by the School Admissions Code 2014 and regulations and this does not allow for any discrimination in this respect.</p> <p>The majority of provision is co-educational and gender of the pupil is not an issue. However, there is one single sex boys school and one single sex girls school, both schools share the same catchment area serving the area of Sandbach thus ensuring sufficient parallel provision for boys and girls in the local vicinity</p>								
Marriage & civil partnership			The Local Authority is bound by the School Admissions Code 2014 and								

	<p>Regulations and this does not allow for any discrimination in this respect.</p> <p>Admissions to the schools are made following the published admission arrangements and over subscription criteria. All applications are considered against the over subscription criteria on a equal basis without reference to the marital status of the parent/carer</p>		
Pregnancy & maternity	<p>The Local Authority is bound by the School Admissions Code 2014 and Regulations and this does not allow for any discrimination in this respect.</p> <p>Admissions to the schools are made following the published admission arrangements and over subscription criteria. All applications are considered against the over subscription criteria on a equal basis without reference to the status of the parent/carer.</p>		
Race	<p>The Local Authority is bound by the School Admissions Code 2014 and Regulations and this does not allow for any discrimination in this respect.</p> <p>However, in some instances parents may be unsure as to how to secure a school place for their child. Translation services are available to assist parents who do not have English as their first language with their application.</p>		
Religion & belief	<p>The Local Authority is bound by the School Admissions Code 2014 and Regulations and this does not allow for any discrimination in this respect.</p> <p>Voluntary Aided Schools which are their own admission authorities may determine over subscription criterion based on faith grounds and in accordance with the regulations in the School Admissions Code 2014.</p>		

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM

ANNEX 3

Sex	The Local Authority is bound by the School Admissions Code 2014 and Regulations and this does not allow for any discrimination in this respect.				
Sexual orientation	The Local Authority is bound by the School Admissions Code 2014 and Regulations and this does not allow for any discrimination in this respect.				
Carers	The Local Authority is bound by the School Admissions Code 2042 and Regulations and this does not allow for any discrimination in this respect. Children in public care or previously cared for child (as defined in section 22 of the Children Act 1989) continue to be given high priority for admission if the school is oversubscribed.				
Socio-economic status	The Local Authority is bound by the School Admissions Code 2014 and Regulations and this does not allow for any discrimination in this respect.				
Proceed to full impact assessment? (Please tick)	Yes	No	✓	Date 03 March 2015	

If yes, please proceed to Section 3. If no, please publish the initial screening as part of the suite of documents relating to this issue

Section 3: Identifying impacts and evidence

This section identifies if there are impacts on equality, diversity and cohesion, what evidence there is to support the conclusion and what further action is needed

Protected characteristics	Is the policy (function etc....) likely to have an adverse impact on any of the groups? Please include evidence (qualitative & quantitative) and consultations	Are there any positive impacts of the policy (function etc....) on any of the groups? Please include evidence (qualitative & quantitative) and consultations	Please rate the impact taking into account any measures already in place to reduce the impacts identified High: Significant potential impact; history of complaints; no mitigating measures in place; need for consultation Medium: Some potential impact; some mitigating measures in place, lack of evidence to show effectiveness of measures Low: Little/no identified impacts; heavily legislation-led; limited public facing aspect	Further action (only an outline needs to be included here. A full action plan can be included at Section 4)
Age				
Disability				
Gender reassignment				
Marriage & civil partnership				
Pregnancy and maternity				
Race				
Religion & belief				
Sex				

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM

ANNEX 3



Sexual orientation				
Carers				
Socio-economics				
Is this project due to be carried out wholly or partly by contractors? If yes, please indicate how you have ensured that the partner organisation complies with equality legislation (e.g. tendering, awards process, contract, monitoring and performance measures)				

Section 4: Review and conclusion

Summary: provide a brief overview including impact, changes, improvement, any gaps in evidence and additional data that is needed			
Specific actions to be taken to reduce, justify or remove any adverse impacts	How will this be monitored?	Officer responsible	Target date
Please provide details and link to full action plan for actions			
When will this assessment be reviewed?	<p>For admission arrangements for entry in September 2016 , consultation must be for a minimum of 8 weeks between 1 November 2014 and 1 March 2015. For all subsequent years, consultation must be for a minimum of 6 weeks between 1 October and 31 January . Where the admission arrangements have not changed from the previous year there is no requirement to consult, subject to the requirement that admission authorities, must consult on their admission arrangements at least once every 7 years, even if there are no changes during that period.</p> <p>However, all admission authorities , must determine their admission arrangements each year even if no changes have been made. For September 2016 admission arrangements admission authorities must</p>		

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM

ANNEX 3

	determine their arrangements by 15 April 2015, and for all subsequent years by 28 February.		
Are there any additional assessments that need to be undertaken in relation to this assessment?	No - Consultation has not been required this year as no changes to the determined 2015/2016 Admission Arrangements and Coordination Scheme have been proposed.		
Lead officer signoff	Val Simons	Date	03 03 2015
Head of service signoff		Date	

Please publish this completed EIA form on your website

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Primary Schools	School Status	PAN 2015	Capacity Indicative Admission Number	PAN Change for 2016
Acton CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled	22	22	
Adlington Primary School	Community	15	15	
Alderley Edge Primary School	Community	30	29	
Ashdene Primary School	Community	60	60	
Audlem St James' CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled	30	25	
Beechwood School	Community	45	45	
Bexton Primary School	Community	60	60	
Bickerton Holy Trinity CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled	20	20	
Bollington Cross CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled	25	25	
Bosley St Mary's CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled	8	8	
Brierley Primary School	Community	30	30	
Buglawton Primary School	Community	30	29	
Calveley School	Community	15	15	
Chelford CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled	9	8	
Cledford Primary School	Community	60	60	
Daven Primary School	Community	30	30	
Dean Oaks Primary School	Community	60	60	
Dean Valley Community School	Community	30	30	
Disley Primary School	Community	30	30	
Edleston Primary School	Community	30	30	
Egerton Primary School	Community	30	30	
Elworth CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled	45	45	
Elworth Hall Primary School	Community	30	30	
Gainsborough Primary & Nursery School	Community	60	60	
Gawsworth Primary School	Community	30	30	
Goostrey Community Primary School	Community	30	29	
Gorsey Bank Primary School	Community	60	60	
Haslington Primary School	Community	45	45	
Havannah Primary School	Community	30	29	
High Legh Primary School	Community	21	22	25
Highfields Community Primary School	Community	30	30	

Primary Schools	School Status	PAN 2015	Capacity Indicative Admission Number	PAN Change for 2016
Hollinhey Primary School	Community	30	30	
Hurdsfield Community Primary School	Community	25	21	
Lindow Community Primary School	Community	30	30	
Little Bollington CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled	15	15	
Lostock Hall Primary School	Community	21	21	
Lower Park School	Community	40	40	
Mablins Lane Community Primary School	Community	75	75	
Manor Park School and Nursery	Community	45	45	
Middlewich Primary School	Community	60	60	
Millfields Primary and Nursery School	Community	30	30	
Mobberley CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled	30	30	
Monks Coppenhall Primary School	Community	60	60	
Offley Primary School	Community	60	60	
Puss Bank Primary School	Community	60	60	
Rainow Primary School	Community	25	25	27
Rode Heath Primary School	Community	30	30	
Scholar Green Primary School	Community	30	25	
Shavington Primary School	Community	30	30	
Sound and District Primary School	Community	19	19	
St Anne's Fulshaw, CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled	19	19	
St Oswald's Worleston CE Primary School	Voluntary Controlled	12	12	
Styal Primary School	Community	17	17	
The Berkeley Primary School, Wistaston	Community	60	60	
The Dingle Primary School	Community	50	50	
The Marlborough Primary School	Community	60	60	
Underwood West Primary School	Community	60	67	
Upton Priory Primary	Community	60	60	
Vernon Primary School	Community	50	52	
Vine Tree Primary School	Community	30	30	
Weaver Primary School	Community	30	30	

			Capacity Indicative Admission Number	PAN Change for 2016
Primary Schools	School Status	PAN 2015		
Weston Village Primary School	Community	38	38	
Wheelock Primary School	Community	45	45	
Willaston Primary School	Community	30	30	
Wilmslow Grange Community Primary School	Community	45	45	
Wrenbury Primary School	Community	20	20	
Wyche Primary School	Community	28	28	

			Capacity Indicative Admission Number	PAN Change for 2016
Academy Conversions Commenced	School Status	PAN 2015		
Ivy Bank Primary School	Community	50	54	60
Peover Superior Endowed (Cont) Primary School	Voluntary Controlled	11	11	
Sandbach Community Primary School	Community	15	15	
Secondary Schools	School Status	PAN 2015	Capacity Indicative Admission Number	PAN Change for 2016
Middlewich High School	Community	140	140	
Poynton High School & Performing Arts College	Community	246	246	
Ruskin Sports College, a Community High School	Community	140	133	
Wilmslow High School	Community	300	300	

			Capacity Indicative Admission Number	PAN Change for 2016
Sixth Forms	School Status	PAN 2015		
Poynton High School & Performing Arts College	Community	50	N/A	
Wilmslow High School	Community	50	N/A	

Primary Schools	School Status	PAN 2015	Capacity Indicative Admission Number	PAN Change for 2016
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Notes:

*In the event that conversion to Academy Status is not completed by 1.3.2015, arrangements determined by the Local Authority shall continue to apply.

Schools with PAN increases. 

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Cabinet

Date of Meeting: 31st March 2015
Report of: Lorraine Butcher – Executive Director of Strategic Commissioning
Title: Better Care Fund – Section 75 Partnership Agreements
Portfolio Holder: Councillor Janet Clowes – Care and Health in the Community

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 Improving the health and wellbeing of the residents of Cheshire East is a priority for the Council and its partners. To achieve this, improvements in the way health and care services are delivered and managed are essential, with integration being the focus of attention across all organisations.
- 1.2 Cheshire East Council is, together with Cheshire West and Chester Council and the four Clinical Commissioning Groups within Cheshire, part of an 'Integration of Health and Care Pioneer', the Department of Health having recognised the scale of ambition and pace of change being progressed across Cheshire. Through the Eastern Cheshire CCG's 'Caring Together' and South Cheshire CCG's 'Connecting Care' programme, the Council is fully committed to developing new 'person centred' models of care.
- 1.3 The Better Care Fund (BCF) is a nationally driven initiative being overseen by the Department of Health and is a key part of Public Sector Reform supporting the integration of Health and Social Care. The Better Care Fund is a national pooling of £3.8billion from a variety of existing funding sources within the health and social care system and will be utilised to deliver closer integration across health and social care. The BCF is a pooled budget held between Local Authorities and Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCG's) via a legal section 75 (s75) partnership agreement. The Fund provides a tool to enable our local integration programmes. It will be spent on schemes that are integral to improving outcomes for local people.
- 1.4 The BCF plans and allocations have been developed on the Cheshire East Health and Wellbeing Board basis and the pooled budget for Cheshire East will be £23.9m and consists of Local Authority Capital funding of £1.8m, South Cheshire CCG funding of £10.5m and Eastern Cheshire CCG Funding of £11.6m.
- 1.5 The Cheshire East BCF plan was submitted to NHS England in September 2014 and has been fully approved by NHS England on the condition that a s75 pooled budget agreement is used as the mechanism to deliver the approved BCF plan.

- 1.6 It is a statutory requirement for a s75 pooled budget, partnership agreement to be in place to support the delivery of the BCF from 1st April 2015. The pooled budget arrangement is fundamental to the smooth delivery and implementation of the BCF plan, in particular ensuring that the level of both financial and non financial risk that partners could be exposed to is managed appropriately.
- 1.7 The Cheshire East Health and Wellbeing Board have endorsed progressing with two separate s75 pooled budget agreements locally, to support the delivery of the Better Care Fund plan and to be aligned with the respective health integration programmes – namely Caring Together (Eastern Cheshire Clinical Commissioning Group, plus Council and partners) and Connecting Care (South Cheshire Clinical Commissioning Group, plus Council and partners). Cheshire East Council would enter into a pooled budget arrangement with Eastern Cheshire Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and a separate s75 arrangement with South Cheshire Clinical Commissioning Group.
- 1.8 The report provides Cabinet with an update on the implementation and delivery of the Cheshire East Better Care Fund, as approved by NHS England and overseen locally by the Cheshire East Health and Wellbeing Board.
- 1.9 It requests Cabinet support and approval for the Council to enter into two s75 Partnership Agreements from 1st April 2015 until 31st March 2016 with local health partners and to continue post April 2016 so long as there is a national requirement to operate the Better Care Fund as a s75 pooled budget agreement.
- 1.10 It seeks delegated authority to the Executive Director of Strategic Commissioning to make decisions and agreements on behalf of the Council in relation to the commissioning of schemes funded by the Better Care Fund.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 Members of the Cabinet are asked to:

- i) Support and approve the Council entering into two s75 partnership agreements with the relevant Clinical Commissioning Group, Eastern Cheshire Clinical Commissioning Group (for Caring Together Programme) and South Cheshire Clinical Commissioning Group (for Connecting Care Programme) to deliver the Better Care Fund Plan;
- ii) Support the proposal that the CCGs will be the lead accounting organisations for the s75 pooled budgets.
- iii) Agree that final amendments to the s75 can be agreed with the Portfolio Holder for Health and Social Care, CEC Executive Director of Strategic Commissioning, CEC s151 officer and the respective CCG Chief Officers;
- iv) Agree that the Cheshire Joint Commissioning Leadership Team is responsible for overseeing the delivery of the agreement pending a review of the existing governance arrangements and an updated

delivery position is reported to Cabinet and the CCG Governing Bodies during October 2015.

3.0 Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 In April 2014, Cabinet endorsed the Cheshire East Better Care Fund plan that was submitted to NHS England in April 2014. The Cheshire East Health and Wellbeing Board have overseen revisions to the original plan following updated guidance and conditions from the Department of Health during the summer of 2014. It was fully approved by NHS England in December 2014.
- 3.2 The Cheshire East Better Care Fund plan has been developed with health partners and is aligned with local health and social care transformation programmes.
- 3.3 Cheshire East Council is a core partner of the partnership arrangements and Cabinet approval is required to enter into the s75 partnership arrangements. The BCF s75 agreements have been reviewed and supported by the Health and Wellbeing Board on 24th March 2015 and the respective CCG governing bodies have / will be considering the s75 agreements.
- 3.4 The governance arrangements supporting the s75 Better Care Fund pooled budget arrangement are fundamental to the smooth delivery of the expected changes and ensuring the level of risk both financial and non-financial the council, partner organisations and providers are exposed to is understood and mitigated against.

4.0 Wards Affected

- 4.1 All wards.

5.0 Local Wards Affected

- 5.1 Not applicable.

6.0 Policy Implications

- 6.1 Health and Social Care integration is a key element of public sector reform. The Better Care Fund formalises these joint initiatives during 2015/16.
- 6.2 Elements of the Better Care Fund funding are linked to the implementation of the Social Care Act, in particular carers, safeguarding boards and maintaining eligibility criteria.

7.0 Implications for Rural Communities

- 7.1 There are no specific implications for rural communities. The benefits of the Better Care Fund Schemes will be seen across all communities in Cheshire East.

8.0 Financial Implications

- 8.1 The Better Care Fund is a national pooling of £3.8bn from a variety of existing funding sources within the health and social care system, with £23.9m being pooled locally within the Cheshire East Health and Wellbeing Board area. The local pooling is made up of Local Authority funding from the Disabled Facilities Grant and Capital Allocation for Adult Social Care of £1.8m, South Cheshire CCG funding of £10.5m and Eastern Cheshire CCG of £11.6m. The local health and social care economy will work together to deliver better care arrangements for its population, seeking to keep individuals within the community, avoiding hospital/residential nursing care. The schemes that make up the Better Care Fund Plan are appended at the end of the report (Annex 1)

Source of Allocation	Eastern Cheshire CCG and CEC Pooled Budget £'s	South Cheshire CCG and CEC Pooled Budget £'s	Total £'s
Eastern Cheshire CCG (Revenue)	11,612,000		11,612,000
South Cheshire CCG (Revenue)		10,481,000	10,481,000
Social Care Capital Grant (CEC)	421,000	387,000	808,000
Disabled Facilities Grant (CEC)	516,000	474,000	990,000
Total	12,549,000	11,342,000	23,891,000

- 8.2 The Council's financial contribution into the BCF is the capital funding of £1.8m detailed above, the Council are not making any additional revenue contributions towards the pooled budget arrangement. During 2014/15 the Council received £6.649m of funding from health towards social care service with a health benefit via a s256 agreement and this funding and associated services will transfer into the Better Care Fund.
- 8.3 The revised guidance in July 2014 introduced a payment for performance element related to the reduction in Non Elective Admissions (these are unplanned, often urgent admissions mainly via Accident & Emergency). The potential performance payment for Cheshire East is £2.11m and this is based on a 3.5% reduction in Non Elective Admissions. The performance fund is only released if there is a reduction in activity, however there is a risk that the Council as a partner to the pooled budget will need to contribute towards some upfront investment towards the services that will act as enablers to delivery of the BCF plan.

	Eastern Cheshire CCG and CEC Pooled Budget £'s	South Cheshire CCG and CEC Pooled Budget £'s	Total £s
Performance Fund linked to 3.5% reduction in Non Electives Admissions to hospital (this is not additional funding)	1,114,000	1,005,000	2,119,000

- 8.4 Following the agreement to operate two section 75 agreements within the Cheshire East area, the respective Clinical Commissioning Groups and the Council will be responsible for producing the pooled budget's accounts and audit in respect of those elements of the budget which they receive directly from government. This arrangement reduces the number of transactions across organisations and provides the opportunity for the pooled budgets to be aligned to the local health and social care transformation programmes. The organisations would host the budget in line with the agreed plans of all partners and the funding would be used explicitly for the agreed areas of spending identified in the plan. The Council will take responsibility for the collation and consolidation of standardised financial and reporting information for the Cheshire East Health and Wellbeing board.
- 8.5 The risk sharing arrangements for over and underspends is directly linked to each scheme specification and the lead commissioning organisation will be responsible for the budget management of the pooled fund allocated to the each individual scheme. The risks of overspends for the schemes included in the BCF plan are currently limited to the funding contribution. A variation schedule has been included in the partnership agreement to provide the lead commissioner with the escalation process to raise issues and concerns.
- 8.6 The main area of financial risk is linked to the delivery of the performance fund which is directly linked to the reduction in hospital non elective admission activity.

9.0 Legal Implications

- 9.1 S141 of the Care Act 2014 provides for the Better Care Fund Pooled Funds to be held under and governed by an overarching s75 National Health Service Act 2006 Partnership Agreement.
- 9.2 Pursuant to Section 75 of the National Health Service Act 2006 and the NHS Bodies and Local Authorities Partnership Arrangements Regulations 2000 (the "Regulations"), NHS bodies and local authorities can enter into partnership arrangements for the exercise of specified functions. The regulations define the nature of the partnership arrangements. They provide for the establishment of a fund made up of contributions from the partners out of which payments may be made towards expenditure incurred in the exercise

of their functions; for the exercise by NHS bodies of local authority functions and for the exercise by local authorities of NHS functions; and require the partners to set out the terms of the arrangements in writing. The specific objectives for implementing Section 75 Agreements are:

- 9.2.1 To facilitate a co-ordinated network of health and social care services, allowing flexibility to fill any gaps in provision;
 - 9.2.2 To ensure the best use of resources by reducing duplication (across organisations) and achieving greater economies of scale; and
 - 9.2.3 To enable service providers to be more responsive to the needs and views of users, without distortion by separate funding streams for different service inputs.
- 9.3 NHS England has provided a template developed by Bevan Brittan for overarching s75 Agreement which has been used as the main framework for the Cheshire East section 75.

10.0 Risk Assessment

- 10.1 The Better Care Fund plan includes a risk register and each lead commissioner is responsible for maintaining a risk register. The risk register is monitored by the Joint Commissioning Leadership Team pending discussions about the ongoing Governance arrangements supporting the delivery and monitoring of the Better Care Fund. The corporate risk registers for the respective organisations incorporate significant risks relating to BCF.
- 10.2 The most significant risks in the plan are as follows:
- The funding for Social Care Act responsibilities funded from the Better Care Fund, including carer's assessment and support packages; advocacy and information and advice is not sufficient to cope with the statutory duties.
 - The investment in community based interventions does not deliver the expected benefits in reducing Non Elective Admissions. This may lead to cost pressures within the acute sector and the performance payment not being released.
 - Governance and decision making arrangements supporting the Better Care Fund are not clear and this may lead to delays with decision making; decisions not being made and decisions being made that are not aligned with the overall vision of the Better Care Fund plan.
 - Funding arrangements are not clear across partners and partners are exposed to unanticipated funding pressures.

These risks will be managed as part of the delivery of the Better Care Fund plan.

- 10.3 Mersey Internal Audit Agency and the Council's Internal Audit Team have worked together to test the proposed governance arrangements for the Better Care Fund.

11.0 Background

- 11.1 The opportunity afforded by the Better Care Fund is to translate the ideas that are already well established within the Cheshire East health and care economy into action, to drive change and transformation at pace.

- 11.2 This commitment is acknowledged by the ambitions of the Cheshire Pioneer Programme which aims to ensure that individuals in Cheshire stop falling through the cracks that exist between the NHS, Social Care and support provided in the Community. The aspiration of the Pioneer partnership is that we can develop a system that will avoid:

- duplication and repetition of individuals experience, with people having to re-tell their story every time they come into contact with a new services;
- people not getting the support they need because different parts of the system don't talk to each other or share appropriate information and notes;
- the "revolving door syndrome" of older people being discharged from hospital to homes not personalised to their needs, only to deteriorate or fall and end up back in A & E;
- home visits from health or care workers being un-coordinated, with no effort to fit in with people's requirements;
- delayed discharges from hospital due to inadequate co-ordination between hospital and social care staff.

- 11.3 The clear commitment is that we will move away from commissioning costly, reactive services and commission those that will develop self-reliance, focus on prevention, improve quality of care, reduce demand and take cost out of the system for re-investment into new forms of care. Across Cheshire we are aligning our commissioning approaches and where relevant jointly commissioning services to deliver consistency and integration in the wider service landscape.

- 11.4 By 2015, the communities of Cheshire will begin to experience world class models of care and support that are seamless, high quality, cost effective and locally sensitive. Better outcomes will result from working together with:

- Better experiences of local services that make sense to local people rather than reflecting a complex and confusing system of care;
 - More individuals and families with complex needs are able to live independently and with dignity in communities rather than depending on costly and fragmented crisis services;
 - Enhanced life chances rather than widening health inequalities.
- 11.5 We recognise that the current position of rising demand and reducing resources make the status quo untenable. Integration is at the heart of our response to ensure people and communities have access to the care and support they need.
- 11.6 Locally within Cheshire East, two integration programmes are at the heart of this work, connecting workstreams across the Cheshire footprint as appropriate, whilst also affording opportunities for learning and remodelling care according to the needs of local populations.
- 11.7 Caring Together (including NHS Eastern Cheshire Clinical Commissioning Group, Cheshire East Council and East Cheshire Trust) - This area covers a population of approximately 201,000 residents, and includes the urban areas of Macclesfield, Congleton and Knutsford. Whilst life expectancy is above the national average, there are significant disparities between areas. The main causes of premature death are circulatory and respiratory disease, cancers, and diseases of the digestive system, with particular links back to lifestyle issues of obesity and alcohol consumption. This area includes 23 GP practices, and works closely with the Local Authority of Cheshire East, and East Cheshire Trust.
- 11.8 Connecting Care (including NHS South Cheshire Clinical Commissioning Group and Vale Royal Clinical Commissioning Group, Cheshire East Council, Cheshire West and Cheshire Council and Mid-Cheshire Foundation Hospital Trust) - This locality has a population of approximately 278,500 and includes 30 GP practices (18 in South Cheshire CCG, 12 in Vale Royal CCG). This area covers a proportion of Cheshire East and Cheshire West and Chester Council. The two Clinical Commissioning Groups share a management team to provide efficiencies. Patient flows to the District General Hospital have illustrated that 92% are from people living within the boundaries of the two Clinical Commissioning Groups. There are significant financial pressures that exist within the health and social care geographies in this locality and this is due in part to a relative lack of deprivation against national benchmarking making it difficult for local organisations to individually draw resources to create the headroom for innovation.
- 11.9 Effective commissioning of services to secure improved outcomes for residents is at the heart of the Better Care Fund, and the partnership within Cheshire East acknowledges this.

- 11.10 Consideration has been given to whether additional joint activity and commissioning resources should be included in the Better Care Fund pooled budget from April 2015. The partners, through our Joint Commissioning Board, have discussed this extensively and determined that we would wish to take a cautious and measured approach to growing the pool as we extend our collective reach in identifying appropriate activity to be included. Common areas for commissioning reviews have been identified for 15/16 across the partnership. At the point of each review decisions will be considered to joining the activity and commission to the pool. Part of the reason for doing this is to ensure we do not lose a focus, via BCF on addressing the shared outcomes and measures that we are aiming to secure. For this reason we do not wish to get ahead of ourselves or overstate our ambition early and then under-deliver.
- 11.11 The ambition of the partnership is clearly to connect commissioning activity to improve the health and care outcomes for residents. The Better Care Fund, commencing in 2015 is seen as a staging post on the journey which will result over time in significant combining of resources to more effectively drive innovation and improvement.

12 Access to information

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

Name: Louisa Ingham
Designation: Better Care Fund Finance Lead
Tel No: 01270 686223
Email: louisa.ingham@cheshireeast.gov.uk

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Better Care Fund Section 75 Report to Cabinet

Annex One

Ref	Scheme	Eastern Cheshire CCG and CEC s75 Funding	South Cheshire CCG and CEC s75 Funding	Total Funding
Theme 1	Self care and self management			
BCF1 (1a)	<p>Supporting Empowerment – Information, advice, prevention and early intervention</p> <p>The principle of the ‘Empowered Person’ has been one of the key underpinning principles of the whole system redesign in both Caring Together and Connecting Care programmes.</p> <p>It focuses on the cultural shift required to further enable individuals to take responsibility for their own health and wellbeing by ensuring that they have access to a range of information advice and support to do this effectively.</p>	£112,000	£103,000	£215,000
BCF2 (1b)	<p>Universal Access to low level assistive technology, occupational therapy advice and assessment</p> <p>To support and enable people to access early practical help to support them with health and social care related problems. Utilising evidence-based practice principles relating to early help to maintain independence and self reliance. It is intended that this initiative will encourage individuals to access support in a variety of community settings where they can have low level assessment which would indicate a range of assistive technology solutions and/or low level equipment, together with advice regarding self health and self care support.</p> <p>This meets the objectives in the prevention and early intervention agenda. It builds on the premise that individuals want to remain in control and to have the low level support/tools to do this allowing the self care/self management principles to be encouraged and maintained.</p>	£288,000	£264,000	£552,000
BCF3 (1c)	<p>Assistive Technology Pilot for adults with a learning disability</p> <p>To pilot the use of Assistive Technology options within 24 hour supported tenancy</p>	£387,000	£356,000	£743,000

Ref	Scheme	Eastern Cheshire CCG and CEC s75 Funding	South Cheshire CCG and CEC s75 Funding	Total Funding
	based schemes and individuals living in their own homes. The objective is to primarily seek out solutions to provide access to support and assistance without the need for continued staff supervision. The long-term objective is to respect individuals' rights to privacy at the same time as ensuring safety and risk management is maintained.			
BCF4 (1d)	Facilitating Early Discharge To provide a service that prevents Delayed Discharge from Hospital.	£119,000	£109,000	£228,000
BCF5 (1e)	Disabled Facilities Grant funded service A suitable, well adapted home can be the defining factor in enabling a disabled person to live well and independently. The Disabled Facilities Grant scheme forms part of the vision for health and social care services by increasing opportunities for frail older people and disabled people to take control of their own care and support, increasing their independence and enabling them to remain in the home their choice. There is a growing number of older people in Cheshire East, and an increasing number of non-elective admissions to hospital services, which is putting unsustainable financial pressure on acute services. Home adaptations have the potential to deliver dividends in terms of both social and financial outcomes, enabling care to be delivered in the patient / service user's own home, and maintaining their safety and independence to prevent unnecessary hospital admissions.	£517,000	£473,000	£990,000
BCF6 (1f)	Carer's Assessment and Support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop revised guidance for carer's eligibility criteria which is aligned with the social care act. To effectively commission carers support services across Cheshire East across the health and social care boundary. To ensure Cheshire East Council meets its duties under the Social Care Act to provide assessment and support planning to Carers, and 	Carers Breaks £226,000 Social Care Act – Carers £165,000	Carers Breaks £200,000 Social Care Act – Carers £152,000	£743,000

Ref	Scheme	Eastern Cheshire CCG and CEC s75 Funding	South Cheshire CCG and CEC s75 Funding	Total Funding
	<p>further, to ensure assessment and support planning are truly personalised and provided by skilled staff.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the number of carers assessments performed and to develop a clearer understanding of residents who rely on carer support. 			
BCF 12 (1g)	<p>Information, advice, prevention and early intervention</p> <p>The Care Act 2014 requires that information and advice is made available to those individuals who may need to access social care support. The strategic objective of this scheme is to reduce the demand on health and social care services over the longer term by ensuring access to information and advice at an early stage in order to increase the chance of prevention or delays in deterioration of health conditions.</p> <p>(Includes care navigation services)</p>	£203,000	£186,000	£389,000
Theme 2	Integrated community services			
BCF7 (2a)	<p>Dementia Reablement</p> <p>To pilot a Dementia Reablement service with a view to providing early help to newly diagnosed patients and those in the early stages of Dementia.</p> <p>The aim of the service is to pilot and test the principles of reablement to focus on learning new skills/techniques to retain memory and delay memory impairment. Drawing on a range of evidence, the pilot will utilise techniques where patients can use practical measures to assist them in maintaining daily living skills and support family/carers to promote independence and positive risk taking.</p>	£332,000	£305,000	£637,000
BCF8 2b	<p>Community based co-ordinated care</p> <p>The Community Based Co-ordinated Care delivered by integrated health and social care teams has been designed to provide joined up care for the wellbeing of people</p>	£3,019,000		£3,019,000

Ref	Scheme	Eastern Cheshire CCG and CEC s75 Funding	South Cheshire CCG and CEC s75 Funding	Total Funding
	with the most complex needs. Its purpose is to proactively work with people identified through a risk stratification approach and their carers to identify their individual needs and goals, design a personal care plan and support their long term care needs by a dedicated care co-ordinator.			
BCF 9 2c	Integrated Community Service Model – Connecting Care Community Based Co-ordinated Care will be delivered by integrated health and social care teams which have been designed to provide joined up care for the wellbeing of people with the more complex needs. Its purpose is to proactively work with people identified through a risk stratification approach and their carers to identify their individual needs and goals, design a personal care plan and support their long term care needs by a dedicated care co-ordinator. This means that instead of citizens trying to navigate their way around the multitude of health and social care services, we are redesigning services to fit around their needs. We want to reduce duplication of care, prevent people having to tell their story multiple times and to minimise waste across care settings.		£3,029,000	£3,029,000
Theme 3	Community based urgent care/rapid response			
BCF10 3a	Implementing a Short Term Assessment Intervention recovery & Rehabilitation Service (STAIRRS) The need for an integrated community rapid response service has been identified in both Caring Together and Connecting care. Whilst the core objectives and overarching ambition for this service is shared across the two health economies, the delivery model will differ, to take account of the local context and population need	£6,632,000 (£4,901,000 from Eastern Cheshire CCG schemes and £1,731,000 for CEC s256 schemes)	£5,661,000 (£4,070,000 from South Cheshire CCG schemes and £1,591,000 from CEC s256 schemes)	£12,293,000
Theme 4	Social Care Capital and Programme Enablers			
BCF11 4a	To utilise the social care capital grant (former Community Capacity Grant) to	£549,000	£504,000	£1,053,000

Ref	Scheme	Eastern Cheshire CCG and CEC s75 Funding	South Cheshire CCG and CEC s75 Funding	Total Funding
	support development in three key areas: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Personalisation 2. Reform 3. Efficiency To provide enabling support to the Better Care Fund programme, through programme management support; developing governance arrangement including the s75 agreement and commissioning capacity.			
		£12,549,000	£11,342,000	£23,891,000

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CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Cabinet

Date of Meeting: 31st March 2015
Report of: Peter Bates, Chief Operating Officer
Subject/Title: Accountable Body for the Local Enterprise Partnership
Portfolio Holder: Councillor Peter Raynes, Finance

1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 This report relates to the Council's role as Accountable Body for the Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership (the LEP) and seeks approval for Cheshire East acting as Accountable Body for all Government funding streams channelled through the LEP.
- 1.2 Cheshire and Warrington Enterprise Partnership is one of 39 public-private partnership bodies across England established by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills to help determine local economic priorities and lead economic growth and job creation within the local area. The LEP is the strategic body through which the activities and objectives of the Cheshire and Warrington Economic Prosperity Board will be supported and co-ordinated.
- 1.3 At its meeting on 16 September 2013, the LEP Board agreed that Cheshire East would act as Accountable Body for the next three years. The decision was made in the light of the existing funding streams for which the Council was Accountable Body, reflecting the strength of Cheshire East's governance and stewardship and that those arrangements were working well.
- 1.4 Importantly, looking forward to the Local Growth Fund, the Government asked all LEPs (as part of their Growth Deal) to sign up to developing a "single assurance framework" covering all Government funding flowing through LEPs. In December 2014, Government published a guide, setting out what it expected LEPs to cover in their local assurance frameworks; this included sections on:
 - LEP governance and decision making
 - Local authority partnership working across the LEP
 - Transparent decision making
 - Accountable decision making (including role of the Accountable Body)
 - Ensuring value for money (prioritisation; appraisal; business case development; risk management)
- 1.5 As previously approved, the Council is already Accountable Body for the LEP's Core Funding grants, the Growing Places Fund and the Local Transport Body. In the light of the increasing number and value of grants being channelled through the LEP – and acknowledging the robustness of the LEP's

governance and decision making structures and its single Assurance Framework – it is recommended that Cheshire East act as Accountable Body for the LEP for all Government funding streams; this requires further approval and is the purpose of this report. Based on the Government's guide, the LEP are finalising their Growth Programme and Assurance Framework.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 That, subject to 2.2 and 2.3, Cheshire East act as Accountable Body for all Government funding streams channelled through Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership, until such a time as the LEP or the Council determine otherwise
- 2.2 That the Chief Operating Officer, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance, be authorised to take all necessary actions to ensure robustness of the Local Assurance Framework and certify that the final Framework is agreed and will be implemented in accordance with the standards articulated in the national framework
- 2.3 That the Chief Operating Officer, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance, be authorised to take all necessary actions to ensure robustness of the Partnership Agreement, setting out the relationships, responsibilities and respective accountabilities of the LEP and Cheshire East as the Accountable Body
- 2.4 That delegated authority be given to the Chief Operating Officer to make arrangements for the delivery of the responsibilities of the Accountable Body, as described in the Local Assurance Framework and summarised in the report

3.0 Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 As described in the report, the Government is clearly expecting Local Enterprise Partnerships to prepare a "single assurance framework" covering all Government funding flowing through LEPs; and consequently to have a single lead local authority (Accountable Body) to pay any Section 31 grant determinations to and adopt the associated responsibilities.
- 3.2 The recommendations relate to accepting that role, subject to satisfactory arrangements being in place for governance and decision making (via the LEP's Local Assurance Framework) and clarity on responsibilities and accountabilities (via a Partnership Agreement).

4.0 Wards and Local Ward Members Affected

- 4.1 All

5.0 Policy Implications

- 5.1 There are no particular policy implications relating to the role of Accountable Body; but clearly this is an essential part of enabling and supporting strategic, sub-regional partnership arrangements.

6.0 Financial Implications

- 6.1 In simple terms the Council will act as “the bank”, receiving Government grant monies, holding (and separately accounting for) funds on behalf of the LEP, and making payments to scheme deliverers.
- 6.2 Importantly, as summarised in the report (9.3, 9.4), the responsibilities on the Accountable Body for proper use of Government grant monies are significant, and as such it is important to ensure that governance and decision making arrangements (via the LEP’s Local Assurance Framework) are sound and that respective responsibilities and accountabilities of the LEP and the Council (via a Partnership Agreement) are clear and acceptable.
- 6.3 To give a sense of scale, the LEP’s operating budget for 2014/15 is some £800,000, financed by “Core Funding” grant from Government of £500,000, along with LA partner contributions and other resources. The existing Growing Places Fund was initiated by Government grants totalling some £13m. The Local Growth Deal could bring in excess of £140m of Government funding to the LEP over the next 7 years, starting with £20m in 2015/16.
- 6.4 As with the Growing Places Fund, it is expected that the fresh Partnership Agreement will include financial recognition of the resources required to fulfil the Accountable Body role (e.g. Section 151 Officer; Legal; Audit; Finance), and set out sums to be paid to Cheshire East in this regard, funded from monies allocated to the LEP. It is intended that the internal audit role will include audit of the LEP’s systems and processes, as well as fulfilling any responsibilities regarding confirmation of compliance with grant conditions, in relation to particular schemes.

7.0 Legal Implications

- 7.1 Local Economic Partnerships (LEPs) were set up in 2011 by the Department for Business Innovation and Skills (BIS) and are voluntary partnerships between Councils and businesses which help to determine local economic priorities and lead economic growth and job creation within local areas.
- 7.2 As described in the report, Government funding arrangements are such that a lead local authority (Accountable Body) needs to be nominated to receive and take responsibility for grant monies, on behalf of the LEP.
- 7.3 s.31(1) of the Local Government Act 2003 empowers a Minister of the Crown to pay a grant to a local authority towards expenditure incurred or to be incurred by the authority. The amount of such grants, the manner of payment and any conditions attaching to the payment can be such as the person paying it (i.e. the

Minister) may determine. As set out in this report, the terms of the grant offer letter may include that where an authority fails to comply with the conditions of the grant the Minister may reduce, suspend or withhold the grant or require repayment of the whole or part of the grant.

- 7.4 There is consequently a need for appropriate governance arrangements to be put in place in relation to the Council's role as accountable body together with an appropriate partnership arrangement which will set out the roles, responsibilities and accountabilities of both the LEP and the Council. Appropriate indemnities will need to be sought to safeguard the Council against any possible clawback of funding by central Government in respect of non compliant distribution of grant funding.

8.0 Risk Management

- 8.1 A draft grant letter, provided for information by DCLG, also sets out certain responsibilities of the Accountable Body and exemplifies risks associated with the role; this includes:
- the Chief Executive and Chief Internal Auditor being required to sign a declaration, to DCLG, confirming that grant conditions have been complied with
 - where an authority fails to comply with any of the conditions the Minister of State may (a) reduce, suspend or withhold grant; or (b) require the repayment of the whole or any part of the grant
- 8.2 There is clearly the potential for risks associated with growth-related capital development and investment projects. It is intended that the LEP's Local Assurance Framework, as relating to governance, project appraisal and decision making, will establish appropriate arrangements to manage and mitigate such risks. The Partnership Agreement will clarify responsibilities and accountabilities of the LEP, and as such provide a further means of protection for the Council.

9.0 Background and Options

- 9.1 A number of Government funding streams are paid to local authorities on the basis of being Section 31 Grant Determinations (of the Local Government Act 2003). In the case of grants channelled through Local Enterprise Partnerships, such Section 31 grants are paid to a lead local authority, being the Accountable Body responsible for ensuring that funds are used in accordance with the purposes, terms and conditions of the grants and that all applicable legal requirements (e.g. state aid; public procurement law) are met.
- 9.2 As noted above, the Government asked all LEPs to sign up to developing a "single assurance framework" covering all Government funding flowing through LEPs. The Government's published guide states that Local Growth Fund resources will be paid via a Section 31 grant determination to a lead local authority (Accountable Body) and that "*...the accountable local authority would also be responsible for ensuring that decisions are made in accordance with the local LGF assurance framework*".

- 9.3 The Government's guide includes the following, in its description of the role and responsibilities of the chosen Accountable Body and its S151 Officer:

We expect the (LEP's) local assurance framework to:

- *confirm accountable body arrangements for the LGF and other funding sources received from Government;*
- *confirm that use of resources are subject to the usual local authority checks and balances – including the financial duties and rules which require councils to act prudently in spending, which are overseen and checked by the Responsible Chief Finance Officer – the 151 Officer, and to ensure transparency that annual accounts are published;*
- *confirm the responsibilities of the accountable local authority:*
 - *ensuring decisions and activities of the LEP conform with legal requirements with regard to equalities, social value, environment, State Aid, procurement etc.;*
 - *ensuring that the funds are used appropriately;*
 - *ensuring that the local LEP assurance framework is adhered to;*
 - *maintaining the official record of LEP proceedings and holding copies of all relevant LEP documents relating to LGF funding;*
 - *responsibility for the decisions of the LEP in approving projects (for example if subjected to legal challenge);*
 - *ensuring that there are arrangements for local audit of funding allocated by LEPs at least equivalent to those in place for local authority spend*
- *confirm that the LEP and accountable body have agreed timescales and operating practices to support the effective implementation of decisions.*

- 9.4 On the latter point, the guide exemplifies: “... a means for monitoring delivery and to provide clarity about what information it would expect to receive from scheme promoters and delivery agents; ...there should be a clear written agreement between the accountable local authority and the delivery agent clearly setting out the split of responsibilities and include adequate provisions for the protection of public funds (e.g. arrangements to suspend or claw back funding in the event of non-delivery or mismanagement)”.

- 9.5 As noted in 1.4, the LEP are finalising their local “Growth Programme and Assurance Framework”, based on the Government's guide. Along with sections on Project Prioritisation and Programme Management and Investment Decision Making, it sets out the governance structure of the LEP, which includes:

- **LEP Board** - to set the corporate and strategic direction of the organisation, satisfying itself that the business plan is in accordance with the strategic direction and that the milestones are sufficiently ambitious
- **Strategy Committee** – to prepare, maintain and publish a Strategic Economic Plan for Cheshire and Warrington
- **Performance and Investment Committee** – to hold the LEP Executive to account for programme delivery and performance and to ensure that projects put forward for funding support the LEP's strategic priorities and offer value for money

- **Finance and Audit Committee** – to provide assurance to the Board that the financial, audit and budgetary systems utilised by the LEP are robust and effective
- 9.6 Cheshire East is represented in these arrangements by both Members and officers, including the Leader on the Board, and the S151 Officer at the Performance & Investment and Finance & Audit Committees.
- 9.7 Whilst the LEP Executive team is relatively small, it is supported by officers from the constituent local authorities directly responsible for those functional areas for which projects and schemes are being progressed. As with the existing Growing Places Fund, it is expected that consultants will be used to provide additional specialist and technical advice, as required and independent scrutiny of the emerging Business Cases that are presented to the Performance and Investment Committee for consideration.
- 9.8 At its meeting on 16 September 2013, the LEP Board agreed that Cheshire East would act as Accountable Body for the next three years. The decision was made in the light of the existing funding streams, for which the Council was Accountable Body, and reflected that those arrangements were working well. As such it is noted that the LEP may review the position in September 2016.
- 9.9 Nonetheless given the nature of Local Growth Fund and the potential for the number and value of other grants channelled through the LEP to increase in the future, it is recommended that approval be given to the Council acting as Accountable Body for all Government funding streams channelled through the LEP, until such a time as either Cheshire East or the LEP determine otherwise. This approval would be based on the robustness of the LEP's governance structures as set out in its new Growth Programme Assurance and Accountability Framework – and on the understanding that the governance structures and the framework itself are applied to all Government funding streams, as envisaged.
- 9.10 Informed by the existing document relating to the Growing Places Fund, an overarching Partnership Agreement is being prepared, between the LEP and the Council as Accountable Body, setting out the respective roles, duties and responsibilities. It will include how the costs of resources deployed by Cheshire East in fulfilling its role will be met by the LEP; and also how the LEP will indemnify the Council, e.g. in respect of legal claims, losses; reliance on appointed external advisors used by the LEP.

10.0 Access to Information

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

LEP Assurance Framework, Department for Business Innovation & Skills, December 2014

Name: Peter Bates

Designation: Chief Operating Officer

Tel No: 01270 686013

Email: peter.bates@cheshireeast.gov.uk

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CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Cabinet

Date of Meeting: 31st March 2015
Report of: Chief Operating Officer
Subject/Title: Digital Customer Services
Portfolio Holder: Cllr David Brown, Strategic Outcomes

1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 The Council has developed the business case for Digital Customer Services, presenting the case for change to embrace the digital age and to enable customer contact across all services to be primarily delivered through digital channels.
- 1.2 Designing and promoting services that are 'digital by default' will improve access for residents and help the council meet its commitment to be a 'resident first', effective and efficient council.
- 1.3 36% of Cheshire East residents prefer to use digital channels in the way they access services today, and there is the potential for 70% of our residents to shift to digital in the way they interact with the Council. Our Customer Portal will provide a single route into the Council's digital services, with information tailored around the individual's specific needs and requirements. It will link various back office systems and data sources to provide an easy-to-use digital one-stop shop for customers.
- 1.4 Our Assisted Digital solutions will provide a safety net for vulnerable and digitally disconnected customers, coaching and building the confidence of customers to use digital channels to enable them to self-serve in the future.
- 1.5 Digital community hubs will encourage and enable customers to collaborate with the rest of the community, help people to access a support network, giving them information about relevant services while at the same time potentially addressing issues of isolation and loneliness.
- 1.6 As well as delivering world class digital solutions that puts the Council always within our customers' reach, the programme will deliver an annual recurring financial net benefit of £2.3m, with break-even 3 years after mobilisation.
- 1.7 Implementation of the business case requires the mobilisation of a Programme to manage the business transformation and implementation of enabling technology, as well as the internal and external communications that are key to driving the right behaviour of both customers and business users to realise the benefits.
- 1.8 The programme team will be made up of several work streams focussed on delivery of a set scope of activities but with project governance and integration

across work streams. The team will include resources from the Council, PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) and an IT implementation partner.

- 1.9 The summary business case (executive report) is provided as an appendix to this report.
- 1.10 The business case was reviewed and endorsed by Executive Monitoring Board on 20th March.

2.0 Recommendation

- 2.1 To authorise the Chief Operating Officer, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder, to take all necessary actions to implement the future digital by default operating model for customer contact, including:
 - Extending the existing contract with PwC to encompass further work packages to support implementation
 - Identifying an appropriate IT implementation partner(s)
 - Mobilising the Programme team to begin implementation

3.0 Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 Digital technology is disrupting traditional business models and changing customer expectations within Cheshire East.
- 3.2 Cheshire East is striving to be a 'resident first' Council and seeking to deliver a higher quality of customer service with a lower cost to serve.
- 3.3 In order to be a leading Council, Cheshire East needs to embrace digital as an opportunity.
- 3.4 Cheshire East residents' shift to digital and social media ought to be reflected in the way customers interact with their council.

4.0 Wards Affected

- 4.1 All wards

5.0 Local Ward Members

- 5.1 Not applicable

6.0 Policy Implications

- 6.1 The implementation of digital services will require the Council to review and challenge policies to support digital service delivery. This will include policy simplification where it detracts from the target customer experience and the proportionate use of risk assessment in determining eligibility for services. Policy changes will be reviewed and approved as appropriate during implementation.

7.0 Implications for Rural Communities

- 7.1 Digital services enable those that cannot physically access Council services to access them remotely. It is acknowledged that access to Broadband in rural areas is still a challenge. The Connecting Cheshire project provides fibre broadband to homes and businesses outside of commercial roll-out areas, aiming to connect a further 10,000 premises across Cheshire, Halton and Warrington with fibre connectivity by September 2017.

8.0 Financial Implications

- 8.1 The business case estimates a cumulative cost of £5m by the end of 2019/20, offset by a cumulative gross benefit for £8.5m. The break-even point is Q1 2018/19. There is a recurring net benefit of £2.3m by 2019/20. The cumulative cost estimate includes ongoing consultancy services from PwC to support the delivery of the programme up to a total estimated contract value of £1.85m.
- 8.2 The cost of implementation has been included within the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy 2015/18 through the Digital by Design programme, with a capital budget of £4.9m. The recurring costs will be funded from ICT revenue budgets. It is also likely that some of the technical changes and hardware included within the scope of this programme are already planned within the ICT Essential Replacement and Enhancement programme or as requirements and budgeted for within service specific projects.
- 8.3 Changes to revenue budgets to reflect the financial benefits and any recurring ICT costs will be included in the 2016/19 Medium Term Financial Strategy.

9.0 Legal Implications

- 9.1 The Council has already completed a procurement process using the consultancy ONE framework in order to contract with PwC for the provision of consultancy services to support the delivery of the Digital Customer Services programme.
- 9.2 Only work package one (Detailed Design) was guaranteed under that Contract to enable development of the business case for Digital Customer Services (total value £395k which includes the additional services referred to in paragraph 11.3).
- 9.3 This report seeks approval to proceed with work packages 2 – 4 (which is a contract condition), to support the phased implementation approach.
- 9.4 The costs of work packages two to four were estimated at tender stage (as per paragraph 9.1) and under the terms of the Contract the exact costs will be agreed prior to confirmation to proceed with each work package.
- 9.5 The identification of the eventual IT implementation partner will be subject to procurement and contractual procedures.

10.0 Risk Management

10.1 There are a number of key strategic risks to the successful implementation of the digital solutions and the realisation of benefits. The key risks and mitigating actions are provided in the appended business case executive summary.

11.0 Background and Options

11.1 The Council began working in partnership with PwC in July 2014 to develop the high level business case for Digital Customer Services. This enabled the Council to:

- Define its ambition by agreeing an overarching set of design principles
- Create several customer personas to reflect the diverse range of customers using council services and understand their needs and expectations
- Develop a high level future operating model and the digital solutions required to empower both customers and the Council
- Understand where benefits could be driven from at a service level
- Estimate savings and implementation costs
- Develop an implementation approach and timescales.

11.2 From November 2014, the Council again worked in partnership with PwC to complete Detailed Design. The purpose of Detailed Design was to:

- Translate the high level digital solutions and business case into implementation activities
- Understand the full impact on each service area in scope
- Produce a detailed design brief and implementation plan
- Obtain clarity around the IT infrastructure – how it will work and what it will look like
- Agree details around what the change means for Cheshire East's customers and staff
- Provide increased certainty around the investment case (benefits, costs and impact on financial strategy).

11.3 Adults services is not included within the business case for Digital Customer Services at present. During the Detailed Design phase it emerged that further work is required to define the new customer journey and future operating model for Adults and clearly plan the progression to meet the Councils requirements for Care Act compliance and future strategy around integrating with health. A separate work stream has been established to rapidly develop the new operating model for Adults. The Digital Customer Services business case will be updated to include Adults services once this work has been completed.

12.0 Access to Information

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

Name: Paul Bayley
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Tel No: 01625 378029
Email: paul.bayley@cheshireeast.gov.uk

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Digital Customer Services Programme Executive Report

March 2015

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Purpose of this document

This Executive Report has been produced to summarise the Detailed Design phase that has been completed over the past 14 weeks. The full findings and recommendations from this phase are contained within the full end of phase report.

Within this Executive Report we have represented the case for change for the Council to embrace the digital age, to select the optimal future model for customer contact, and to enable customer contact across all services to be primarily delivered through digital channels whilst continuing to offer additional support to the vulnerable and those in need. An approach to truly meet the objective to be **Resident First**.

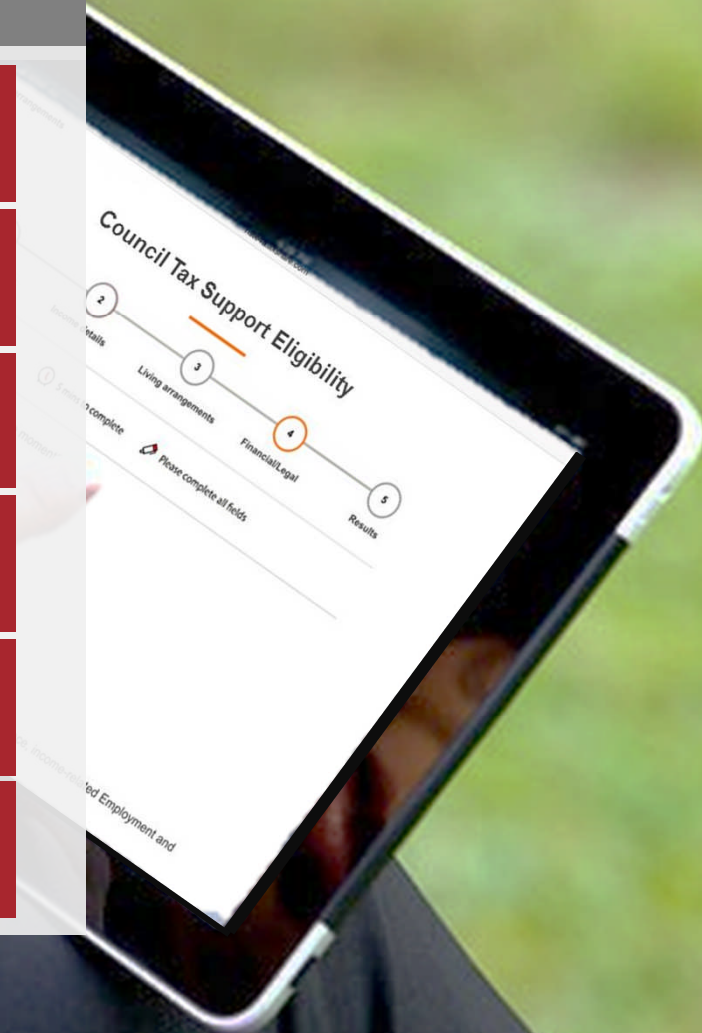
We have summarised analysis to develop our understanding of our customers to help us consider how we can develop and deliver solutions that will improve our customers experience and deliver our services more efficiently and effectively. We have proposed a future model, based on the principle of offering services as 'digital by default' and the solutions that underpin this model.

Contained with the summary of the business case we have updated our estimated annual savings from 2015/16 to 2019/20 and beyond, based on the gap between the current state of customer contact and the proposed future model, with an estimate of associated resource and technology costs to enable the change to happen.

In the conclusions section of this document we have outlined what we require from Programme Board and CLB and Cabinet to progress into Implementation.

Contents

<i>Delivering your ambition</i>	<i>P4-6</i>
<i>Background context and approach</i>	<i>P6-10</i>
<i>Understanding your customers</i>	<i>P11-12</i>
<i>Enabling the digital model</i>	<i>p13-26</i>
<i>Business Case</i>	<i>p27-34</i>
<i>Implementation</i>	<i>p35-41</i>





Delivering your ambition

Delivering your ambition



Enablers



Technology

- Improved website to provide better access to information and services
- User friendly digital solutions that work
- One single view of the customer



Policy

- Policy simplification where it detracts from the target customer experience.
- Proportionate use of risk assessment in determining eligibility for services



Process

- Processes to support the digital solutions
- Standardisation/ simplification to provide a more user friendly customer experience



People

- Assistance for those that are less digitally able
- Training for staff on digital solutions
- Increasing adoption of a 'commercial mind-set'

Benefits



Personalised, user friendly service



Quicker response times



Transparency



Improved understanding of customers



Reduction in avoidable contact



Reduced cost to serve



Less manually intensive processes



Collaborative work environment



Improved accessibility



Background Context & Approach

Understanding Cheshire East's challenge

Customer expectations are changing



...expect more and expect consistency

... want to be informed

... Want to participate

...want to achieve outcomes

Technology "mega-trends" are changing the role of customer service

Social



Mobile



Data Analytics



Cloud



The challenge for Cheshire East

- Cheshire East's ambition is to be a 'resident first' council
- Digital is disrupting business models and customer expectations within Cheshire East
- In order to be a leading council, Cheshire East needs to embrace digital as an opportunity
- Cheshire East is seeking to deliver a higher quality of customer service with a lower cost to serve
- Cheshire East residents' shift to digital ought to be reflected in the way customers interact with their council



Only 30% of Cheshire East's population fit the persona of Mrs. Traditionalist, showing that there is potential appetite for digital across the remaining population



42% of residents access Cheshire East's website on mobile devices, but mobile functionality remains very low, despite increased demand



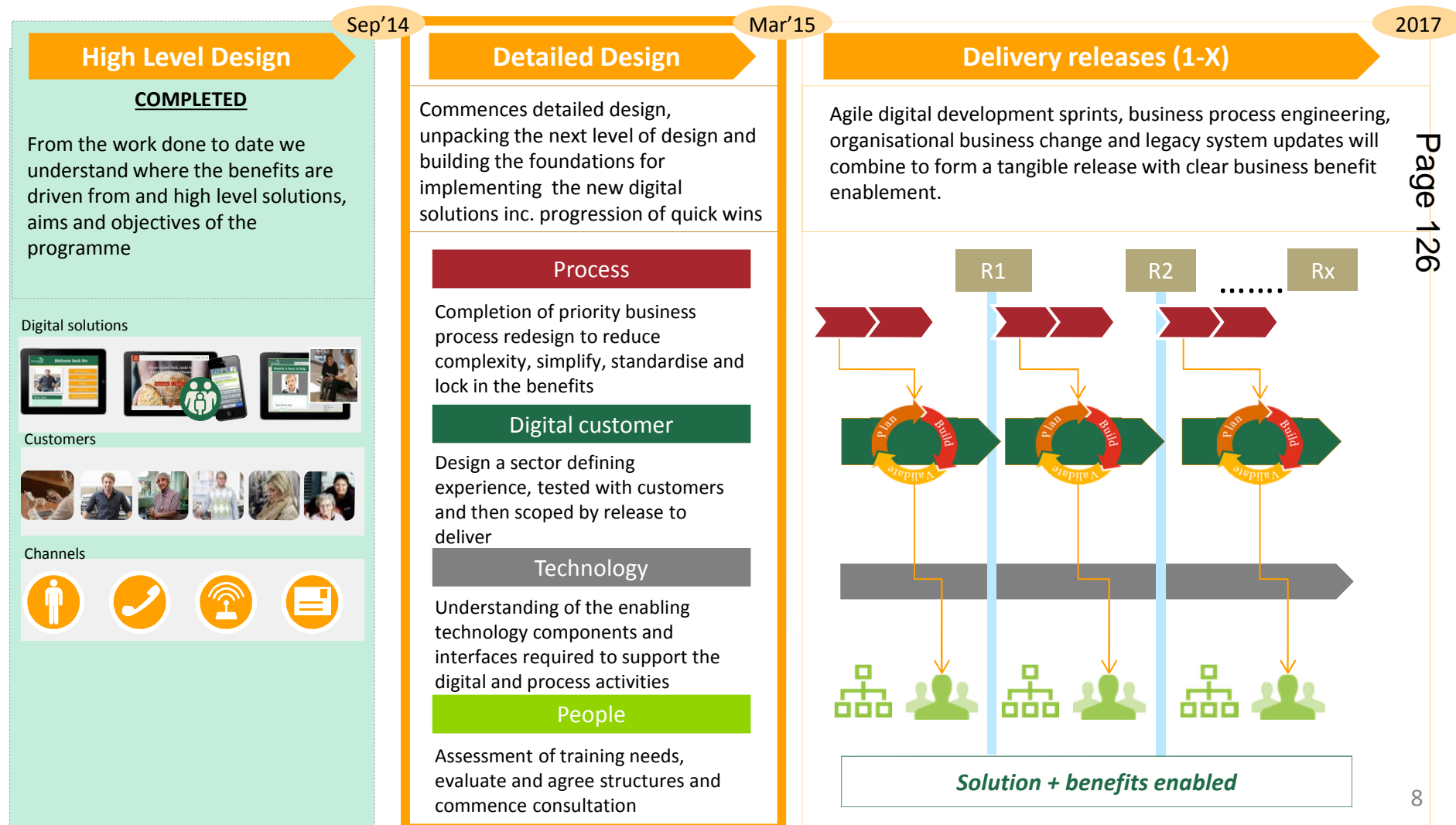
Only 3% of visits to the Cheshire East website result in a transaction, despite growing online capabilities across the web for these processes

Purpose of the Programme

The Digital Customer Service Programme aims to design and implement a future model of customer contact across the council. The future model is informed by leading digital practices and maximises the opportunities presented by digital to help the council meet its commitment to be a 'resident first' council.

Our Approach: Overview

This phase of the Programme has been focused on Detailed Design and the diagram below shows where it fits in the end to end transformation process.



The purpose of Detailed Design

The purpose of Detailed Design was to:

Translate the high level digital solutions and business case developed into implementation activities

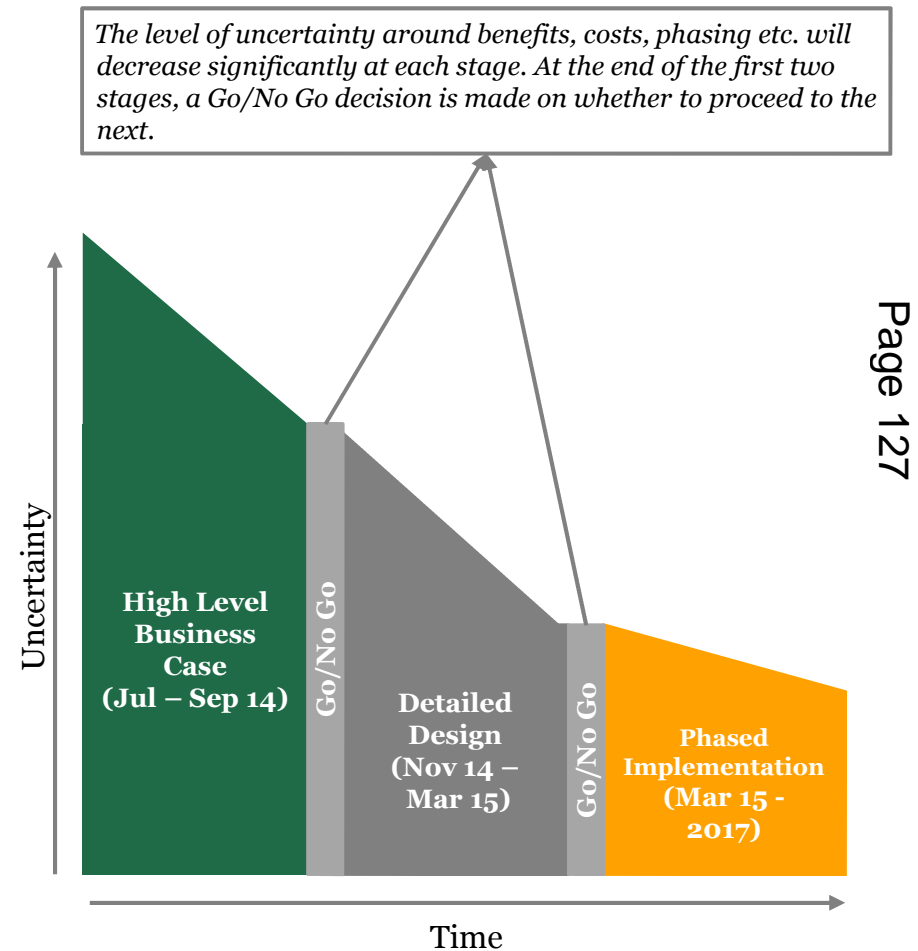
Understand the full impact on each service area in scope

Produce a detailed design brief and implementation plan

Obtain clarity around IT infrastructure -how it will work and what it will look like

Agree details around what the change means for Cheshire East's customers and staff

Increased certainty around the investment case (benefits/ costs and impact on financial strategy)

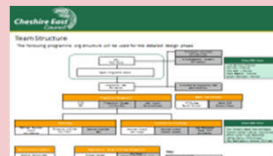


Our approach – outputs

The diagram below summarises the key outputs produced at each stage of the detailed design phase.

1 - Mobilisation (2 weeks)

- Project Terms of Reference



- We identified resources, roles and responsibilities across the PwC and Cheshire East team. Next we Identified stakeholders across front and back office teams and agreed an approach to developing the detailed design and created logical service groupings

2 - Design the future customer contact model (8 weeks)

- Current state process maps
- Future customer journeys
- Current/ Future State IT Architecture



- We mapped out future state customer journeys to determine how the opportunities identified could work in practice.
- We developed a future state IT architecture required to support the future state Digital Model across the council

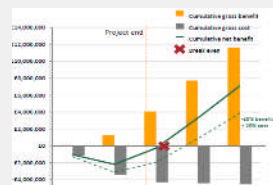
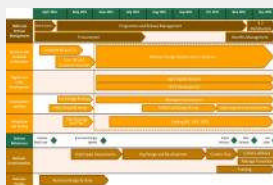
- User stories
- Solution mock ups
- Customer segmentation



- We captured the business and technical requirements via user stories, to show the functions the solution must provide during implementation
- Using the outputs from the workshops we created mock ups to bring the solutions to life and demonstrate how the online experience could look and feel across a number of service areas

3 - Implementation planning and business case (4 weeks)

- Data collection
- Implementation plan
- Business case
- Cost catalogue



- We developed the approach for implementation which involved developing programme governance, prioritisation of services for releases, agreement of work streams and developing a detailed plan for release 1
- Using the allocation of services to releases we were able to profile the costs and benefits accordingly and forecast benefits realisation including a 20% sensitivity analysis.



Understanding your customers



Third Party User

* NOTE: Third party user sits across all persona types and has been removed to minimise duplication within figures. 30% of residents will act as Third Party Users to help those customer personas that require support to use digital channels.

Understanding your customers

Using Acorn software we were able to match customer data to the customer personas to determine the potential digital appetite across Cheshire East. These figures were used to guide future channel usage across service areas

12%

Mr. Digital



If there was a self serve option for services I would use it, but options are limited

24%

Mrs. Twilight



I am unable to access most services outside of typical working hours

33%

Mr. Willing



I am willing to use digital channels, but may require some additional support

10%

Ms. X



I take the easiest option which at the moment is telephony

30%

Mrs. Traditionalist



I prefer to use traditional channels unless I am persuaded and supported to do otherwise

Digital potential

Actions to realise digital uptake

High

Shift to digital likely though increased digital capability

Med

Shift to digital possible through the creation of user friendly solutions and the provision of digital support

Low

Shift to digital possible by reducing the prominence of telephony channel, promoting digital channels and ensuring digital functionality is user friendly

Targeted support through assisted digital, working with partners and Digital Champions



Enabling the Digital Model

The Future Digital Model

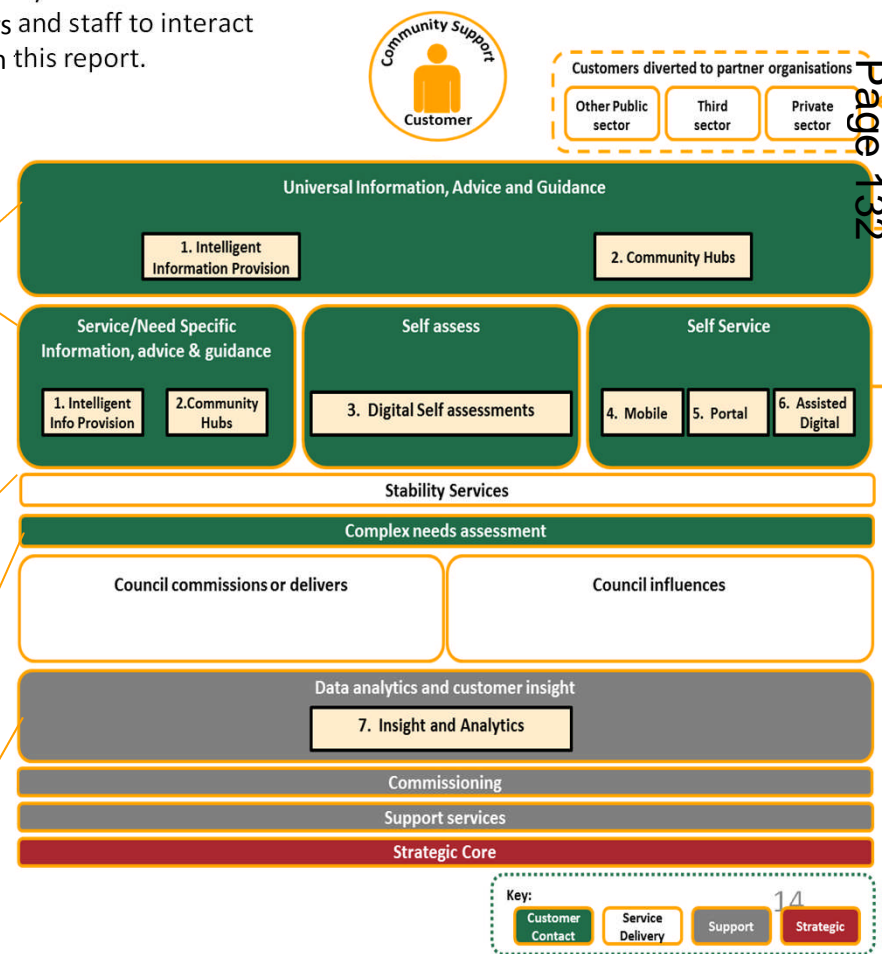
Detailed design has built upon the design principles and solution themes produced during High Level Design. This has enabled the Programme to provide clarity and definition around the future Digital Model – whilst recognising that Digital is an enabler for the whole organisation. The Programme has focused mainly on those layers where customer contact is most prevalent, however the future model shown below also highlights how digital touches and enables other layers. The model is underpinned by digital solutions that are simple and intuitive, enabling customers and staff to interact digitally as part of an enhanced experience. We have described these solutions in this report.

Service information provision and signposting is coordinated through connected solutions (**Intelligent information provision** and **Community Hubs**), targeting the elimination of all information provision that does not require manual interaction. Empowering customers and communities to work together to self-manage, build social capital and reduce demand. Diverting early to partner organisations where the Council is not best place to meet need. For self-service transactions and provision of customer specific information a **Customer Portal** enables personalisation of services and supports gathering and providing information in relation to more complex processes. **Assisted Digital** is the wrapper around the model providing a ‘safety-net’ for those customers who need support to engage with us through digital solutions.

A layer of stability services provides customers with the means by which to manage situations to avoid more complex needs arising e.g. someone who has fallen into arrears may be encouraged to settle their council tax account through reminder text messages, rather than the need for more extensive interventions, such as legal action.








Complex needs assessments are supported through information collection and any rules-based criteria being applied prior to professional assessment. Professionals are also supported through the ability to work away from the office.

The customer facing layers of the model are enabled by a focus on data **analytics and insight**, which allow continuous improvement and informed planning and decision making.

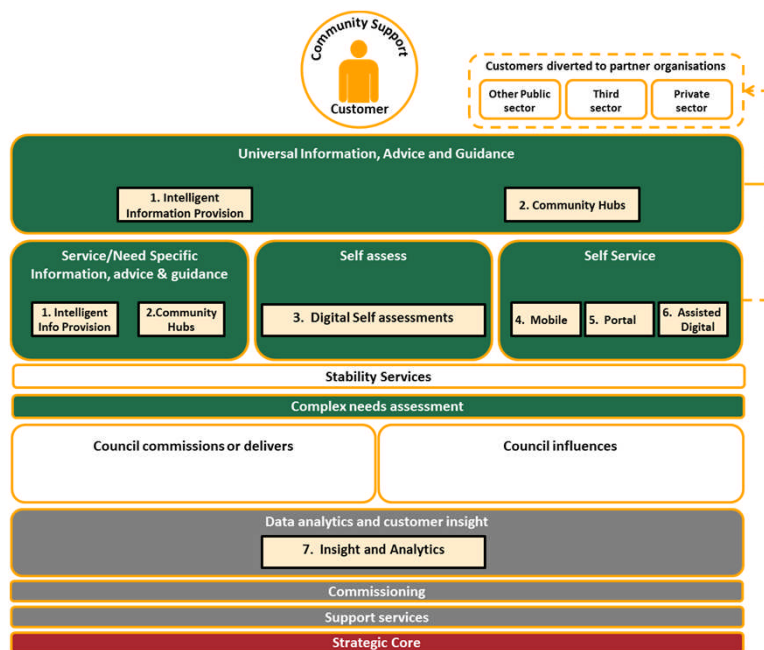


Introducing the Digital Solutions

The solutions outlined below are what underpin the future Digital Model. A subset of these Solutions are presented over the following pages.

	<i>'Solution in a sentence'</i>	<i>Benefits to our customers</i>	<i>Benefits to our people</i>
 1. Intelligent Info Provision	<i>Providing customers with quicker and easier access to information, which is the most significant reason for customers interacting with the Council</i>	<i>Information is easier to access, removing the need to contact the Council</i>	<i>Staff can focus on value adding activity, rather than fielding high volume requests for information</i>
 2. Community Hubs	<i>A social collaboration platform enabling communities to come together to share information and resolve smaller issues without contacting the Council</i>	<i>Provides access to a wider knowledge base enabling customers to self-serve and also contribute to the Community.</i>	<i>Builds social capital and reduces demand with limited intervention required from staff. Provides another source of knowledge to improve services.</i>
 3. Digital self-assessments	<i>Online simplified automated self assessment for all Council services that require an assessment</i>	<i>Simple, intuitive and guided process for assessments</i>	<i>Staff can focus on value adding activity, rather than process paper or manual assessments</i>
 4. Mobile	<i>Customers able to seamlessly interact through Mobile devices or supported by Council employees utilising mobile working technologies</i>	<i>Customers have access everywhere and anywhere to Council services.</i>	<i>Staff are empowered to work flexibly and work more efficiently</i>
 5. Portal	<i>An end-to-end transactional portal, which is based on customer's personal situation and preferences, and is linked to other Council web assets</i>	<i>Provides simple access to all Council services enabling the customer to self-serve.</i>	<i>Staff can focus on value adding activity, rather than processing transactions</i>
 6. Assisted Digital	<i>Empowering customers to access more services digitally, whilst also providing a safety net for more vulnerable users through F2F and phone assistance where required</i>	<i>Increases the level of trust, motivation, access and skills to use Digital solutions</i>	<i>Increases the levels of confidence and skills in using Digital solutions</i>
 7. Insight and Analytics	<i>Customer information is pooled from various parties and internally to create a single view of customer to inform decision making</i>	<i>Enables a more personalised and tailored service to be received</i>	<i>Connected data and information enabling more informed decision making</i>

What do these solutions deliver for Cheshire East ?



Self-service

The new model will transform the way that customers engage with the Council. The customer will complete all initial assessments and transactions online (or via Customer Services where assisted digital is required) and will be able to track the progress through their account. The customer will receive the same experience regardless of whether they access the service by computer or on mobile devices. Applications will be filtered and dealt with as defined by business rules, to deal with them with the minimum necessary manual intervention:

- Signposting and information provision – customers will be provided with information or directed to third parties where Council action is not required.
- Simple assessments will be automated according to business rules, with manual intervention only required in exceptional circumstances.
- Complex assessments will involve online data capture and workflowed through to the relevant professional.

Data Analytics and Customer Insight

Customer insight and analytics allows the Council to gain a better understanding of its customers and the services it provides, which will enable the Council to drive intelligent decision making. The Council will be able to better understand where demand is coming from, the impact of campaigns or certain services performance and how certain customer segments are using its services.

This enables the Council to be proactive about how it engages with customers to better meet their needs and to mitigate demand by targeting certain customers with applicable services, information or reminders.

Information, advice & guidance

- Information is simple to understand and easily available to customers through the Council website and Mobile App, improving the customer experience and reducing demand into the Council.
- Outbound communication is proactively targeted at customers, based on improved knowledge of customers and business rules to keep customers informed.
- Customers will have community hubs available to communicate with each other, providing support and information without the need for intervention from the Council.

What is it?

A portal provides a single route into the Council's online services and information tailored around the individual's specific needs and requirements. It links various back office systems and data sources to provide an easy-to-use digital one-stop shop for customers.

What does it mean for Cheshire East?

Digital passport to council services

- Secure single log-in to a customer portal which ensures the protection of an individual's data, potentially using existing accounts such as Facebook as account log in
- A single portal which a customer can use to access all their information across all council services where they can track progress of any service requests submitted
- Provides a consistent look and feel for the user with back-office systems linked to the portal, providing a single presentation layer of data, even if back-office systems are not integrated

Tailored and Customised to Customer

- Personalised webpage (e.g. widgets) and settings (e.g. customer contact channel, such as SMS, Twitter, email, etc.) based on customer preferences ('My Account')
- Pushes tailored information to customers based on preferences, profile (e.g. events in the local area) and type of customer (e.g. individual, business, Councillor)
- Focuses on a two way value exchange between the customer and the Council whereby the customer provides personal details in order for the Council to supply relevant services (personalisation of services to the customer's profile)

Self-Service Functionality

- An increased breadth of self-service activity made available through the website; offering a one-stop-shop for Council services
- Requests for service fulfilled without the need for manual intervention through intelligent e-forms
- Requests that require a rules-based assessment fulfilled through the Portal, without the need for manual intervention
- Requests for service that require a professional assessment supported through information collection and any rules-based criteria applied, before being automatically inputted into a back office system from which a professional assessment can be carried out and the customer automatically notified of any outcomes/recommendations.

Personalised access to services

Favourites



Benefits for customers

- Provided with the information they want and require through a single source
- Secure personalised experience when engaging with the Council
- Single repository for all records of interaction with the Council
- Allows for multiple channels based on user preference (e.g. SMS, email, Facebook, etc.)
- Provides timely outbound information to reduce the requirement for individuals to contact the Council

Benefits for Cheshire East

- Ensures Council services are not unnecessarily marketed
- Develops more detailed customer insight
- Improved understanding of future service demands from detailed customer profile data
- Single repository of data on each customer, across all Council systems
- Greater understanding of customer interests and activities
- Provides insight into the customer journey with the ability to intervene where necessary
- Reduced demand in the Call Centre and Customer Service Centres for Council services and enquiry management

Critical success factors

- Cyber security requirements with storing and making customer data accessible
- Significant evaluation and re-engineering of existing online forms and the underpinning business processes is necessary to improve usability
- Integration with back-office systems
- User friendly presentation layer and front page for customers to interact with (especially for the vulnerable)
- Marketing and communication campaign to drive traffic through online portal in conjunction with reduced availability of other channels

Auto populated details



Save & return to forms

What is it?

Our Assisted Digital solution will support certain groups of society who are more likely to be digitally excluded, these customers are likely to already be known to the Council as vulnerable people, they are likely to be characterised by our persona 'Mrs Traditionalist'. It will include traditional telephony and face to face services and as legacy channels are retired, they are replaced by 'Digital Access Points' which guide customers through the use of digital platforms for requesting Council services or information (e.g. helping customers to use self service machines in selected locations, such as CSCs) and provide a safety net for the more vulnerable.

What does it mean for Cheshire East?

Digital access points

- In targeted locations utilising both Council, Private and Third Sector facilities
- Council Officers and digital champions available to provide 'assisted digital' access, either at the council buildings, libraries, partner locations or customers homes

Taking digital to the Customer

- An emphasis on educating currently digitally averse users to encourage the digital shift, working with trusted partners and organisations (e.g. Barclays, ASDA), where appropriate
- Council Officers travelling to Customers throughout Cheshire East who may not have access to the internet or may be housebound
- Council Officers will help to guide Customers through the website and complete relevant service requests

Web chat within the Call Centre

- Web support with webchat function to allow additional support with services
- Skype/Lync equivalent video web chats linked from self-service machines to the Call Centre

Co-browsing

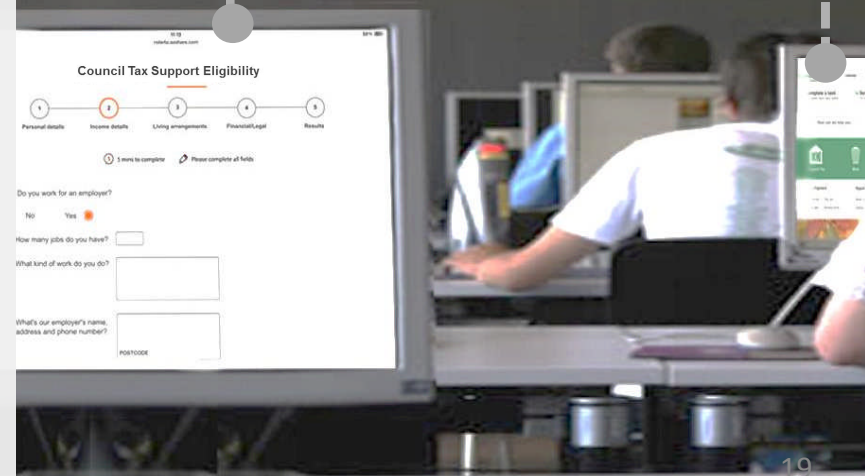
- Text based guidance for customers through the online portal
- Service Officers in the Call Centre will be able to provide text based support to a number of people using digital platforms, at the same time

Telephony and face-to-face

- Proportionate support through non-digital channels for those less able to use Digital, with telephony access to the Call Centre and face-to-face access at Customer Service Centres, where officers are able to provide support for more complex enquiries and interactions

Training, advice and guidance

Supporting vulnerable users



Benefits for customers

- Provides safety net for vulnerable and digitally disconnected customers
- Greater access to Council services through libraries and other designated access points
- Customers can easily access services 24/7. They are trusted and easy to use
- Provides assurance for those with greatest needs
- Additional support will build trust and confidence in the council digital services
- Coaches customers how to use digital channels to enable them to self-serve in the future - customers will be educated on digital rather than alienated by it
- Supports the most vulnerable through provision of telephony and face-to-face access

Benefits for Cheshire East

- Reduction in initial face to face and telephony contact with the customer, and reduction of paper mail by making more services accessible online
- Supports the push to digital channels and associated cost and experience benefits
- Staff become more confident using digital and dealing with customers through digital
- Use of libraries and other designated access points as digital connectors ensures service requests are more easily accessible

Critical success factors

- Careful assessment of contact centre team size required to ensure savings achieved through the reduction of telephony and face to face customer contact with the Council
- Vital to identify Residents of Cheshire East who are not currently Customers but may require Council services (engaging the 'digitally disconnected')
- Face to face is rationed and a clear policy is in place to support those that do not have significant vulnerability
- Greater collaboration with partners in order to align plans and strategies.
- Customers have a positive first experience when using digital channels, so that they do not dismiss it and rely back on telephony or face-to-face as their channel of choice

Improved search functionality

Signpost to forums



Online web support and web-chat

What is it?

Through the use of existing platforms (e.g. Facebook, Twitter) or by developing platforms (bespoke websites) encourage and / or enable customers to collaborate with the rest of the community, with limited interaction from the Council required This could be general community groups and / or specific to customer needs.

What does it mean for Cheshire East?

Collaboration space for Customers

- Flexible platform to act as a collaboration space for Customers to provide help and support to one another
- Messaging between Customers or the posting of FAQs to the community
- Council intervenes occasionally to structure content and identify the most useful discussions or information

Secure portals

- Certain user groups will require secure log-ins due to the nature of the discussions and questions
- Censoring of certain discussions will be important for Customers to build trust in the collaboration platform

Bespoke platform linked to transactional portal

- Enables Customers to bookmark content on the community network, which is accessible through a virtual folder in their personalised portal
- Ability to suggest content on the community network through the preferences and service requests on the transactional portal

Using existing platforms

- Use of existing platforms, such as Facebook or Twitter, for community collaboration
- Embedded as part of the transactional portal

Offers multiple contact opportunities

- Web chats (video link or text based), message boards and social media links

Examples identified in workshops

- Volunteering
- Fostering forums – pre and post placement
- Dog matching – lost and found dogs
- Community groups
- Workzone (Benefits)
- Social care and mental health - re-enablement

Opportunities in your local area

Reach out to the wider community



Benefits for customers

- Ability to reach out to wider knowledge and experience of the community
- Potential to resolve a query before it is asked if someone else has already posted the same query
- Supports collaboration across a variety of locations and communities
- Links together like minded groups, even those in vulnerable situations, e.g. the elderly or those looking at fostering
- Helps raise awareness of opportunities for people pursuing new interests or greater community involvement, for example, fostering

Benefits for Cheshire East

- Reduced demand in the Call Centre and Customer Service Centres for Council services and enquiry management as customers can access the information themselves
- Council able to share information and facilitate instead of providing services
- Uses existing community based digital presence and established audiences therefore minimising the 'build it and they will come' approach
- Assists in gaining customer insight on commonly searched for, or requested information, that can then help shape the Council's own digital presence and overall effectiveness for a variety of service areas
- Supports collaboration across a variety of locations and communities, and helps to increase community spirit and interaction across the region

Critical success factors

- Clear strategy and approach to managing content on the Hubs, including quality assurance for the content posted on the Hubs, to ensure unbiased comments and discussions
- Critical mass required for the network to be beneficial for the community, therefore a lot of material and existing information will need to be prepopulated where possible
- Security measures for certain hubs, services and discussions depending upon the customer profile and service offering
- The Council may need to stimulate growth of the hub in certain localities to attract the right customers to provide support to others

*Live
newsfeeds
tailored to
users*

*Links to videos
and multimedia*

*Signposting to
forums*



The Technical Architecture to underpin the Digital Solutions

To enable the Council to deliver the new Digital services and realise the associated benefits the future technical architecture has been developed to provide a framework for the IT components that underpin the solutions.

This has been based on our reference architecture (see below) and the current state architecture, which have then been developed with the ICT Strategy team and CoSocius through a series of workshops and meetings. It incorporates best of breed principles in areas such as Service Orientated Architecture, Data as an Asset, Analytics, Cloud computing and mobile technologies.

The interaction layer includes components that allow internal and external users to interact with the platform across a range of channels . Examples of sub-components could include a responsive website, mobile apps, social media, and web chat.

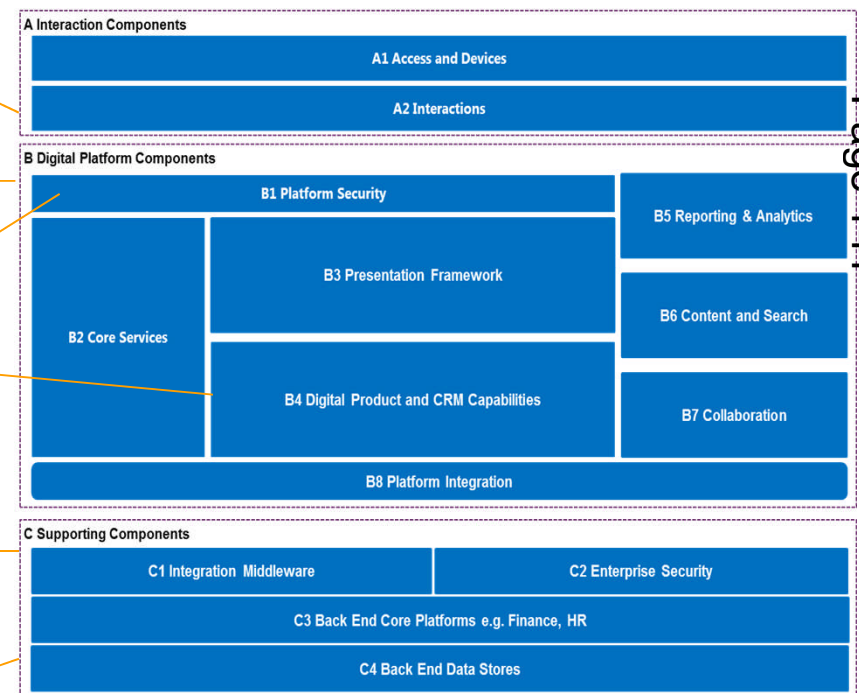
Digital Platform Layer includes the set of components required to deliver required platform capabilities.

The security component enables the council to authenticate users and customers to provide access to the digital platform and authorise them to do specific activities.

The Digital Product and CRM will provide the user and customers with access to the services and the underlying data and functionality systems.

The Integration Layer facilitates the Digital Platform link and interface with other CEC and 3rd party systems and data through the provision of a set of reusable interface capabilities.

Supporting Components layer includes other components that the platform requires to fulfil its purpose, which will be leveraged from CEC's IT estate.

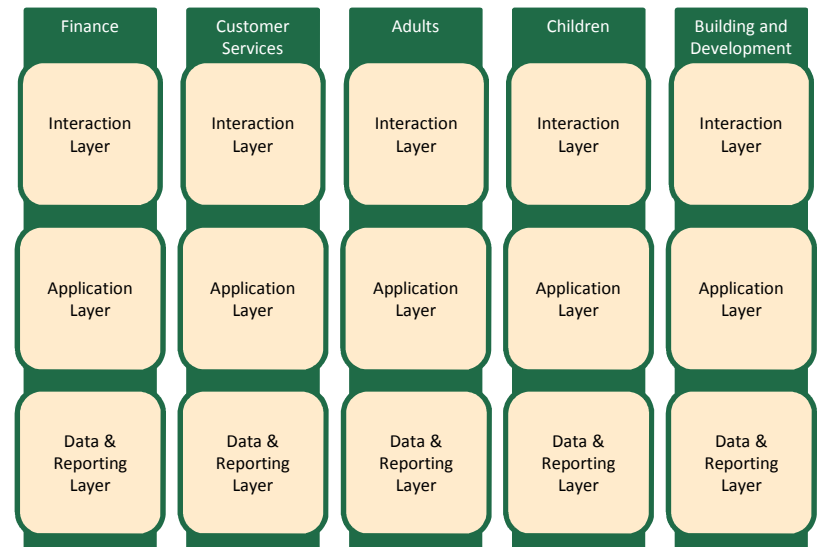
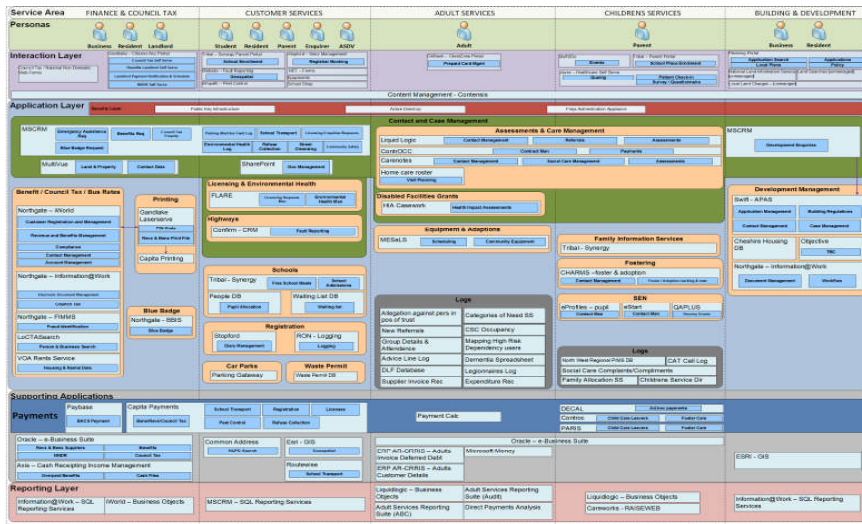


The Current Architecture

There are a number of technology gaps in the Council's architecture, which the council will need to address to effectively support digital delivery.

The diagram below on the left provides a detailed overview of the current state architecture and the layers which build upon it. It highlights (in green) areas where Contact and Case management is duplicated across services areas. It also highlights the Council's multiple interaction points (purple) and disjointed reporting (pink).

The challenges of this architecture can be represented in a more simplified schematic (below right) which illustrated how, currently, each service group operates in silos and has implemented systems and databases specific to their service over time. This has meant that there is less interaction between service areas, minimal shared data and reporting, an inconsistent customer experience, less economies of scale and therefore higher costs.

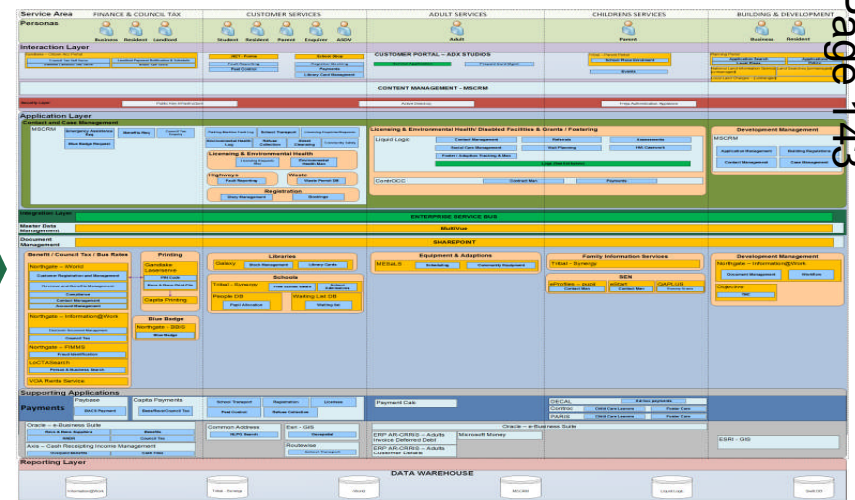
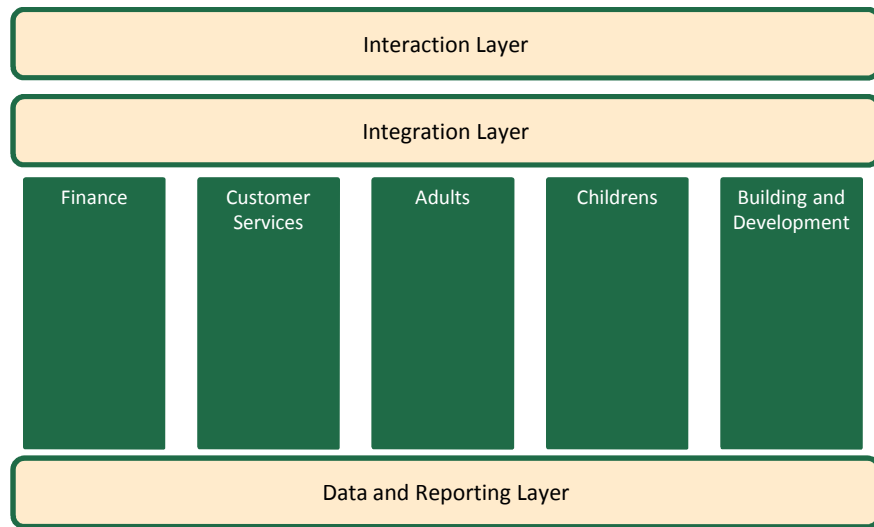


The Target Future State Architecture

In order to enable the Digital Solution a number of changes to the current architecture have been identified and are proposed to be implemented as part of the next phase of the programme. The diagram on the left below provides a simplified schematic of the proposed changes. This includes putting in place components in the key layers of Interaction, Integration and Data & Reporting that cut across each service area.

The application layer will need to remain largely consistent as it is where service specific systems deliver core operations and therefore changes to these will mean significant changes to the service areas. This model will increase interaction between service areas, improving customer experience and lowering costs.

The diagram on the right below shows the detailed overview of the target future state architecture with the key areas to change shaded in orange. More details on the proposed changes are included in the main document.



Enabling the Digital Model through our Customers and Staff

We fully appreciate that simply building world class Digital solutions will not be the sole enabler to delivering the Programme's ambition and benefits. It is just as important to enable and empower both our Customers and Staff and we will do this through the applying the principles outlined below during Implementation.

Digital Inclusion

- Support customers to acquire the necessary digital skills
- Help residents to overcome a lack of connectivity
- Provide the means to make digital technologies accessible for all parts of the community
- Motivate and incentivise customers on the benefits of Digital
- Build trust through secure solutions and supporting customers who are less comfortable using Digital

Marketing and Communications

- Raise awareness of the benefits of digital, exciting them and encouraging them to interact online
- Ensuring all customers are communicated to effectively via the most appropriate channel
- To help residents understand 'what will this mean for me'
- To provide support mechanisms for Digital Inclusion that help overcome some of the barriers against using digital channels

Enabling the Digital Model

Enabling and Empowering Staff

- Embed a sustainable change in behaviours, through investing in the necessary skills, support and incentives to adopt the new ways of working
- Deliver key change management activity in line with Implementation plans to prepare, embed and perform the new ways of working

Process and Policy

- Simplification of current policy where it detracts from the target customer experience.
- Increasing adoption of a 'commercial mind-set'.
- Proportionate use of risk assessment in determining eligibility and verification of evidence.



Business Case

Business Case

Summary

Break even point:

Q1 FY18/19

3 years after mobilisation

By end of FY19/20:

Cumulative gross benefit: £8.5m

Cumulative cost: £5m

Cumulative net benefit: £3.5m

Recurring benefit:

There is a recurring net benefit of £2.3m by FY19/20

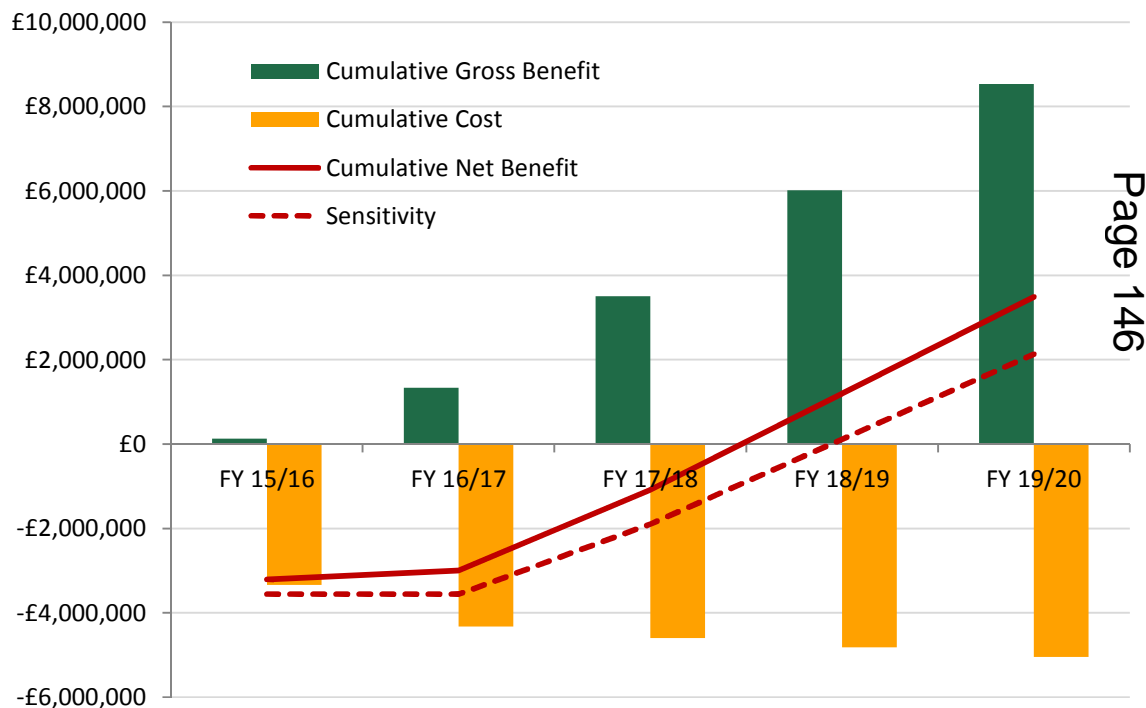
Sensitivity:

With a combined 20% sensitivity* breakeven point is Q3 FY18/19

*10% reduction in benefits combined with a 10% cost increase

What has changed since high level design?

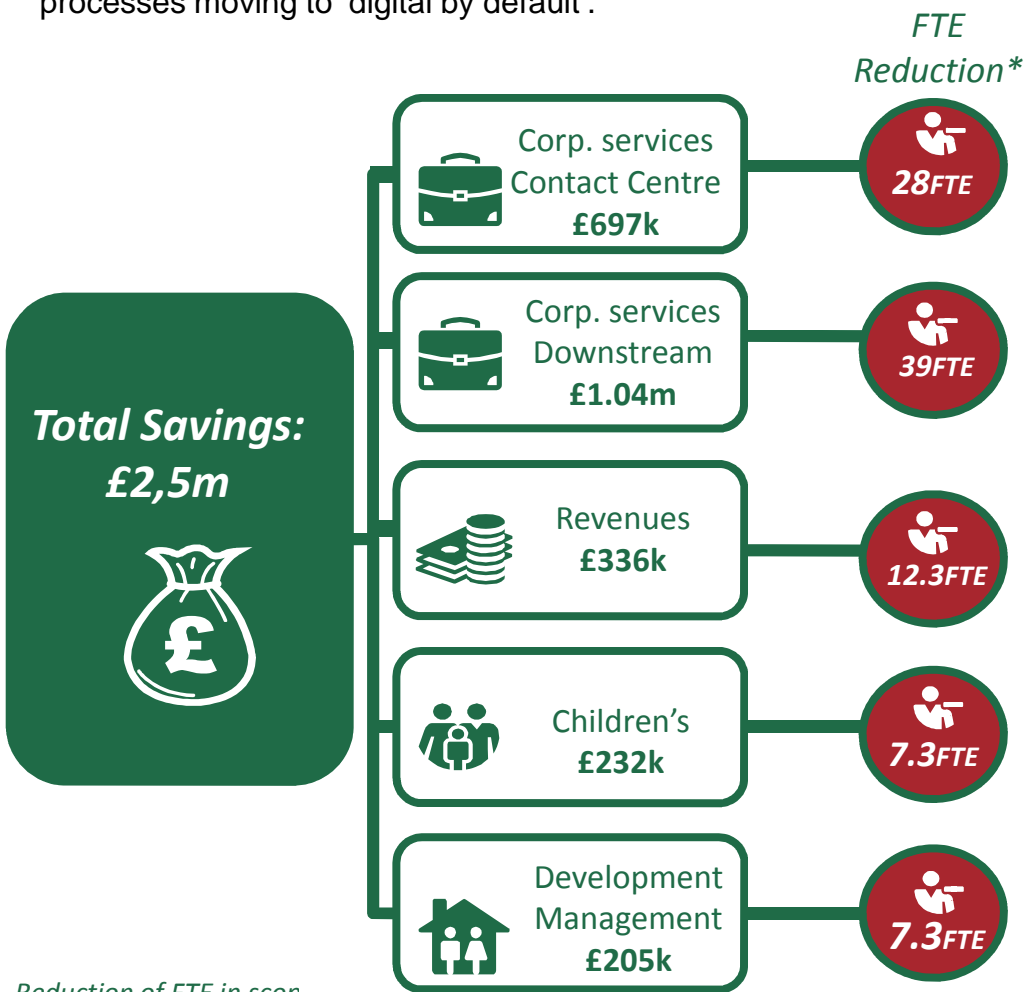
- Benefit reduction from high level design related to savings related to Adult's work (now separate Workstream) and refinement of other benefit assumptions
- Increased costs due to complexity of integration of back office solutions to achieve a single customer view and provide single source of reporting



Year	FY15/16	FY16/17	FY17/18	FY18/19	FY19/20
Cumulative Gross Benefit	£127,540	£1,332,426	£3,507,238	£6,015,645	£8,530,310
Cumulative Cost	-£3,339,415	-£4,325,532	-£4,594,365	-£4,817,365	-£5,040,365
Cumulative Net Benefit	-£3,211,875	-£2,993,106	-£1,087,127	£1,198,280	£3,489,945

Summary of savings across the organisation

The information below shows the estimated savings across the organisation, based on the principle of all customer-facing processes moving to 'digital by default'.



How has confidence in the forecasts increased?

Downstream data collection – In phase 1 a budget book was used to forecast downstream benefits. This phase we collected volumetric, channel and FTE data for back office teams supporting the contact centre services.

Contact centre refinement – we interrogated the existing data set for the contact centre to identify additional volumes of customer contact not picked up on systems

Understanding of services – Through the service specific workshops we developed a deeper understanding of the digital potential to reflect in the future model

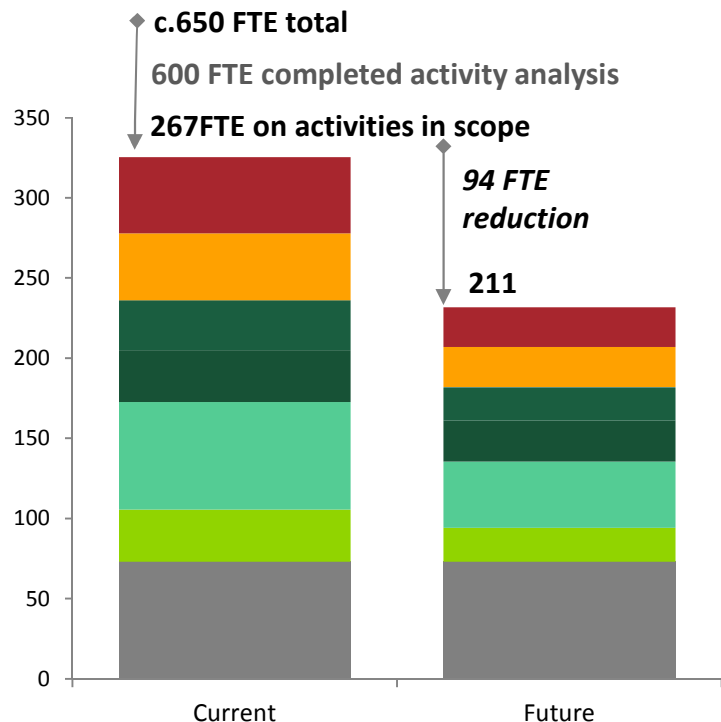
Customer segmentation - The customer segmentation work has enabled us to understand the potential digital appetite for services and reflect this in forecasts

Additional benefits from revenue generation:
>£250k

- 10 additional foster placements with a monetary value of £250k
- Further potential through bulky goods, pest control, prioritised service delivery

Benefits identification

Within a wider pool of c.650 FTE activity analysis was carried out on 600 FTE carrying out services in scope. Of this 600FTE 267 was spread across types of activity in scope/ impacted by digital. Within this scope we determined benefits of 94 FTE



Types of activity in scope

- Information request
- Service request
- Rules based assessment & complex assessment
- Administration
- Management & supervision
- Service delivery

% FTE reduction on type of activity

48%

There are over 330k information requests made per year. c81% of information requests are made via telephony. c55% of these volumes will shift to digital through

- ✓ proactive status updates
- ✓ Improved access to info on website
- ✓ transparency of information

39%

There are c.230k service requests made per year. c80% of service requests require manual data entry/ manual effort. 55% of these volumes will become more automated (25% digital self serve with manual provisioning, 30% automated provisioning) through

- ✓ Integration of forms with CRM and back office
- ✓ Increased digital uptake through reduced prominence of telephony channel

27%

There are c.388k requests requiring rules based assessment. 69% of these are manually completed - 31% of these volumes involve self service with manual intervention and only 1% fully automated. The self serve rate will increase to 55% with 20% of volumes involving auto decision making through

- ✓ Auto flag existing jobs
- ✓ Pooled data
- ✓ Self serve eligibility tools
- ✓ Risk based approach to verification

38%

The increased digital uptake will result in a corresponding 38% reduction in effort spent on administration – recording and data entry/ rekeying details, billing and receiving payments and general admin:

- ✓ Online payment options
- ✓ Less paper centric processes
- ✓ Handheld devices for operatives
- ✓ More fully integrated online forms

35%

Savings generated through management and supervision through reduced FTE

1%

Some savings will be realised through service delivery within highways/ street lighting through improved reporting of issues making it easier for operatives to locate issues

- ✓ Simplification/ standardisation of reporting process
- ✓ Reporting linked with GPS
- ✓ User friendly language and easy categorisation

Summary of Costs

An estimate of the costs* required for effective implementation have been provided in the table below. These costs are broken down into Implementation and recurring costs.

Workstream	Cost Area	Implementation Cost	Recurring Cost
Programme Management	Programme Management Resource	£839,000	-
Business and Technical Architecture	Business and Technical Architecture Resource	£236,000	
Business Transformation	Business Change Resource	£195,000	
Digital and Commercial off the shelf (COTS) development	Development of Customer Portal and enhanced Digital channel offering through webchat and SMS	£221,000	
	Hardware - including handheld devices and Self-service terminals in Face to Face locations to support .	£40,000	£23,000
	Assisted Digital - Refit and rebrand of Macclesfield and Delamere house face to face locations to support delivery of Digital services.	£100,000	
	Functional specification development for key Digital and Commercial off the shelf (COTS) systems developments.	£195,000	
	Commercial off the shelf (COTS) Development and Integration – Includes MSCRM, Liquid Logic, SharePoint and other back office customisation. UX, Dev Front end portal and SSO.	£1,600,000	
	MS CRM licences	£31,000	
Integration and Testing	Provision of Integration architecture and Biztalk licence	£175,000	£100,000
Infrastructure and Data	Provision of Environments and ongoing maintenance	£500,000	£100,000
	Data Architecture and Environments Management	£330,000	
	Rapid Business Intelligence – Qlikview license	£100,000	
ICT cost covered by existing ICT capital programmes		-£500,000	
Total		£4,062,000	£223,000

*rounded to nearest £1,000

What does this mean for our customers?

**Transparent
and reliable**



"I am no longer calling the council to constantly chase up progress updates- their proactive communications and status updates reassure me that everything is under control!"

**Customer
insight driven**



"I was notified on the portal that I had an outstanding parking fine which I would have forgot about otherwise!"

**Tailored
service
delivery**



" When I call up they know who I am and know all my history so I don't have to keep repeating myself- the service is very personalised."

**Proactively
informed**



"I got a text to tell me when someone was coming to exterminate the pests in my kitchen and when my bin was missed, which shows they care"

**Quick and
user friendly**



"I can make multiple school applications without the hassle of having to rekey data for each of my sons!"

**Simple,
seamless
customer
experience**



"I was able to apply for, pay for and track my new bin request online with the support of an online advisor."

**Supportive
and inclusive**



"I was able to go to the library where they helped me apply for my benefits – I learnt how to use my portal and complete some other applications which was great!"

What does this mean for our staff?

Efficient service delivery



"I no longer receive duplicate enquiries through on issues reported, which saves me and my team time assessing them!"

Quality applicants



"The quality of fostering applicants received are higher as customers are well informed. The conversion rate of applicants to placements has increased and we can now meet our targets"

Mobile working



"We no longer have to use lock out sheets – using handheld devices means we do not waste time updating systems and there is less risk of human error"

Reduced data entry



"I no longer have to extract customer information from forms and rekey it into our systems – I can focus on better serving our customers"

User friendly systems



"I no longer have to flick between 12 screens – my job is so much easier!"

Collaborative work environment



"I am able to access all the relevant information I require across service areas to better serve customers."

Reduced contact volumes



"I am able to view back office systems and no longer need to keep calling them to request information!"

What are the wider implications?

The UK's overall population is set to reach 73m people by 2037 with the number of people aged 80 and over set to double...

Planning for the impact of demographic change

The population increase will have clear implications for the demand for housing, school places, health care and other services. The future model will provide a platform to help the council manage the increase in demand and still provide a high quality of services to customers at a lower cost

Identifying those most in need

The investment in new systems will help Cheshire East council and its partners to identify those most in need of support, through the analysis of customer insight and sharing of data across a number of public service agencies

Supporting member activity

Members will have access to deeper insight to support local decision making and the facility to engage with communities via digital platforms extending their reach.

Developing partnerships

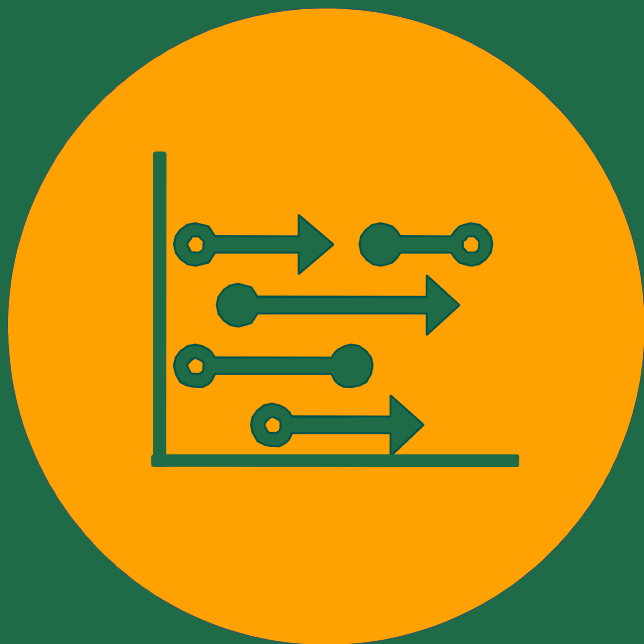
Improved data quality creates potential for future development of partnerships across business and public sector for research and development purposes

Platform for integration

The shift to digital provides an initial platform for the enablement of greater integration of healthcare and social services systems and the secure sharing of sensitive data across different partners

Delivering social value within communities

The use of community hubs and assisted digital will help those people who need lower level support to have access to support network, giving them information about relevant services while at the same time potentially addressing issues of isolation and loneliness



Implementation

The Principles that underpin our Implementation Strategy

We have developed a set of key principles to guide the implementation strategy, which puts residents first and should be adhered to at all times during the implementation.

Benefits led

Prioritise delivery of benefits as early as possible, whilst maintaining quality of service. This will be informed by release planning, with implementation supported by a robust benefits management approach

Technology as an enabler

Use technology to enable the transformation of the business, improving the day to day life for staff and customers, and saving costs across the organisation

Look beyond the sector

In delivering a sector defining experience, look for best practice and approaches across other industries, to challenge the norms of local government and push towards a world-class digital service for Cheshire East residents

A “hybrid-agile” approach to delivery

Using Architecture Driven Agile to deliver regular tangible outputs, overlaid with strong governance and programme management. This will allow products to be tested throughout the implementation process, reducing the risk of an unexpected outcome at the end.

Customer informed solutions

To truly realise the benefits from digital self service customers need to be involved in the design of the right experience. We will hold customer testing workshops to gain customer feedback.

A collaborative partnership

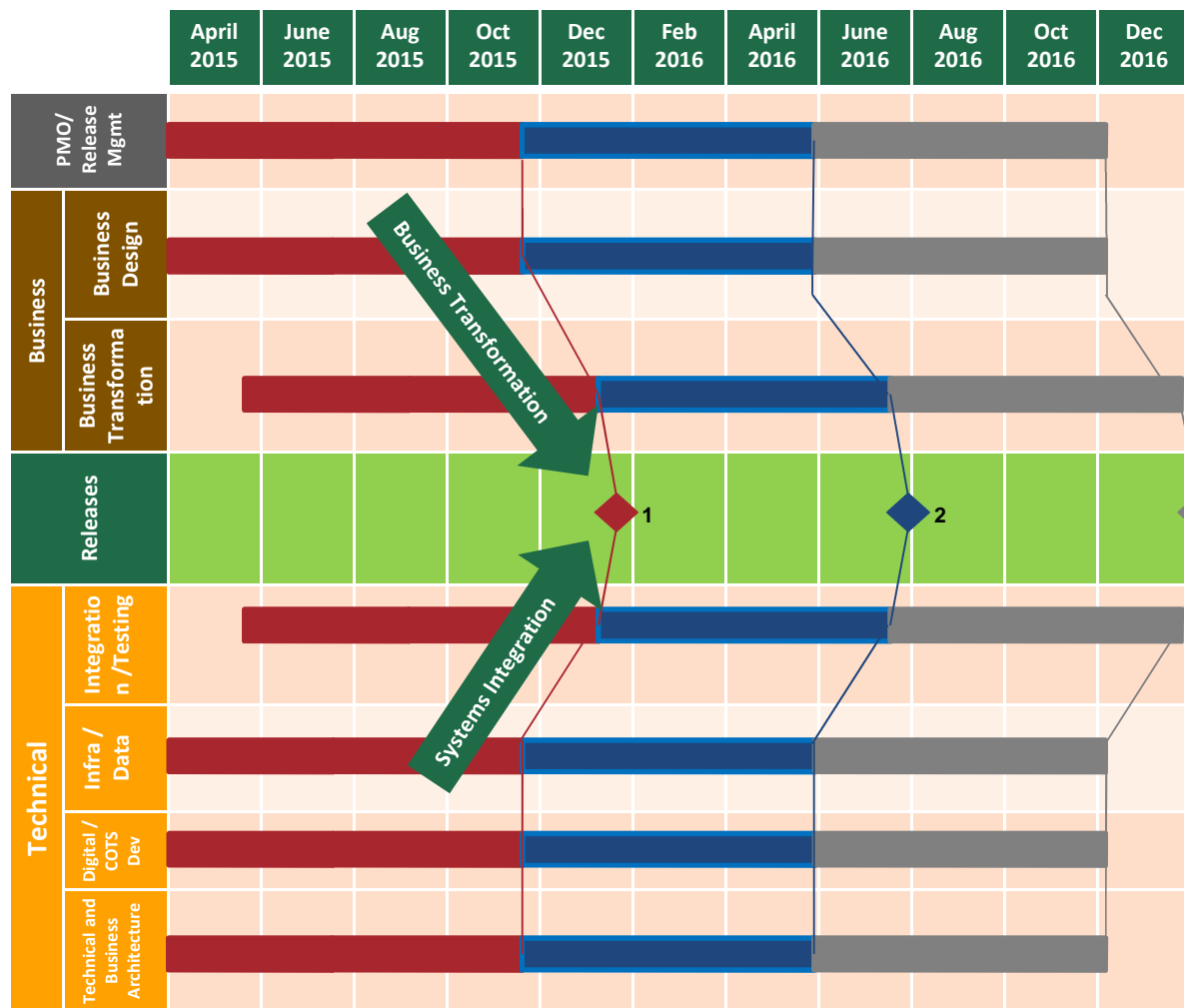
Bring together the very best skills and experience from Cheshire East and its partners as one delivery team. All parties will work together and be represented in the design of the products

Open and clear communications

Both internally and externally, open, clear communication will be key to driving the right behaviour of both customers and business users to realise the benefits. A communications strategy and plan have been developed to make sure the right information reaches the right people, at the right time

Implementation Approach Roadmap

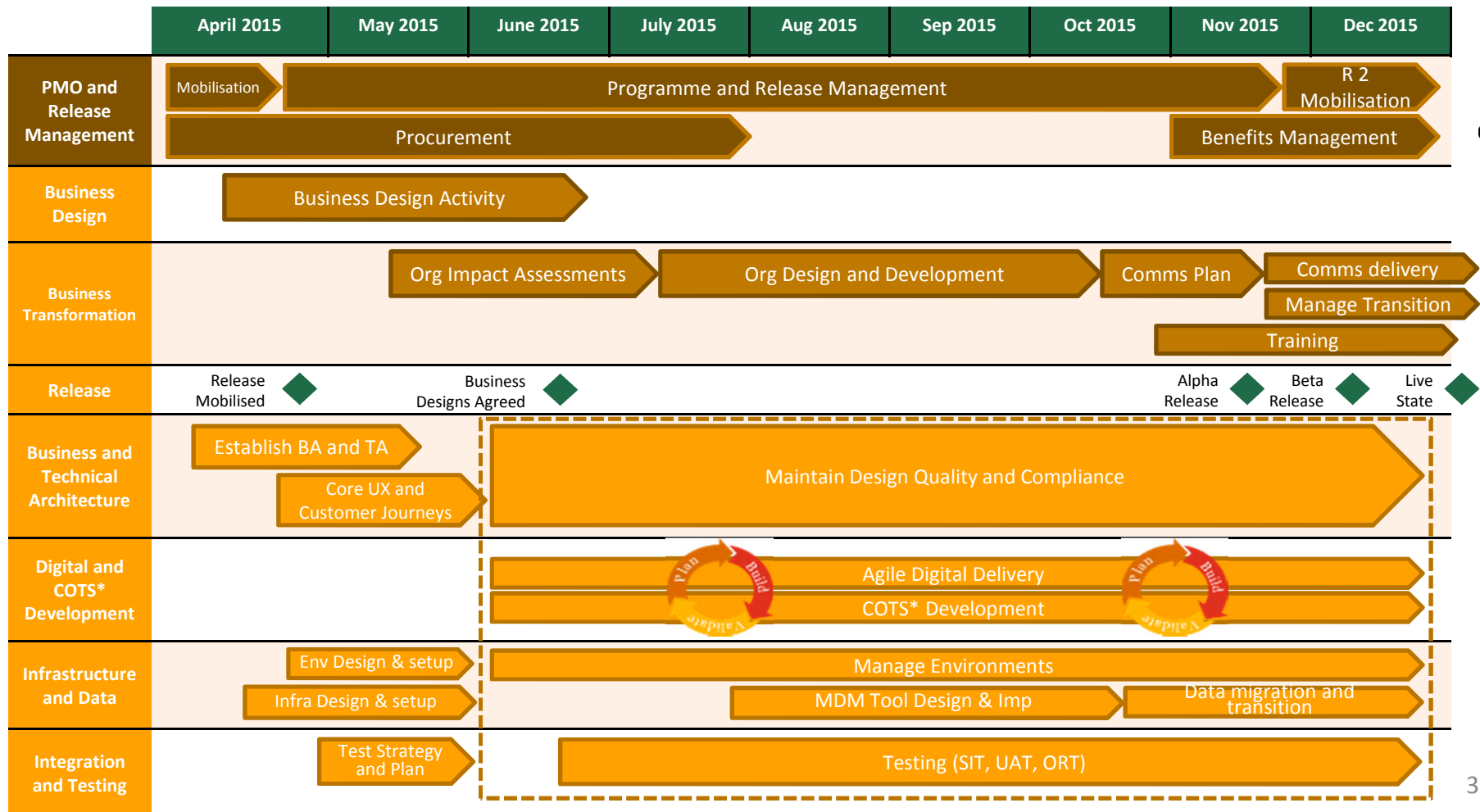
This approach forms the basis for the implementation roadmap and then the detailed plan, illustrated in the diagram below.



- Implementation is based on 3 core releases with the Business and Technical workstreams working together to deliver a release.
- Business Design and Transformation activities revolve around design of process, people and organisation. These activities often deliver earlier in a Release, however business readiness tasks are also required and run in parallel with Technical workstreams.
- Technical workstreams cover all the requirements to ensure the solution can technically deliver using the Architecture Driven Agile methodology.
- All workstreams are supported by the PMO and Release Management.

Release 1 Roadmap

The diagram below presents the key activities and timeline related to Release 1, using the Architecture Driven Agile (ADA) approach. Further detail on the activities is documented in the workstream definitions.



Release Strategy and Roadmap

The Digital service will be deployed across a number of releases, delivering regular incremental benefits. In creating the releases the following principles have been used:

- Aim to deliver benefits as early as possible looking at areas of greatest potential for savings and customer experience improvement
- Prioritise customer impact by addressing the areas that are the most frequently used by customers
- Reduce delivery risk by delivering incremental change building on foundational cores each time
- Recognise Programme interdependencies as part of planning
- Align around directorates where possible to create ownership and minimise disruption to live services

This roadmap is illustrative as an “Agile” development methodology is being used on this programme. Agile will accelerate the delivery and allows flexibility to prioritise during the programme.

Business Release	Scope	Date Enabled
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redesigned and rebranded Digital and Assisted Digital offering including Customer Portal • Council Tax • Benefits • Free School Meals • Blue Badge • Highways, Street Lighting and Traffic and Transportation • Refuse Collection (Information Request and form consolidation) • Waste Permits • Environmental Health 	December 2015
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced core Digital and Assisted Digital offering including Community Hub(s) • Business Rates • Adult Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment and Care Management • Disabled Facilities Grant • Equipment and Adaptations • Support for Social Work • Fostering • SEN • FIS • Schools Admissions, Transport and Payments 	June 2016
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Optimised core Digital and Assisted Digital offering • Development Management • Licensing • Registrations • Community Wardens • Street Cleansing • Car Parks • Income • Emergency Assistance • Let us know • Concessionary Travel 	December 2016

Risks to implementation

Below are some of the **key risks** that would have the largest impact on the project if left unmitigated:

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation
High reliance on cultural / customer behaviour change to enable benefits to be realised	H	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communication and stakeholder management Buy in and Leadership from Senior Management Team/cabinet
Scale of change programme could impact negatively on service delivery	M	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Balanced use of dedicated programme team members and current service delivery resources with backfill as appropriate Robust resource planning resourced with suitable skills and capabilities
Benefit calculations and assumptions prove to be invalid, potentially impacting the scale and pace of benefits realisation	M	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Robust Benefits Management approach to be implemented and managed as part of the PMO workstream
High reliance on delivery of technology / data solutions to enable the benefits to be realised	M	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Majority of change will be cultural and behavioural with technical tools key to support new working styles Extra support has been costed into Business Case
Key stakeholder buy-in: Members, Partners, CLB, required in support of Implementation of new ways of working	M	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comprehensive communication and engagement plan to be delivered as part of Implementation
New implementation design doesn't integrate with existing change projects e.g. Liquid Logic	M	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Robust Implementation strategy and Release planning approach will support Implementation phase through understanding key interdependencies and planning for them accordingly Agile methodology allows for flexibility to prioritise during the programme.
The complexity of the project and the wide variety of roles required are not fully considered	M	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation strategy has considered internal resources and identified where external resource support is necessary and appropriate

Conclusions and Next Steps

This Executive Summary provides an overview of the detailed design stage and the case for change resulting from the work completed during this stage. Key conclusions and proposed next steps are outlined below:



The case for change and implementation plan has been built upon an understanding of the environment and constraints within which the Digital Programme will be delivered, along with a deep understanding of delivering similar implementations.

Success will be dependent on leadership and commitment from the Programme Board and CLB to make it happen



Changes to how the Council will work will be required to support the successful implementation of the recommended solutions

Programme Board and CLB will need to champion and direct these changes



Benefit realisation will be dependent on achieving a number of process, people and customer behaviour changes and provision of enabling technology solutions.

The Digital Programme will need to agree benefit realisation milestones with benefit owners as part of the implementation



The programme team will be made up of several workstreams focussed on delivery of a set scope of activities, based specific competence, but with project governance and integration across workstreams

Programme Board and CLB will need to approve the release of further Council resources to join the programme



There are a number of key strategic risks to the successful implementation of new digital solutions

Programme Board and CLB are asked to acknowledge and consider mitigating actions

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