

# Corporate Policy Committee

## Agenda

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**Date:** Thursday, 1st December, 2022  
**Time:** 10.00 am  
**Venue:** Committee Suite 1,2 & 3, Westfields, Middlewich Road,  
Sandbach CW11 1HZ

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

It should be noted that Part 1 items of Cheshire East Council decision making meetings are audio recorded and the recordings will be uploaded to the Council's website

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

1. **Apologies for Absence**

To note any apologies for absence from Members.

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. **Minutes of Previous Meeting** (Pages 5 - 16)

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> October 2022.

4. **Public Speaking/Open Session**

In accordance with paragraph 2.24 of the Committee Procedure Rules and Appendix on Public Speaking, set out in the [Constitution](#), a total period of 15 minutes is allocated for members of the public to put questions to the Committee on any matter relating to this agenda. Each member of the public will be allowed up to two minutes to speak; the Chair will have discretion to vary this where they consider it appropriate.

Members of the public wishing to speak are required to provide notice of this at least three clear working days in advance of the meeting.

5. **High Speed Rail 2 Phase 2b - Qualifying Authority and Schedule 17 Decision-Making** (Pages 17 - 32)

To consider a report which seeks to consult the Corporate Policy Committee prior to a decision being made by Full Council which seeks for the Council to become a Qualifying Authority for the construction of phase 2b of the High Speed Rail 2 (HS2).

6. **Communications Strategy for Residents 2022-25** (Pages 33 - 88)

To consider a report which presents the Communications Strategy for Residents 2022-25 for approval, with the results of public consultation on the draft strategy.

7. **Consultation and Engagement** (Pages 89 - 160)

To report progress in delivering a co-ordinated and collaborative approach to consultation and engagement, since the previous report in July 2022.

8. **Workforce Strategy 2021-2025 - Progress Update** (Pages 161 - 170)

To consider a report which provides an update on progress against the delivery of Cheshire East Council's Workforce Strategy 2021-2025; an update on the Mutually Agreed Resignation Scheme (MARS); and a review of the programme of activities supporting organisational culture.

9. **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion - Annual Review** (Pages 171 - 194)

To provide an update on progress against delivery of the Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy 2021-2025.

10. **Financial Review Update 2022/23** (Pages 195 - 336)

To consider a report which provides an updated overview of the Cheshire East Council forecast outturn for the financial year 2022/23.

11. **Performance Report - Quarter 2 2022/23** (Pages 337 - 390)

To consider a report which provides an oversight of organisational performance for the second quarter of 2022/23 against the priorities in the Council's Corporate Plan 2021-25.

12. **Strategic Risk Register Assurance Report Q2 2022/23** (Pages 391 - 436)

To consider a report which provides an update on the activity of the Council's Strategic Risk Register for Quarter 2 (July – September) 2022/23.

13. **Health and Safety Update 2022/23** (Pages 437 - 450)

To consider a report which provides a summary of accident and information data for the Council and maintained schools for the first two quarters of 2022/23 and comparative data for the same periods in the last three years.

14. **Domestic Taxbase 2023/24** (Pages 451 - 458)

To consider a report which sets out the Council tax base calculation 2023/24 for recommendation from Corporate Policy Committee to Council in December 2022.

15. **Work Programme** (Pages 459 - 464)

To consider the Work Programme and determine any required amendments.

16. **Minutes of Sub-Committees** (Pages 465 - 472)

To receive the minutes of the following sub-committee meetings:

General Appeals Sub-Committee - 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2022  
General Appeals Sub-Committee - 20<sup>th</sup> September 2022  
General Appeals Sub-Committee - 11<sup>th</sup> October 2022  
General Appeals Sub-Committee - 8<sup>th</sup> November 2022

**THERE ARE NO PART 2 ITEMS**

**Membership:** Councillors C Browne, J Clowes, S Corcoran (Chair), JP Findlow, K Flavell, S Gardiner, N Mannion, A Martin, J Rhodes, J Saunders, A Stott (Vice-Chair), M Warren and P Williams

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**CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL**

Minutes of a meeting of the **Corporate Policy Committee**  
held on Thursday, 6th October, 2022 in the Committee Suite 1, 2 & 3,  
Westfields, Middlewich Road, Sandbach CW11 1HZ

**PRESENT**

Councillor S Corcoran (Chair)  
Councillor A Stott (Vice-Chair)

Councillors C Bulman (for Cllr Flavell), J Clowes, J P Findlow, S Gardiner,  
A Martin, N Mannion, A Moran (for Cllr Browne), K Parkinson, J Rhodes,  
M Warren and P Williams

**Officers in attendance**

Lorraine O'Donnell, Chief Executive  
Jane Burns, Executive Director of Corporate Services  
Helen Charlesworth May, Executive Director of Adults, Health and Integration  
David Brown, Director of Governance and Compliance  
Alex Thompson, Director of Finance and Customer Services  
Sarah Bullock, Director of Policy and Change  
Peter Skates, Director of Growth and Enterprise  
Gareth Pawlett, Chief Information Officer  
Josie Griffiths, Head of Audit and Risk  
Brian Reed, Head of Democratic Services and Governance  
Dan Coyne, Head of Communities and Integration  
Martin Smith, Registration and Civic Services Manager  
Paul Mountford, Democratic Services

**Apologies**

Councillors C Browne and K Flavell

**25 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillors J Clowes, A Moran and J Rhodes each declared in interest in an item on the agenda relating to the appointment of representatives to the Health and Care Partnership Board as they were expecting to be appointed to the Board. They each indicated that they would leave the meeting whilst the matter was considered and would return upon its conclusion.

Councillor A Moran declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in an item on the agenda relating to the 'Fight for Middlewich' petition on the grounds that he was a Director of ANSA. The Monitoring Officer advised that a dispensation within the Councillor Code of Conduct allowed councillors who were Directors of Council-owned ASDVs to remain present, take part in the debate and vote in relation to an item in which they had a

disclosable pecuniary interest. Councillor Moran indicated that he would remain present and participate in the consideration of the item.

In relation to the same item, and in the interests of openness, Councillor C Bulman declared that she was both a Town councillor and a Borough ward councillor for Middlewich.

In the interests of openness, Councillor N Mannion declared an interest in an item on the agenda relating to the Best4Business lessons learned review as he had participated in the 'scrutiny in a day' event referred to in the report.

## **26 PUBLIC SPEAKING/OPEN SESSION**

There were no public speakers.

## **27 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

### **RESOLVED**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> July 2022 be approved as a correct record.

## **28 PETITION: FIGHT FOR MIDDLEWICH**

The Committee considered a report on the 'Fight for Middlewich' petition. The petition, which had been signed by at least 5,000 petitioners, had been presented to Council on 20<sup>th</sup> July 2022 and referred to the Corporate Policy Committee. The officer responses to the demands and requests contained in the petition were appended to the report for the Committee's consideration.

As provided by the Council's petitions scheme, and at the invitation of the Chair, Laura Turner, the petition organiser, addressed the Committee in order to outline the background to the petition. She had prepared a supporting document which the Chair had agreed would be circulated to members of the Committee following the meeting.

The Chair thanked Laura Turner for attending the meeting and speaking on the matter.

During consideration of this matter, members noted the following:

- S106 contributions could be tracked on the Council's website.
- Work was underway to provide the Middlewich Eastern Bypass, which was one of the most significant infrastructure projects in the Borough.
- A 'funding by town' comparison would be a difficult and costly exercise to undertake as universal services were provided on a head-by-head basis.

**RESOLVED**

That the Committee

1. receives the petition;
2. notes the responses to those matters within the Council's control (items 1- 12 of Appendix 2); and
3. notes that items 13 – 17 of Appendix 2 will be referred to the relevant bodies identified within the Appendix.

**29 UK SHARED PROSPERITY FUND - INVESTMENT PLAN UPDATE**

The Committee considered an update report on the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, including an outline of anticipated governance and project selection arrangements.

It was noted that since the core UK Shared Prosperity Fund Investment Plan had been submitted to the Government, a new Rural Fund had been announced on 3rd September. To access the allocation under the Rural Fund, additional information would need to be submitted as an addendum to the Investment Plan.

**RESOLVED**

That the Committee

1. notes the overview of the Cheshire East core UKSPF Investment Plan as submitted to the Department for Levelling up Housing and Communities on 1<sup>st</sup> August 2022, set out in the body of the report and Appendix A;
2. as Accountable Body, agrees the Terms of Reference of the new Cheshire East Shared Prosperity Fund Local Partnership Group set out at Appendix B;
3. notes the proposed governance arrangements and proposed project selection processes for the UKSPF; and
4. delegates authority to the Executive Director – Place to:
  - (a) submit a completed Rural Fund addendum to the UKSPF Investment Plan for Cheshire East after consultation with the Cheshire East Members on the UKSPF Local Partnership Group;
  - (b) make any amendments to the addendum to the UKSPF Investment Plan as required by government in order to release the funding or as required during the plan period to enable the effective spend of the fund;

- (c) accept the Rural Fund allocation for Cheshire East and approve a Supplementary Capital Estimate of up to £827,627 and to allocate the funding as set out within the Cheshire East UKSPF Investment Plan addendum; and
- (d) manage the Cheshire East Rural Fund 2023-25 programme, taking all necessary actions in the interests of maximising the impacts of the fund aligned to the fund parameters and local priorities, and aligned to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund Investment Plan.

### **30 APPROVAL OF CORPORATE GRANTS POLICY 2022 - 2025**

The Committee considered a report on a revised Corporate Grants Policy for the operation of grants schemes in Cheshire East Council for 2022-2025. The Policy set out how grants offered by Council service areas should be aligned to meet the strategic aims and objectives in the Council's Corporate Plan.

It was noted that recommendation 3.3 of the report should refer to paragraph 8.1.4.

#### **RESOLVED (unanimously)**

That the Committee

1. approves the updated Corporate Grants Policy 2022 to 2025;
2. notes that each individual grant scheme implemented by the Council will have its own process put in place which aligns to the Corporate Grants Policy; and
3. delegates authority to Corporate Leadership Team / Executive Director of Adults, Health and Integration to amend the policy as necessary and in the event of contemplated changes to the subsidy control regime detailed in section 8.1.4 of the report.

### **31 REGISTRATION SERVICE - CEREMONY FEES**

The Committee considered a report which reviewed the fees that the Registration Service charged for ceremonies and related services.

#### **RESOLVED (unanimously)**

That the Committee approves the fees set out in the Appendix to the report.

**32 INTEGRATED CARE SYSTEM - APPOINTMENT TO HEALTH AND CARE PARTNERSHIP**

Having declared an interest in this item earlier in the meeting, Councillors J Clowes, A Moran and J Rhodes left the meeting prior to its consideration.

The Committee considered a progress report on the new governance arrangements for integrated health across Cheshire East, and the appointment of members to the new Place Partnership Board (now called the 'Cheshire East Health & Care Partnership').

Members noted with some concern that the formal governance structures were not yet in place and that the Board was currently meeting in shadow form.

**RESOLVED (unanimously)**

That the Committee

1. agrees that Councillors Arthur Moran, Jill Rhodes and Janet Clowes be appointed to the Cheshire East Health & Care Partnership Board; and
2. notes the nominations to the Joint Scrutiny Committee.

At the conclusion of this item, Councillors J Clowes, A Moran and J Rhodes were invited to return to the meeting.

**33 PARENTAL LEAVE POLICY FOR COUNCILLORS**

The Committee considered a proposed parental leave policy for Councillors.

The report invited the Committee to consider the recommendations of the former Constitution Committee, following its consideration of a motion with an attached draft policy on 15<sup>th</sup> July 2019 that had been referred to that Committee by Council on 21<sup>st</sup> February 2019. The draft policy had been shared with the current Constitution Working Group which had given the policy its broad support.

There was some concern about how ward responsibilities would be supported in the event of an extended absence by a ward member, particularly in the case of a single member ward.

It was noted that the arrangements could be reviewed in the light of experience.

**RESOLVED**

That the Committee recommends to Council that the proposed parental leave policy be adopted as set out in Appendix 1 to the report.

#### 34 **ICT STRATEGY PRINCIPLES**

The Committee considered a report on the development of an ICT Strategy for Cheshire East Council, the principles on which the Strategy would be based, and the timeline for its development.

##### **RESOLVED (unanimously)**

That the Committee

1. approves the development of an ICT Strategy for Cheshire East Council;
2. approves the principles in paragraph 6.6 of the report as the basis for the Cheshire East Council ICT Strategy; and
3. approves the timeline for development.

#### 35 **SHARED SERVICES REVIEW UPDATE**

The Committee considered a report on work to date with the development of a new hybrid operating model for ICT Services following a review which had concluded that a move away from a shared service to a new hybrid operating model was the preferred approach, and was technically feasible and financially viable.

As this would be another complex business change programme, officers were mindful of the outcomes of the recent Lessons Learned Review of Best4Business which were to be considered later in the meeting. Further work on technical and financial assurance and due diligence would continue over the coming weeks, with the expectation that a further report would be submitted to the Shared Services Joint Committee in November and to this Committee in December.

##### **RESOLVED (unanimously)**

That the Committee notes the work to date on a new hybrid operating model for ICT Services and the revised timescale.

#### 36 **BEST4BUSINESS - LESSONS LEARNED REVIEW**

The Committee considered a report on the outcomes of the lessons learned review for the Best4Business programme.

The report set out the outcomes from the review and invited any further reflections and feedback.

Members and officers had participated in a 'scrutiny in a day' event on 1<sup>st</sup> August 2022 which had been facilitated by the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny.

The outcomes of the review were attached at Appendix 3 to the report. An assurance statement from the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny was attached at Appendix 4.

The Committee was advised that a draft version of Appendix 3 had been published with the agenda in error. The final version of the Appendix, which was substantially the same, would be circulated to members of the Committee and published on the agenda web page following the meeting.

Members who had attended the one day scrutiny event were of the view that it had been productive and that everyone present had been candid.

Members thanked the Executive Director of Corporate Services for overseeing the review and bringing the project to completion.

## **RESOLVED (unanimously)**

That the Committee

1. notes the key lessons and recommendations arising from the review;
2. notes that a final budget reconciliation report will be issued once the outstanding minor commercial and programme closure issues are resolved and final programme costs are confirmed; and
3. requests a report back on the practical actions being taken to address the lessons learned and recommendations.

Note: At 12.35 pm, the Committee adjourned for half an hour for lunch.

Councillor A Martin submitted his apologies for the remainder of the meeting.

## **37 FIRST FINANCIAL REVIEW 2022/23**

The Committee considered a report which provided an early overview of the Cheshire East Council forecast outturn for the financial year 2022/23.

The report highlighted the negative impact of increasing inflationary pressures on the Council's budget since it was set in February 2022, and the ongoing costs of COVID-19 scarring. Members noted the consequential financial challenges being experienced by the Council and the ongoing activity to minimise the impact on services.

The Annex to the report provided information on the overall financial stability and resilience of the Council and demonstrated how spending in

2022/23 was being funded, including the positions on overall service budgets, centrally-held budgets, council tax and business rates. Further details were contained in the appendices.

In response to a number of questions by members, officers advised that:

- Section 106 Agreements did not include provisions for reviewing the level of developer contributions at a later date.
- Whilst there were financial pressures affecting all service committees, the report indicated that each committee would if necessary be required to make a contribution to the Council's overall financial position.
- The financial position would be further reviewed following the November budget when allocations to individual local authorities were known.

Officers were thanked for highlighting the emerging financial issues with the Committee at an early stage.

## **RESOLVED (unanimously)**

That the Committee

1. notes the forecast adverse Net Revenue financial pressure of £11.6m against a revised budget of £328.4m (3.5%);
2. notes the forecast Capital Spending of £187.9m against an approved MTFS budget £185.2m due to slippage carried forward from the previous year;
3. endorses the approach of Senior Officers to mitigate the adverse forecasts through the activities outlined in each 'Action Plan' contained in Annex 1 (Appendices 1 to 7), which include:
  - Managed restriction of in-year spending, whilst retaining essential services, in consultation with the relevant Committee.
  - Reviewing the level of spending on key contracts and reviewing the need for contract renewals during 2022/23.
  - Pricing and grant reviews to ensure income is being fully recovered on related activity.
  - Enhanced vacancy forecasting and management.
  - Re-alignment of, and appropriate use of balances, such as earmarked reserves, General Reserves and capital receipts.
  - Review and reprofile the Capital Programme to prevent any impact of related inflation on the revenue budget.
4. notes the contents of Annex 1 and each of the appendices, and notes that any financial mitigation decisions requiring member approval will be presented to the appropriate Committee;



5. approves supplementary revenue estimates for specific grants coded directly to services up to and including £1,000,000 in accordance with Financial Procedure Rules as detailed in Appendix 2 Adults and Health Committee, Section 3 Corporate Grants Register, Table 2;
6. approves supplementary capital estimates up to and including £1,000,000 in accordance with Financial Procedure Rules as detailed in Appendix 6, Section 5 Capital Strategy, Table 5;
7. approves capital virements up to and including £5,000,000 in accordance with Financial Procedure Rules as detailed in Appendix 6, Section 5 Capital Strategy, Table 5;
8. notes that Council will be asked to approve:
  - (a) fully funded supplementary revenue estimates for specific grants coded directly to services over £1,000,000 in accordance with Financial Procedure Rules as detailed in Appendix 1, Section 3 Corporate Grants Register, Table 3, Appendix 2, Section 3 Corporate Grants Register, Table 2 and Appendix 3, Section 3 Corporate Grants Register, Table 2; and
  - (b) capital virements over £5,000,000 in accordance with Financial Procedure Rules as detailed in Appendix 6, Section 5 Capital Strategy, Table 6.

### **38 PERFORMANCE REPORT - QUARTER 1 2022/23**

The Committee considered a report which provided an oversight of organisational performance for the first quarter of 2022/23 against the priorities in the Council's Corporate Plan 2021-25.

The Director of Policy and Change gave a brief presentation to highlight the key messages in the report. As requested by the Committee, the report now contained appropriate benchmarking and performance indicators.

The Chief Executive advised that the Financial Review, Performance and Strategic Risk reports on the agenda were all emphasising that the Council was facing higher demand for its services, with higher costs and fewer staff to perform the work. Despite the various risks and challenges outlined in the report, however, the Council had made progress with the delivery of its priorities.

In response to a number of questions by members, officers commented as follows:

- The Executive Director of Corporate Services was chairing an officer working group to address the issues of recruitment and retention of staff. The Council was operating in a highly competitive labour market with staffing and skill shortages evident across the economy. Recent

media campaigns by the Council had resulted in some posts being filled.

- A written response would be provided on the operation of the health and wellbeing bus in rural and hard to reach areas of the Borough.
- Demand for car parking was still lower than pre-pandemic levels. The Chair of the Economy and Growth Committee added that this would be reviewed by the Committee in 12 months' time.
- Business rate collection was at the same level as for the same quarter in the previous year. Council tax collection was slightly down.

**RESOLVED (unanimously)**

That the Committee notes the performance against Q1 of 2022/23 of delivery of the Corporate Plan.

**39 STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER ASSURANCE REPORT 2022/23  
QUARTER 1**

The Committee considered a report which provided an update on the activity of the Council's Strategic Risk Register for Quarter 1 (April – June) 2022-23. The Strategic Risk Register was attached as Appendix A to the report, and included a commentary for each risk.

Members noted that there were five risk items which were at the maximum net score of 16 following mitigation.

In response to questions raised by members, officers commented as follows:

- With regard to HS2, a written response would be provided on whether the risks identified in the report were more aligned to HS2(a) or HS2(b).
- With regard to the increased demand for children's services, a written response would be provided on where the Council puts the statutory override for SEND into the risk assessment.
- Officers would consider and report back on the suggestion that risk reference SRR1C (Increased Demand for Children's Services) be split to provide a separate risk item on High Needs Education.

**RESOLVED (unanimously)**

That the Committee notes the position of the Strategic Risk Register for Quarter 1 2022/23.

**40 WORK PROGRAMME**

The Committee considered its work programme for 2022/23.

The Executive Director of Corporate Services highlighted that the second quarter reports on financial review, performance and strategic risk would be coming to the Committee's next meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> December. A report on the Afghan and Ukrainian resettlement schemes would also come to the

December meeting. A report on the HR Strategy would include an update on apprenticeships. The Director added that there might be a number of announcements made in the near future, such as investment zones, which would require the Council to respond quickly, so further reports may need to be added to the work programme for the next meeting.

Members noted that it may be necessary for the December meeting to be an extended meeting to accommodate the amount of business envisaged.

Councillor Mannion commented on the need for a corporate approach to addressing the needs of Ukrainian refugees for whom the Council had a statutory responsibility, for example in relation to housing, education and safeguarding. He also commented on the need for a service committee to consider the provision of photo IDs to avoid people being disenfranchised at the next election. Finally, he felt that consideration should be given to the Council's position of fracking.

The Chief Executive commented that any changes to electoral arrangements would require secondary legislation to be passed. The national body for returning officers had made the point that a significant lead-in period would be required for any changes. The original target date for the implementation of any changes was the date of the next local elections in 2023 but there was some question as to whether this would now be achieved. Councillor Mannion asked whether the issue could be raised with local MPs. The Chair agreed to take that suggestion away.

The Chair agreed to give further consideration to the issue of fracking.

The Executive Director of Corporate Services undertook to review the currently unallocated items on the work programme.

## **RESOLVED**

That the work programme be noted.

## **41 MINUTES OF SUB-COMMITTEES**

### **RESOLVED**

That the minutes of the following sub-committee meetings be received:

General Appeals Sub-Committee – 5<sup>th</sup> July 2022

Finance Sub-Committee – 6<sup>th</sup> July 2022

Finance Sub-Committee – 7<sup>th</sup> September 2022

## **42 REPORTING OF OFFICER DELEGATED DECISIONS**

This item had been included on all service committee agendas in the current committee cycle to provide greater transparency of officer

decision-making and to draw to members' attention the monthly schedules of officer delegated decisions published on the Council's website.

**RESOLVED**

That

1. the officer delegated decisions for the Corporate Directorate in July and August 2022 be noted; and
2. this item be included as a regular item on future agendas.

**43 REPORTING OF URGENT DECISIONS**

There were no urgent decisions to report.

The meeting commenced at 10.00 am and concluded at 2.42 pm

Councillor S Corcoran (Chair)



*Working for a brighter future together*

## **Corporate Policy Committee**

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<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	1 December 2022
<b>Report Title:</b>	High Speed Rail 2 Phase 2b – Qualifying Authority and Schedule 17 Decision-Making
<b>Report of:</b>	Jayne Traverse, Executive Director of Place
<b>Ward(s) Affected:</b>	All Wards

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### **1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1.** This report seeks to consult the Corporate Policy Committee prior to a decision being made by Full Council which seeks for the Council to become a Qualifying Authority for the construction of phase 2b of the High Speed Rail 2 (HS2) by authorising the Executive Director of Place to approve the decision-making procedure for associated Schedule 17 applications.

### **2. Executive Summary**

- 2.1** The enactment of the High Speed Rail (Crewe - Manchester) Bill ("the Bill") will give deemed planning permission to the scheme which is similar to the grant of outline planning permission under the existing Town and Country Planning Act. There will be additional detailed designs and other construction works however which will be subject to applications for approval by the Local Planning Authority.
- 2.2** The Bill provides for the Council to become a 'qualifying authority' which would then allow the Council to assess and determine such applications subject to certain restrictions on the grounds for refusal as set out in the Bill. However, if the Council decide not to become a qualifying authority, the grounds for refusing any applications are more restricted than those available to qualifying authorities.
- 2.3** The Council should retain as many decision making powers as possible in the assessment and determination of all HS2 related applications in order to

ensure that the Council achieve the best and most appropriate outcomes for the local community and minimise the impacts on the wider environment as far as possible.

- 2.5 The Council became a Qualifying Authority for HS2 Phase 2a (West Midlands – Crewe) in 2019 and adopted a similar decision making process in October 2020.
- 2.4 The Bill requires the Secretary of State to specify which planning authorities have entered into a Planning Memorandum to become a qualifying authority by the time the Bill is reported on by the House of Lords. Although this may be some time off, it is appropriate for the Council to confirm their decision to HS2 Ltd as soon as possible.
- 2.5 In addition, it is intended to seek approval to reciprocate the current decision-making arrangements for Phase 2a to ensure that appropriate officer delegated authority and where necessary Planning Committee procedures are in place to deal with applications submitted in relation to works along the route of Phase 2b.

### **3. Recommendation**

- 3.1. To note the report and Annex 1 and provide commentary and feedback to Council.

### **4. Reasons for Recommendations**

- 4.1. The proposed approach will enable the Council to have greater control over the approval of construction details associated with the High Speed Rail scheme such as the detailed design of permanent structures and an enhanced role in relation to certain enforcement and construction matters. This is essential so that the Council can (acting reasonably and where necessary) seek to either improve or control the detailed design applications. Equally, the greater number of conditions that the Council can consider as Qualifying Authority is considered vital in helping to control and manage the impacts of construction and the scheme on the Borough.
- 4.2. This is necessary to ensure that the impacts of the developments on the local environment and local amenity are fully considered and addressed in line with the approach of the Cheshire East Council Local Plan Strategy.
- 4.3. The process of becoming a Qualifying Authority binds local authorities to act in a particular way through the signing of the Planning Memorandum in respect of determining applications for consent in an expedient manner (within eight weeks in line with statutory determination periods for planning applications), and to being sufficiently resourced to be able to do so. As such, this is being adjudged by all parties involved in the High Speed Rail 2 (Phase 2b) that the decision should be made by Full Council.

- 4.4. The recommended approach would allow the Council to ensure appropriate officer delegated authority and where necessary Planning Committee procedures are in place to enable officers to deal with applications submitted in relation to works along the route in a timely manner and meet the timescales set out in the Planning Memorandum.
- 4.5. The decision to become a Qualifying Authority and changes to the Constitution rests with Council but given the changes to the terms of reference to committee it is appropriate to consult Strategic Planning Board.

## **5. Other Options Considered**

- 5.1. The only alternative option is to become a Non-Qualifying Authority. This would mean that the Council would have a much more restricted role in the approval of construction matters and would only be permitted to consider plans and specifications for buildings. This option therefore provides a narrower degree of control over the impact that the construction of the scheme will have on the local environment and local amenity.
- 5.2. Without a change in the Constitution as detailed in Annex 1, there is a risk that the Council would be unable to determine Schedule 17 Applications in a timely manner. As a result of this, the Council would lose its Qualifying Authority status and its determination powers; and the Secretary of State would take all decisions on Schedule 17 Applications.

## **6. Background**

- 6.1. In January this year, the Government introduced a hybrid Bill to Parliament to seek powers for the construction and operation of Phase 2b of HS2. The Bill will grant planning permission for the construction of a high speed railway between Crewe and Manchester all associated development works.
- 6.2. The Bill grants what is termed as 'deemed' planning permission, which is similar to an outline planning consent, for development authorised by the Bill. However, this "planning permission" will be subject to a number of conditions requiring the nominated undertaker (the party/parties who will construct the railway) to obtain the consent or approval of the Local Authorities along the route for certain matters.

### Qualifying Authority

- 6.3. The Bill gives each Local Authority a choice between having a wide or narrow range of controls over the detailed design of permanent structures such as stations and viaducts, and an enhanced role in relation to certain enforcement and construction matters. Those who opt for a wider range of controls are referred to as 'qualifying authorities'.

- 6.4.** A Qualifying Authority will have the responsibility for approving plans and specifications for works such as buildings and road vehicle parks, terracing, cuttings, embankments and other earthworks, fences, walls or other barriers, transformers, telecommunication masts, pedestrian access to the railway line, artificial lighting, waste, and spoil disposal and borrow pits. They will not have powers of approval for any works or features of a temporary nature, for anything underground, and for any tunnel or railway track bed.
- 6.5.** A qualifying authority can only refuse to approve (or impose conditions in respect of) the plans and specifications on two main sets of grounds:
- a) The design or external appearance of the building works ought to be modified to:
- preserve the local environment or local amenity;
  - prevent or reduce prejudicial effects on road safety or on the free flow of traffic in the local area;
  - preserve a site of archaeological or historic interest or nature conservation value, and is reasonably capable of being so modified;
- or
- b) The development ought to, and could reasonably, be carried out elsewhere on land within the Act limits.
- 6.6.** Non qualifying authorities will only be able to refuse approval if the design or external appearance of the works ought to be modified to preserve the local environment/local amenity (and is reasonably capable of being so modified) or the development ought to, and could reasonably, be carried out elsewhere on land within the Act limits.
- 6.7.** In addition, qualifying authorities will be able to enforce construction arrangements relating to:
- handling of re-useable spoil or topsoil
  - road transport
  - storage sites for construction materials, spoil or topsoil
  - construction camps
  - works screening
  - artificial lighting
  - dust suppression
  - road mud control measures.
- 6.8.** These may be subject to a class approval by the Secretary of State, in which case the relevant qualifying authority would be consulted before such approvals are made. Should the Secretary of State not make a class



approval, these arrangements are subject to approval by the relevant qualifying authority.

- 6.9.** Construction arrangements relating to construction camps, and lorry routes with more than 24 lorry movements per day would also require individual approval from the relevant qualifying planning authority; along with the bringing into use of any scheduled work or depot.
- 6.10.** Councils wishing to become Qualifying Authorities are required to sign the “Planning Memorandum”. This document sets out rules of conduct and administrative arrangements for both the Local Planning Authorities and the nominated undertaker.
- 6.11.** It requires the Council to commit to dealing with applications for consent in an expedient manner (within eight weeks in line with statutory determination periods for planning applications), and to being sufficiently resourced to be able to do so.
- 6.12.** Becoming a Qualifying Authority therefore involves a commitment by the Council to deal with applications appropriately and within specified timescales, in return for control over a wider range of matters than it would otherwise have.
- 6.13.** This commitment has resource implications: the Council will receive application fees to cover the costs associated with dealing with these consents and approvals, or HS2 Ltd. will provide a financial contribution to the Council to deal with the additional workload. This contribution would come through a Service Level Agreement (SLA) between the Council and HS2 Ltd to cover the costs of handling the applications and any additional work required to support their determination. The Council will engage with HS2 Ltd. to obtain the number of applications and exact timetable as necessary to determine the extent of resources required and implications on the service – as they have been doing for Phase 2a.

#### Process for Decision-Making

- 6.14.** In order to meet the above timeframes as a Qualifying Authority a process for decision making has already been established for HS2 Phase 2a applications. This was however specific to just Phase 2a so a similar process is required for Phase 2b.
- 6.15.** The applications are likely to be for relatively minor works in the initial phases but could become substantial in number and frequency as works evolve in the future. As such in view of these points, and the need to ensure that the applications are dealt with within the set timescales, there is a risk that the anticipated volume of work could have a significant impact upon the capacity

of the Planning Committee to consider these additional items within the required period.

- 6.16.** For these reasons, a cascaded delegated authority is sought to allow the Head of Planning to determine approvals under Schedule 17 (the Planning Conditions Schedule) of the Bill.
- 6.17.** The approach to Committee reporting would broadly reflect that of the existing process for determining planning applications, allowing Members the opportunity to ‘call-in’ such approvals – subject to specifying relevant planning reasons and following agreement with the Head of Planning in liaison with a Principal Planning Officer.
- 6.18.** Schedule 17 Applications would be determined as follows:
- Delegated Authority to the Head of Planning to determine all applications and notifications submitted in relation to HS2 matters in consultation with the Principal Planning Officer; subject to the provisions below.
  - All live applications, including Member call-in’s, to be reviewed fortnightly and considered for Planning Committee determination by the Head of Planning and Principal Planning Officer. Both officers to jointly determine whether a delegated or committee determination is appropriate (and if a committee determination is necessary, the specific planning committee) based on the scale, complexity and level of public scrutiny of each application.
  - In line with the existing procedures for Members, any request for call-in by the relevant Local Ward Member must be received within 15 days of the issue of the electronic notification of the application; and must set out the material planning consideration(s) specific and relevant to the matters which can be considered under Schedule 17 which warrant the application going before Planning Committee.
  - The scheme of delegation shall be subject to a review after 6 months in consultation with the Head of Planning and the Chairs of Planning Committees to ascertain whether any changes are necessary to the scheme of delegation as lessons are learned throughout its application.
- 6.19.** The type of applications which would be referred to planning committee for determination would likely be of a scale and nature that present more significant impacts to the local environment and amenity; or present complex planning and environmental considerations which requires appropriate scrutiny by Members. Examples of such applications could include:
- Development of large-scale bridges and viaducts;
  - Significant ground engineering works;

- Creation of borrow pits;
- Buildings which are of a scale and nature which may create impacts beyond the immediate locality.

Other procedural arrangements – consultation and notification

- 6.20.** Under the HS2 Bill, there is no statutory requirement for the Council to carry out any consultation on Schedule 17 applications with any other parties other than key statutory bodies (Natural England, English Heritage and the Environment Agency) and no requirement to inform the public on receipt of such submissions.
- 6.21.** In view of the restrictions the HS2 Bill places on the Council in terms of timescales for determination and the matters that can be taken into consideration, the Council would not carry out any formal consultation with local residents and Parish Councils on Schedule 17 submissions.
- 6.22.** The Council however recognises that there may be high levels of interest in any HS2 related developments. In order to ensure local people and Members are therefore kept up to date and made aware of all applications, and in order to reflect the existing procedures for all planning applications, the Council would as a minimum undertake the following:
- Write to inform the affected Parish Councils on the route of the receipt of a Schedule 17 application;
  - Write to inform all neighbours immediately adjoining the relevant part of the route;
  - Notify Local Ward Members of all Schedule 17 Applications;
  - Provide Local Ward Members with the opportunity to request that the application be ‘called-in’ for a committee determination – subject to specifying relevant planning reasons and following agreement with the Head of Planning in liaison with a Principal Planning Officer;
  - Make full details of all Schedule 17 submissions (including plans and supporting documents) available to view on the Council’s website. The purpose of this process is to keep the public informed, but the Council will not be requesting comments.

Amendment to Council Constitution

- 6.23.** The proposed amendments to the scheme of delegation as outlined above will require an amendment to the Council Constitution.
- 6.24.** The Council Constitution already has the appropriate Scheme of Delegation in relation to the extent of powers delegated to Executive Director of Place. This was put in place prior to HS2 Phase 2a. These powers are delegated further through Local Schemes of Delegation to the Head of Planning.

- 6.25.** The Council Constitution however also details the current terms of reference for Northern and Southern Planning Committee, and Strategic Planning Board. This is detailed in Annex 1 to this report along with the proposed amendments sought.
- 6.26.** It is recommended that Members approve the proposed amendments to the Council Constitution in order to ensure appropriate delegated authority and Planning Committee procedures are in place to deal with requests for approval of detailed design and external appearance of buildings and structures along the route of Phase 2b of HS2.

## **7. Consultation and Engagement**

- 7.1.** Strategic Planning Board and Corporate Policy Committee are being consulted and their views will be updated to Council.

## **8. Implications**

### **8.1. Legal**

- 8.1.1.** Councils wishing to become Qualifying Authorities are required to sign the “Planning Memorandum”.
- 8.1.2.** The Planning Memorandum sets out rules of conduct and administrative arrangements for both the local planning authorities and the nominated undertaker of the works. It is part of a suite of documents forming the Phase2b of HS2 Environmental Minimum Requirements.
- 8.1.3.** The Planning Memorandum regulates the details of the deemed planning consent that are reserved for local planning authority approval. It sets out the undertakings made by Qualifying Authorities in return for the additional planning controls referred to above.
- 8.1.4.** Signing the Planning Memorandum and becoming a Qualifying Authority:
- Is legally binding;
  - Gives CEC a greater degree of control over planning conditions;
  - Does not fetter CEC’s discretion to withhold approval of planning conditions but stipulates certain expectations as to the stringency of conditions
- 8.1.5.** CEC’s status as a Qualifying Authority can be withdrawn in certain circumstances.
- 8.1.6.** It provides for the establishment of a Planning Forum which will meet regularly to assist with the effective implementation of the planning provisions in the Bill in order to help co-ordinate and secure the expeditious implementation of those planning provisions.

- 8.1.7.** Due to the national importance of the HS2 infrastructure project Qualifying Authorities are required to have regard to construction, cost and programme implications.
- 8.1.8.** The Planning Memorandum does not fetter CEC's ability to refuse a request for approval of conditions but requires that CEC shall not seek to impose any unreasonably stringent requirements on the requests for approval of any construction arrangement, plans or specifications, mitigation scheme or site restoration scheme, which might frustrate or delay the project, or unreasonably add to its cost. In particular, it should not seek to impose unreasonably stringent requirements or standards in respects of land use, planning, design or environmental matters.
- 8.1.9.** Due to the time pressures on the project, CEC will be expected to put in place appropriate internal decision-making arrangements to ensure that the 8 week period for determining requests is achieved. A delegated process is already in place for HS2 Phase 2a, this provides for delegation to the Head of Planning in consultation with the Chair of Strategic Planning Board. A similar process should be put in place which will require a change to the Terms of Reference for Committees within the Constitution as indicated within Annex 1.
- 8.1.10.** If CEC repeatedly fails to expedite requests for approval, or seriously fails to expedite a request in line with the stipulated timescale, or repeatedly or seriously fails to act in accordance with all the requirements of the Planning Memorandum, the Secretary of State may have sufficient grounds to order that CEC shall cease to have the additional powers of a Qualifying Authority. Prior to being disqualified, the nominated undertaker and the Secretary of State would discuss with CEC concerns regarding its performance and the performance of the nominated undertaker.
- 8.1.11.** Where CEC refuses a request for approval, in addition to specifying the grounds under the Planning Conditions Schedule for its decision, it shall state clearly and precisely the full reasons for its decision.
- 8.1.12.** The Planning Memorandum does not relate to applications for permission to construct over-site development - namely certain non-rail-related development over operational structures such as stations and vent shafts. These will be taken forward under the normal planning process.
- 8.1.13.** Finally, it should be noted that any applications for permission are unrelated to any assurances obtained through the petitioning process. These assurances are dealt with separately as there is a contractual obligation to comply with all relevant assurances made by HS2. A unilateral written commitment is made to Parliament and an undertaking is

also given that HS2 will take the necessary steps to secure compliance with any assurances made.

**8.2. Finance**

- 8.2.1.** Given that signing the Planning Memorandum gives the Local Planning Authority a greater range of controls, this will require more resources to process and deal with applications compared to if the Council chose to become a non-qualifying authority. However, the Service Level Agreement (SLA) between the Council and HS2 Ltd is intended to cover all costs associated with processing Schedule 17 applications and therefore there should not be any negative cost implications to the Council from becoming a qualifying authority. Any costs will be accounted for within the Council's Development Management budget.

**8.3. Policy**

- 8.3.1.** HS2 is supported in the Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy under Strategic Priority One which states that promoting economic prosperity by creating conditions for business growth will be delivered by (amongst other things) maximising the opportunities that may be offered by High Speed 2 Rail Links (HS2).

**8.4. Equality**

- 8.4.1.** All public sector authorities are bound by the Public Sector Equality Duty as set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. In exercising their powers authorities must have regard to the effect of any differential impacts on groups with protected characteristics. In deciding to become a qualifying authority the Council must pay due regard to its Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) as set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010.
- 8.4.2.** The enhanced controls provided for in becoming a qualifying authority should have a positive public benefit when it comes to the PSED

**8.5. Human Resources**

- 8.5.1.** It shall be necessary to ensure that sufficient resource is allocated in Planning, Highways, and Legal Services to support determination of the applications within the timescales required

**8.6. Risk Management**

- 8.6.1.** Key risks to the Council relate to ability of officers to determine the applications within the required statutory timescales and staff resource implications associated with the additional workload.

**8.6.2.** This will be managed through the use of the SLA between the Council and HS2 Ltd to secure additional finance to ensure sufficient resources to manage the process effectively. Early engagement with HS2 Ltd has already taken place about the likely timing and number of future applications which will also enable staff resource to be managed well in advance of any increased workload. This engagement will continue with early pre-application discussions.

**8.7. Rural Communities**

**8.7.1.** The route of the scheme passes through a number of rural communities which are likely to be subject to applications for the approval of detailed designs or other associated developments. Each application for approval would enable an assessment of the relevant environment effects for those matters that the Council is able to control under the Bill.

**8.8. Children and Young People/Cared for Children**

**8.8.1.** There are no direct implications for children and young people.

**8.9. Public Health**

**8.9.1.** There are no direct implications for public health

**8.10. Climate Change**

**8.10.1.** There are no direct implications for climate change.

Access to Information	
Contact Officer:	David Malcolm, Head of Planning david.malcolm@cheshireeast.gov.uk 07788 415246
Appendices	1. Proposed change to Constitution
Background Papers:	
Section 3 of HS2 Phase 2b Information Paper B2: Main Provisions of the Planning Regime and the Phase 2b Planning Memorandum explain this in more detail:	
<a href="https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1048798/B2_Main_provisions_of_the_planning_regime_v1.pdf">https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1048798/B2_Main_provisions_of_the_planning_regime_v1.pdf</a>	
<a href="https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1050458/M345.pdf">https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1050458/M345.pdf</a>	

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**Annex 1: HS2 Phase 2b - Proposed Change to Constitution**  
**Extract from Constitution (Chapter 2 – Part 4 Page 22)**

**Strategic Planning Board**  
**Functions**

- 1 To oversee the division of the Council's Development Management functions and workload in order to ensure timely and consistent decision making at the most appropriate level, and to that end:
  - 1.1 monitor the volume and type of applications determined; assessing the performance of the Development Management service, and, if appropriate
  - 1.2 vary the division of functions and delegations between the Board, the Planning Committees and the Head of Planning
  - 1.3 adopt working protocols and procedures: e.g. protocols governing the direction of applications between the Planning Committees, public speaking rights, Referral procedure and others.
- 2 To exercise the Council's functions relating to town and country planning and development control, protection of important hedgerows, preservation of trees, regulation of high hedges, and any relevant applications pursuant to **Schedule 17 of the High Speed Rail (West Midlands - Crewe) Act 2021 Acts**. Most of these functions are delegated to the Planning Committees and then onwards to the Head of Planning, but the following are reserved to the Board:
  - 2.1 Applications for Large Scale Major Development as defined by the Strategic Planning Board from time to time. Currently this includes:
    - 2.1.1 residential developments of 200 dwellings or more, or 4 ha. or more
    - 2.1.2 10,000 square metres or more, or 4ha. or more of retail, commercial or industrial or other floor space.
  - 2.2 This does not include re-applications for extant schemes or detailed applications where outline consent has been given or removal/variation of conditions.
  - 2.3 Applications for major minerals or waste development other than small scale works which are ancillary to an existing mineral working or waste disposal facility.
  - 2.4 Applications involving a significant departure from policy which has been referred to SPB which a Planning Committee is minded to approve.
  - 2.5 Any other matters which have strategic implications by reason of their scale, nature or location.

- 2.6 Any other matters referred up to it at the discretion of the Head of Planning, including major development of less than the thresholds set out in paragraph 2.1 above which have wider strategic implications.
- 2.7 To exercise a consultation and advisory role, commenting upon the content of proposed planning policy, any document which forms part of or linked to the Local Plan and upon the effectiveness of existing policies employed in development control decisions.
- 2.8 To determine any relevant Schedule 17 applications as deemed appropriate by the Head of Planning.
- 3 Where the application is to vary or remove a condition that was imposed by the Planning Committee it will not be delegated.
- 4 However, there will be a presumption that a call in request by a local ward Member will be agreed where applications are for the renewal (or extension of time) of extant unimplemented permissions.

## **Northern and Southern Planning Committees**

### ***Functions***

- 1 To exercise the Council's functions relating to town and country planning and development control, the protection of important hedgerows, preservation of trees, regulation of high hedges and any relevant applications pursuant to **Schedule 17 of the High Speed Rail (West Midlands-Crewe) Act 2021 Acts** Some applications have been reserved to the Strategic Planning Board: others are delegated on to the Head of Planning: the following are retained for the Planning Committees:

#### **1.1 Applications for Small Scale Major Development for:**

- 1.1.1 residential developments of 20 to 199 dwellings or between 1 and 4ha.
- 1.1.2 retail or commercial/industrial or other floor space of between 5,000 and 9,999 square metres or 2-4 ha.

This does not include re-applications for extant schemes or detailed applications where outline consent has been given or removal/variation of conditions.

- 2. To determine any other planning and development control matters:
  - 2.1 advertised as a departure from policy, which the Head of Planning is minded to approve;
  - 2.2 submitted by a Councillor, senior Council officer (Grade 12 or above) or a member of staff employed within the Development Management and

Policy service area; or by an immediate family member or partner of these where representations objecting to the application have been received. Where objections have been received, applications recommended for refusal can be dealt with by officers under delegated powers;

- 2.3 considered to be significant applications by the Council either as applicant or land owner. This category will not normally include minor developments which accord with planning policy and to which no objection has been made;
  - 2.4 referred up to the Committee by a Councillor in accordance with the Committees` Referral procedure. However, any request must be received within 15 working days of the issue of the electronic notification of the application, and set out the material planning consideration(s) which warrant the application going before committee (except for a request to review a Schedule 17 application, where a 7 day time frame will apply);
  - 2.5 any other matters referred up to them at the discretion of the Head of Planning;
  - 2.6 any relevant Schedule 17 applications as deemed appropriate by the Head of Planning.
- 3 Applications for householder development, listed building consents to alter/extend and conservation area consents will normally be dealt with under delegated powers.
  - 4 Applications for advertisements, tree work, prior approvals, Certificates of Lawfulness and notifications will normally be dealt with under delegated powers.
  - 5 Where the application is to vary or remove a condition that was imposed by the Planning Committee it will not be delegated.
  - 6 However, there will be a presumption that a Referral request by a local ward Member will be agreed where applications are for the renewal (or extension of time) of extant, unimplemented permissions.
  - 7 Each Committee will refer up to the Strategic Planning Board matters involving a significant departure from policy which it is minded to approve contrary to recommendation by the Head of Planning.

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*Working for a brighter future together*

## **Corporate Policy Committee**

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<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	1 December 2022
<b>Report Title:</b>	Communications Strategy for Residents 2022-25
<b>Report of:</b>	Jane Burns, Executive Director – Corporate Services
<b>Report Reference No:</b>	CP/16/22-23
<b>Ward(s) Affected:</b>	All wards

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### **1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1.** This report presents the Communications Strategy for Residents 2022-25 for approval, with the results of public consultation on the draft strategy.
- 1.2.** The strategy has been developed as part of the Council's work to deliver the following priorities in the Council's Corporate Plan 2021-25:
  - 1.2.1.** Ensure that there is transparency in all aspects of council decision-making
  - 1.2.2.** Listen, learn and respond to our residents, promoting opportunities for a two-way conversation
  - 1.2.3.** Promote and develop the services of the council through regular communication and engagement with all residents.
- 1.3.** And the following actions from the Corporate Plan 2021-25:
  - 1.3.1.** A communications plan which is targeted at residents (especially those who are hard to reach) to include digital opportunities
  - 1.3.2.** Review the style of communications to give a contemporary and effective approach, and
  - 1.3.3.** Regular, proactive communications through all channels.

## **2. Executive Summary**

- 2.1.** In January 2022 a report was submitted to Corporate Policy Committee requesting approval to develop and approve a new approach for communications with residents. The committee approved the development of a communications strategy for residents.
- 2.2.** In July 2022, Corporate Policy Committee considered a draft communications strategy which sets out vision, aims, principles and priorities for the council's communication with residents. The committee approved the draft to go to public consultation.
- 2.3.** This report presents the final communications strategy and results of the public consultation.
- 2.4.** The strategy sets out the vision, aims and priorities for the council's news and public relations, and the promotion of key council services, policies, programmes and initiatives to residents.

## **3. Recommendations**

- 3.1.** It is recommended that Corporate Policy Committee:
- 3.1.1.** Approves the final Communications Strategy for Residents 2022-25.
- 3.1.2.** Approves that further updates are provided to Corporate Policy Committee on progress against the aims of the strategy on an six monthly basis.

## **4. Reasons for Recommendations**

- 4.1.** A communications strategy for residents will:
- support the strategic aims and objectives in the council's Corporate Plan 2021-25;
  - support effective operational delivery of services;
  - help people, including those who are under-served or seldom-heard, access those services; and
  - inform the effective use of council resources.
- 4.2.** A planned, strategic approach for communications, based on sound professional principles that align to the priorities and vision of the organisation, will be more effective than an ad hoc, uncoordinated approach to communicating with residents and customers.
- 4.3.** The strategy has been informed by the views and preferences of residents and customers through public consultation

## 5. Other Options Considered

### 5.1.

Option	Impact	Risk
Create a strategy without public consultation. (Not recommended)	We would have a strategy that shapes council's communication output for residents.	Without residents' input we may miss opportunities to communicate more effectively with them.
Do nothing – continue to operate without a defined and documented strategic approach to resident communications and media activities. (Not recommended)	No agreed strategic rationale to prioritise resources, simplify, clarify and coordinate our messages, and react more effectively to emerging issues.	Unplanned, ad hoc, reactive communications activity is rarely effective in the long-term in delivering required outcomes or offering real value for money. It would be difficult to ensure and evidence effective use of council resources in communicating with the public.

## 6. Background

**6.1.** The Corporate Plan includes the priority “Promote the services of the council through regular communication and engagement with all residents”. It also includes the actions:

6.1.1. “A communications plan which is targeted at residents (especially those who are heard to reach) to include digital opportunities”

6.1.2. “Review the style of communications to give a contemporary and effective approach” and

6.1.3. “Regular communications through all channels”.

**6.2.** In January 2022 Corporate Policy Committee approved the development of a communications strategy for residents to address these corporate plan priorities and actions. In July 2022, Corporate Policy Committee approved a draft strategy to go to public consultation.

**6.3.** Response to the consultation was largely supportive of the draft strategy, as presented to the committee in July. However, respondents made a number of points and recommendations that relate to this strategy and, more generally, to the council's wider approach to communicating, engaging and

consulting with residents and customers. Respondents also made some specific comments and suggestions about the vision, aims and priorities set out in the draft strategy.

- 6.4. The strategy has therefore been updated as a direct result of feedback provided through this consultation.

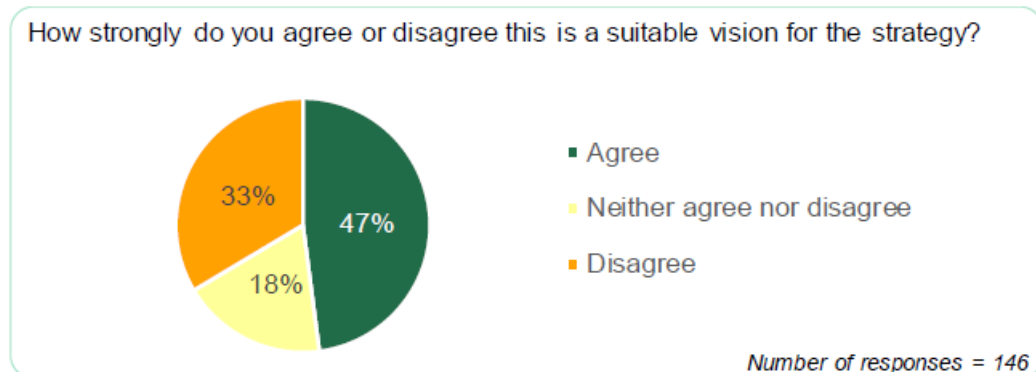
## 7. Consultation and Engagement

- 7.1. The draft Communications Strategy for Residents was subject to formal consultation between 21 September and 23 October 2022. The consultation was promoted on the council's website and through local media and social media. A survey questionnaire was available online and as a paper copy for postal responses. It was issued to the Digital Influence Panel and promoted in our local libraries. It was also promoted to Cheshire East Council staff, including managers, Cheshire East members and was sent to Town and Parish Councils.

- 7.2. 151 responses were received with the majority being generally supportive of the vision, aims and priority actions. A summary of responses and changes made as a result are below.

### 7.3. Vision:

47% of respondents agreed that this is a suitable vision for the strategy, 33% disagreed.



- 7.3.1. The vision statement has been amended in response to comments made by respondents to the consultation. The statement has been shortened to really focus on the core purpose of communications activity.

- 7.3.2. The vision now reads:

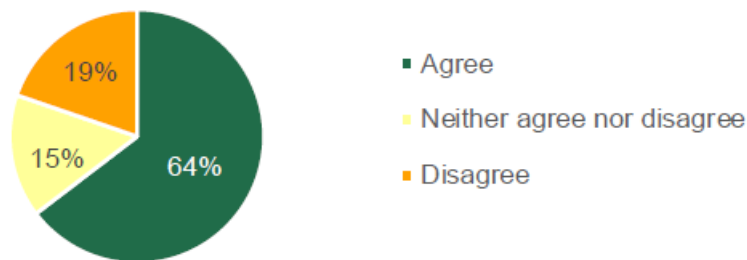
“People in Cheshire East are well-informed about their council and council services.

“They are aware of council decisions and how to influence them.”



#### 7.4. Aims:

How strongly do you agree or disagree these are suitable aims for the strategy?

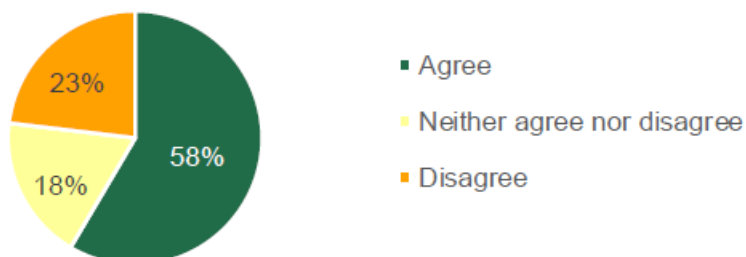


Number of responses = 147

- 7.4.1. The aims have been amended in response to comments made by respondents to the consultation. Respondents raised the importance of two-way communication and listening to what residents say. The aims and priorities have been amended to more explicitly reflect these fundamental and important considerations that also apply to the council's wider work to improve customer experience and consultation and engagement.
- 7.4.2. The first two aims have been re-ordered in response to suggestions that the strategy could more clearly prioritise the importance of residents as our key stakeholder. While the aims and priorities are not intended to appear in order of importance, this does make the importance of the resident more obvious.
- 7.4.3. Therefore, Aim 1 is now "Build engaged audiences from Cheshire East's diverse communities". The brief narrative for Aim 1 also now includes explicit reference to taking and making opportunities to listen to residents and enabling two-way engagement on an equitable basis.
- 7.4.4. Aim 2 is now "Promote council priorities through a coordinated programme of activity"
- 7.4.5. Aim 3 and Aim 4 remain unchanged.

#### 7.5. Priorities:

How strongly do you agree or disagree these priorities will deliver the strategy vision and aims?



Number of responses = 147

- 7.5.1. A number of the priorities have also been amended in response to comments made by respondents to the consultation.
- 7.5.2. Priorities under Aims 1 and 2 have been re-ordered reflecting the re-ordering of Aims.
- 7.5.3. There is now more explicit emphasis on non-digital communication and the potential to work with Members and town and parish councils (Priority 2).
- 7.5.4. There is now more explicit emphasis, in a number of priorities, on the role and importance of two-way communication and listening to the voice of the resident and customer in this strategy – including Priorities 1, 3, 5 and 6.
- 7.6. We also asked for other comments and suggestions about the draft strategy. Some notable answers, which have been taken into account in the updated strategy, are below:
- 7.6.1. *“Town and Parish Councils can also be an effective conduit for information from Cheshire East for residents who would not look at Cheshire East’s website or literature.”*
- 7.6.2. *“I particularly liked how the information was displayed in a visual format. It was interesting and the data was easy to access quickly and clearly. The aims stated are laudable and desirable. I did wonder if the strategy should have discussed these aims are to be met in a little more detail.”*
- 7.6.3. *“There appears to be too little emphasis on the Council’s responsibility if not duty to queries and complaints and requests made by the resident”*  
While this emphasises the importance of listening and genuine two-way conversation, which are very important to this strategy, it perhaps relates more directly to the range of interactions that are in the scope of the Council’s [Customer Experience Strategy](#).
- 7.7. Prior to drafting the strategy, we asked residents about their communications preferences, how they get information and news about the council and how they would prefer to get that information.
- 7.7.1. There has been a marked increase in usage of digital channels across all age groups over time. Feedback showed that the key characteristic in determining preferred media channels is age. While older people are increasingly using digital channels, some are less likely to say they prefer digital channels and state a preference for more ‘traditional media’, such as newspapers, TV and radio.
- 7.7.2. In the recent consultation, respondents were also keen to point out that we should not entirely depend on digital communication methods.

## **8. Implications**

### **8.1. Legal**

8.1.1. The communications and engagement activities covered by this report and strategy are subject to the following guidance and legislation:

- Data Protection Act 2018
- Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988
- Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000
- Libel and defamation law
- Code of recommended practice for local authority publicity
- Advertising Standards Authority's advertising codes.
- Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018
- Civil Contingencies Act 2004

### **8.2. Finance**

8.2.1. The recommendations in this report have been proposed in the context of agreed 2022/23 budget for communications and engagement activity.

### **8.3. Policy**

8.3.1. The communications and media activities of Cheshire East Council are subject to the following policies:

- Media relations protocol
- Social networking policy
- Social media abuse policy
- Visual identity guide
- Brand protocol

8.3.2. There are also important connections to key council strategies, that are being considered by this committee, including:

- Customer Experience Strategy
- Digital Strategy
- Approach to consultation and engagement
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy

### **8.4. Equality**

8.4.1. The strategic principles proposed in this report will ensure that all communications material will consider the needs of the individual it is targeted at, with consideration given to alternative formats and channels where required.

8.4.2. The principles set out in the strategy, state that all communications activity must be inclusive and accessible.

- 8.4.3. An Equality Impact Assessment (appendix 3) has been prepared to ensure that individuals and groups with protected characteristics are not directly or indirectly discriminated against as a result of our communications activity and strategy.

## **8.5. Human Resources**

- 8.5.1. There are close connections with the council's human resources service in respect of delivering internal communications and employee engagement, and workforce strategy.

## **8.6. Risk Management**

- 8.6.1. An effective communications strategy will support the organisation to ensure that it is represented fairly, that it is transparently and clearly accountable and credited for its decisions and actions, reducing the risk of reputational damage through misrepresentation, misinformation and/or disinformation.
- 8.6.2. The principles set out here support management of the Strategic Risk Register corporate risk SR13 – Reputation.

## **8.7. Rural Communities**

- 8.7.1. Effective and planned communications activity and communications strategy are necessary tools to ensure that the council's communications resources are well-managed, and that engagement activity and opportunities are available across a range of channels, reaching individuals and communities in all geographies across Cheshire East, including rural areas. The draft strategy includes the aim: "Build engaged audiences from Cheshire East's diverse communities" and the priority to "Improve communication with seldom-heard audiences". This includes rural communities, where there are obstacles to effective communication.
- 8.7.2. Priority 2 in the strategy recognises the potential to seek the support of local ward members and town and parish councils to share information about council services, where digital and other forms of communication may be less accessible.

## **8.8. Children and Young People/Cared for Children**

- 8.8.1. Children and young people are an important audience for the council. The draft strategy includes the aim: "Build engaged audiences from Cheshire East's diverse communities" and the priority to "Improve communication with seldom-heard audiences". This includes children and young people, and we will work to ensure that their voices are heard and have the opportunity to influence decision making as well as having access to the information they need about council services.

## 8.9. Public Health

- 8.9.1. Effective and planned communications activity and communications strategy are necessary tools to ensure that the council's communications resources are well managed and that engagement activity around Public Health priorities can be prioritised appropriately. Communications activity will support positive behaviour change to influence and support an improvement in population and individual health and wellbeing.
- 8.9.2. Communications has played a key role in the Council's response to the Coronavirus pandemic.

## 8.10. Climate Change

- 8.10.1. Communications and media activity will be central to the Council's work to address the climate change emergency and deliver the ambitions of the council's Environmental Strategy. The communications strategy is a necessary tool to ensure that the council's communications resources are well managed and that engagement activity around climate change and environmental strategy can be prioritised appropriately.
- 8.10.2. Our communications approach recognises the opportunities that the accelerating shift towards increasingly digital channels of engagement offers. While not all engagement activity can, or should, be undertaken through digital channels, they are now established as the default for a significant proportion of the population and are often, in general, a 'greener' alternative to, for example, print.

Access to Information	
Contact Officer:	Michael Moore, Head of Communications <a href="mailto:Michael.moore@cheshireeast.gov.uk">Michael.moore@cheshireeast.gov.uk</a> 01270 686581
Appendices:	Appendix 1 - Cheshire East Council Communications Strategy for residents 2022-25 Appendix 2 - Communications Strategy for Residents Consultation 2022 - Full report Appendix 3 – Equality Impact Assessment
Background Papers:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <a href="#">Cheshire East Council Customer Experience Strategy</a></li> <li>2. <a href="#">Cheshire East Council Media Relations Protocol</a></li> <li>3. <a href="#">Cheshire East Council Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy</a></li> <li>4. <a href="#">Code of recommended practice on local authority publicity</a></li> </ol>

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*Cheshire East Council*  
**Communications  
Strategy for  
Residents**  
*2022-25*

Open

Fair

Green

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# 1 Context statement / background

## 1.1 Introduction

Cheshire East Council has committed to “promote the services of the council through regular communication and engagement with all residents” (Cheshire East Council’s Corporate Plan 2021-2025).

It is important that communication between the council and residents is open, fair, engaging and accessible. The council provides services that directly affect people’s lives and we need people to know how to access services when they need them. It is also important that people understand how decisions are made, how and why priorities are set, how the council’s activities are funded and how well the council

is performing. We also want to provide a clear picture of the challenges the council faces and the wider context in which it operates.

Individual residents need different things from the council – and they may have different preferences about how they get information and news – ‘one-size-does-not-fit-all’ in terms of communications activity. So, it is important that we constantly assess and review the effectiveness of our communications activities to make sure they are accessible, useful and meaningful, and that they provide value for money.

This strategy includes a clear vision for the council’s communications with residents. It sets out aims and outlines priorities for communications activity that will support the delivery of the corporate plan. It also sets out the principles we will follow when communicating.

## 1.2 Have your say

This communications strategy is focused on the council’s communications with residents.

In developing this strategy, we asked residents and other interested stakeholders and groups the following:

- What do you think about our vision for communications with residents?
- What do you think about our communications aims?
- How well will the proposed priorities deliver our aims and vision?
- Is there anything else you would like to see us focus on?
- Do you have any other comments or suggestions you would like to make?



## 1.3 Cheshire East Council

Serving an estimated population of 398,800 Cheshire East Council is the third largest Local Authority in the North West, and the fifteenth largest in the country.



**3,170**

planning applications registered



**3.5 million**

visits to council-owned  
leisure facilities



**1.4 million**

visits to libraries



**560,000**

telephone calls answered



**14 million**

bins emptied per year



**40,000**

street lights maintained



**72%**

of our social care users are satisfied  
with the service we provide  
(North West average 68%)



**169,000**

digital forms completed



**87%**

of our secondary schools are  
rated as good or outstanding  
(North West average 67%)

The council is a unitary council – this means that we provide all the services that a county council and a district or borough council would provide. We provide more than 500 services in support of our communities, economy, health, education and environment.

The council's day-to-day budget for services is around £300 million per year, (excluding schools funding).

In addition, we are investing more than £600 million in major projects such as roads, town centre regeneration, infrastructure and schools.

The council is made up of 82 councillors representing 52 wards. In May 2021, the council moved to a committee system of decision making, with six service committees plus finance sub-committee.

The council employs around 3,500 staff in four directorates – corporate services, place, adults, health and integration, and children and families.

The council works closely with a wide range of other organisations in the public, private and voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise (VCFSE) sectors to deliver its priorities.

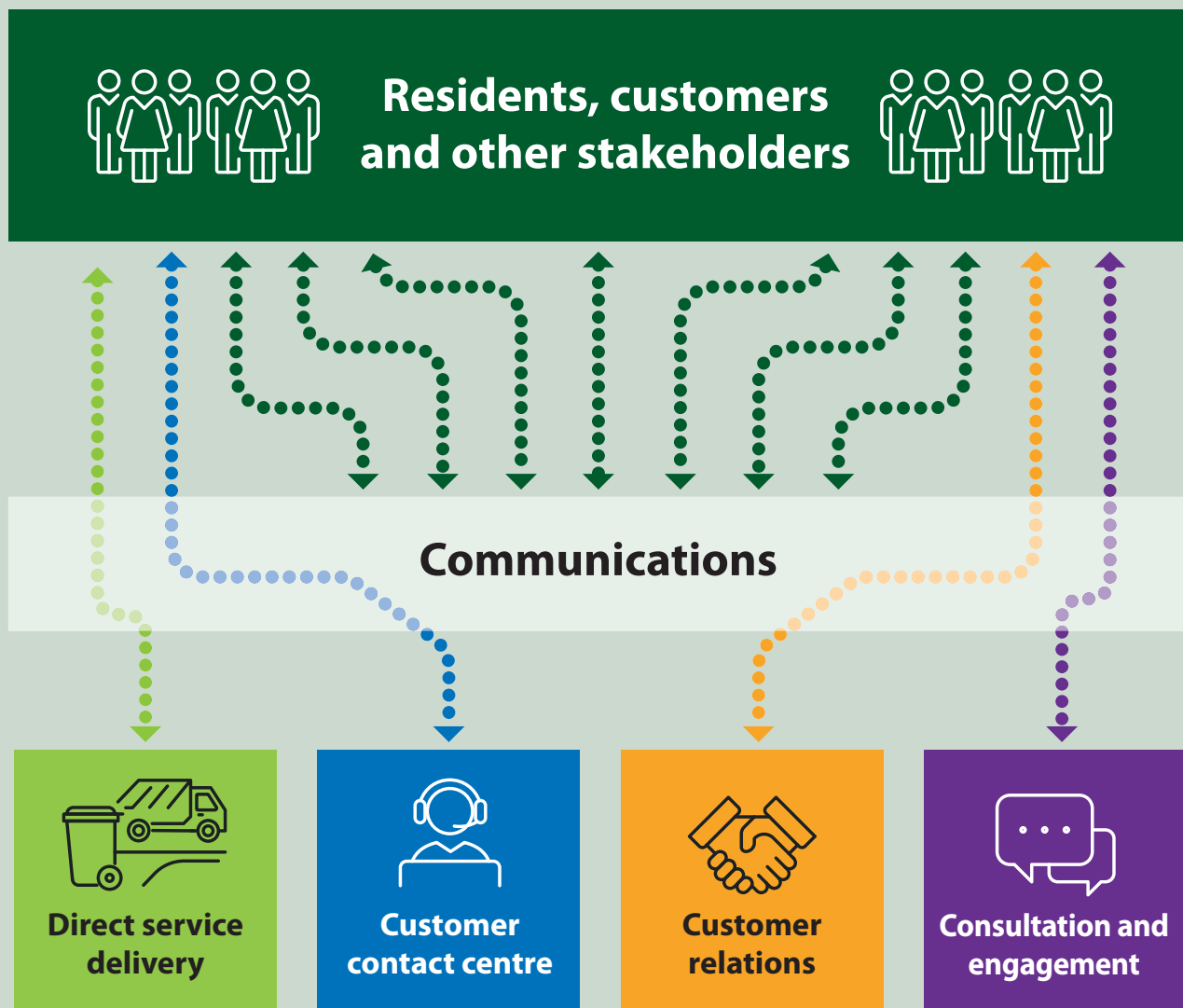
## 1.4 Scope of the strategy

This strategy sets out our vision, aims and priorities for the council's news and public relations, and the promotion of key council services, policies, programmes and initiatives to residents.

It works alongside other strategies and policies that cover the wider range of two-way interaction and communication between individual residents and the council, its officers and members. For example, the council's customer experience strategy sets out

how we treat customers when they are trying to access our services - to provide the best possible experience for our customers, whoever they are and however they contact us. And the council's coordinated and collaborative approach to consultation and engagement sets out how the council will involve people in influencing decisions about services and policies

This communications strategy for residents, and the activities it covers, while clearly defined, must work as a key part of this wider strategic approach for managing the council's relationships with residents, customers and other stakeholders.



## 1.5 Cheshire East Council's communications activities

In 2021/22 the council:



Published **287**  
media releases



Was included in more than **6,600**  
individual media articles and news stories



Responded to more than  
**700** media enquiries



Had **31,000** followers for the  
corporate Twitter account



Had **22,000** followers for the  
corporate Facebook account



More than **34,000** subscribers to  
e-newsletters about our services

Key subject matter in 2021/22 included:



COVID-19 pandemic  
response and recovery



Town centre regeneration,  
including Crewe and Macclesfield



Adoption of the committee system  
for council decision-making



Community Governance Review  
of Town and Parish Councils



Council tax and funding for  
council services



Council's carbon neutral plan



Highways maintenance  
and funding



Major infrastructure  
projects, including HS2 and  
Congleton Link Road



Support for refugees – including  
Homes for Ukraine and Afghan  
resettlement scheme



Adult social care funding  
and service pressures



Services for children and young people  
with special educational needs



Fostering, adoption and  
children's social care

## 2 Vision for Cheshire East Council's communication with residents



*"People in Cheshire East are well-informed about their council and council services."*

*"They are aware of council decisions and how to influence them."*

### 2.1 Strategic outcomes for communication with residents





### 3 Aims



#### **Aim 1 - Build engaged audiences from Cheshire East's diverse communities**

Cheshire East has a diverse population that lives in a diverse geography. Different individuals and groups have different needs, interests and opportunities to interact with the council.

We must take and make opportunities to listen to residents.

Some individuals and groups may experience more obstacles to accessing information and news about their council than others. These under-served communities may include:

- people who identify as minority groups in relation to protected characteristics as defined under the Equalities Act 2010,
- people who cannot or choose not to access digital channels of communication,
- people in particular socio-economic circumstances, and
- people who live in different geographical areas.

So, we must work to further understand our residents' varying communications needs and preferences and develop channels and styles of communication that encourage and enable interest and two-way engagement on an equitable basis.



#### **Aim 2 – Promote council priorities through a coordinated programme of activity**

The council delivers a wide range of services. We have an ambitious programme of activities to deliver our corporate plan. Effective and well-planned communication is essential to deliver these services, programmes and initiatives successfully.

Our residents need to be able to find out about council services and initiatives and understand the policies and vision behind them. We also want them to understand what they can do to help themselves, to reduce dependency on council services and retain independence. We will prioritise our efforts and investment in communications activity to ensure value for money.



### **Aim 3 – Be an effective voice which promotes Cheshire East’s priorities, challenges and achievements**

Cheshire East Council works alongside many partners, including NHS and other local service providers (such as police and fire and rescue), town and parish councils, VCFSE organisations, commissioned services / private businesses and government departments.

In this increasingly complex environment, it is important that the council is accountable and credited for its work and its impact on individuals, communities, economy and environment. Council taxpayers need to understand what the council does and what local taxation pays for. The council needs to have a clear and consistent brand that is used to identify its services, projects, initiatives etc.

In order to meet the council’s corporate plan priorities, it is also important to further develop the council’s profile nationally, to improve opportunities for funding, innovation and influence.

The council is also a key employer in Cheshire East and is operating in an increasingly competitive recruitment market.

Therefore, we must take steps to ensure that the council has a clear identity and a clear and consistent voice.



### **Aim 4 – Build resilience to respond to new circumstances and emergencies**

The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated the importance of effective council communications in the response to the national emergency, giving people the information and guidance required to help them protect themselves, the people around them and the local economy.

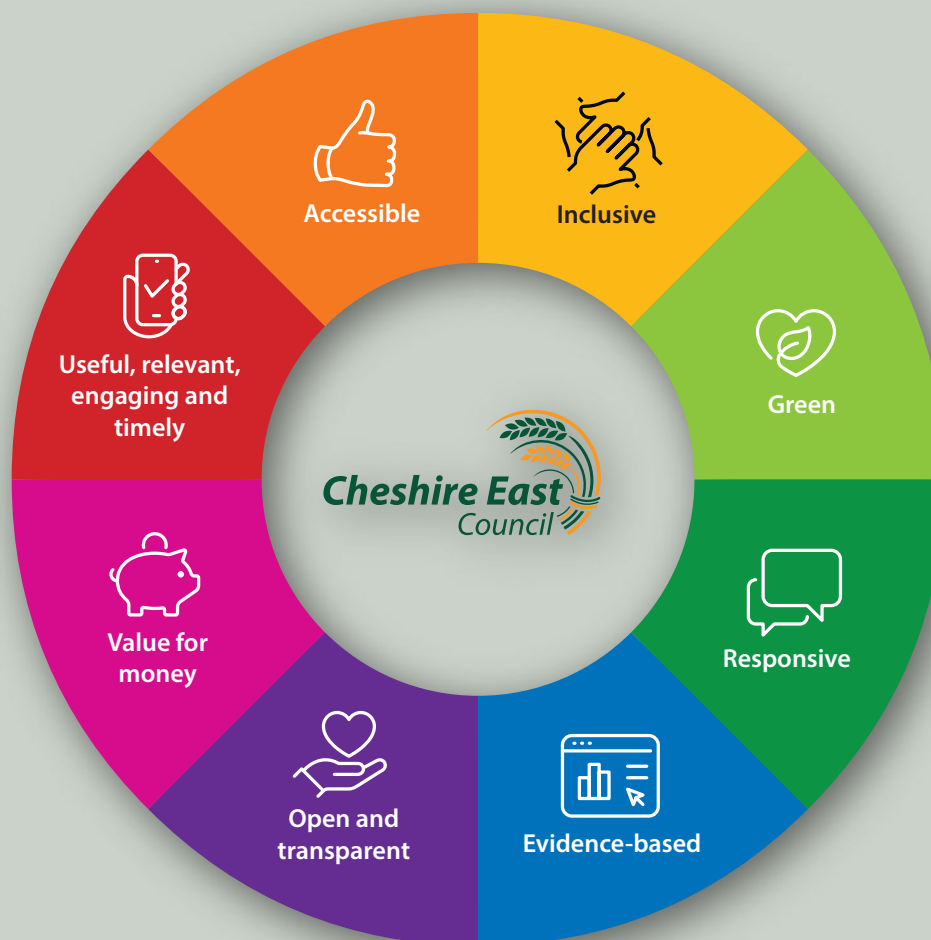
Effective communications are essential in response to major incidents and emergencies. The council has a duty under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 to “Put in place arrangements to make information available to the public about civil protection matters and maintain arrangements to warn, inform and advise the public in the event of an emergency.”

The council also has a key role in supporting the local response to national initiatives such as ‘Homes for Ukraine’.

We must also be prepared to respond to unplanned opportunities and threats, alongside delivery of a planned and prioritised communications programme for the council. This can include taking advantage of emerging national trends and initiatives, funding that might support council priorities, or tackling misinformation and dis-information about the council and its services.

This means using intelligence and insight, horizon-scanning, and developing effective protocols, resources and training to be as prepared as we can be.

## 4 Principles



- **Accessible**

People have different needs and preferences; we will make every effort to make all communications as accessible as possible to as many as possible.

- **Inclusive**

Communications will be representative and considerate of Cheshire East's diverse communities and population.

- **Useful, relevant, engaging and timely**

People are inundated with information, news and opinion from many different and competing sources. We will endeavour not to add to the unwanted 'noise' but will target and adapt messages and ensure that they are timely. We will aim to inspire positive action and support for council priorities.

- **Responsive**

Responsive to the changing needs of our residents and communities listening to them and supporting them to be strong, resilient and successful.

- **Evidence-based**

We will use insight and intelligence to ensure that our communications will be effective in meeting agreed objectives.

- **Open and transparent**

Our communications will be honest and factual, we will endeavour to make the council's role, and the impact of its decisions and actions, clear in any given circumstance.

- **Value for money**

We will not spend money on communications activity without being able to demonstrate the value delivered against any spend.

- **Green**

We will work to reduce the carbon footprint and environmental impact of our communications activity, for example, working to reduce use of plastic in mailings, and considering carbon cost of both digital and printed promotional materials.



## 5 Audiences and stakeholders

The population of Cheshire East is estimated to grow by **31,000/8%** with the largest increase in over 65 age group



Average age **43.6 years** (2011 Census) - by 2030, average age is expected to be 47 years



We have fewer **working age and under 16s** than North West or national average



**17.5%** of residents have a long-term health condition or disability



More than **500** cared for children and **360+** care leavers



**40,003** residents are 'unpaid carers'



**93.6%** class themselves as White British



**3%** of Cheshire East households have members for whom English is not the main language



**5.1%** were born outside the British Isles, with **2.7%** born outside the EU



## Residents' communications preferences

Recent feedback from residents about communications preferences (from a representative sample) includes:

- **88%** of residents use email on a daily basis
- **89%** of residents use the internet daily
- Daily internet use is lower for those aged 75 and over (**68%** use the internet daily)
- It is also lower for those matching the customer experience strategy persona characteristics of 'supported elderly' (**55%** use the internet daily).
- **68%** of people who identified themselves as disabled use the internet daily
- **Older people** are more likely to read a local newspaper.
- Facebook use is relatively high in age groups **16-74** (but particularly 54 years and younger).
- Some **22%** of over 75s use Facebook but use of other social media in this group is negligible.
- **Older people** were more likely to feel well informed about the council and its services than younger people.

## 6 Priorities - delivering our aims

### Aim 1 - Build engaged audiences from Cheshire East's diverse communities

#### Priority 1 - Improve communication with seldom-heard audiences



Cheshire East has a diverse population that lives in a diverse geography. Different individuals and groups have different needs, interests and opportunities to interact with the council.

Some individuals and groups may experience more obstacles to having their voice heard and find it harder to access information and news about their council than others. So, we must listen and work to further understand all our residents' communications needs and preferences and develop channels and styles of communication that encourage and enable interest and engagement on an equitable basis.



#### Priority 2 - Support the shift to digital channels

We will support the council's digital strategy programme and will develop effective digital communications channels to reach the large majority of residents who prefer digital channels.

However, we must also ensure that we provide alternatives for those who cannot or choose not to engage digitally. While non-digital channels, such as outdoor advertising, postal mailings and face-to-face communication can be appropriate in some cases, these non-digital options can bring additional costs. We will be particularly keen to explore other methods, including seeking the support of local stakeholders in communities, such as ward members and town and parish councils.

Digital communications work will include exploring the full potential of email, social media and other digital platforms, complementing the work of digital and customer experience strategies.

#### Priority 3 - Help people to understand how to influence and get involved with council decision-making

Communications activity can directly support the council's approach to consultation and engagement, and participation in local democracy.

This includes raising awareness of consultation and engagement opportunities and helping people to understand how feedback has influenced decision-making.

## Aim 2 – Promote council priorities through a coordinated programme of activity

### Priority 4 - Promote corporate plan projects, programmes and priorities

For the purposes of this strategy, the priorities listed in the corporate plan are distilled down into the following seven themes:



- Reducing health inequality and long-term reliance on care, and an increasingly pressured health care system
- Climate change, carbon neutral plan
- Good growth, good transport links, town centres, employment – celebrating and promoting Cheshire East as a place
- Protecting the most vulnerable people in our communities
- Digital vision
- Give all children the best start in life to achieve their full potential
- Getting involved with local decisions



### Priority 5 - Improve understanding of how council tax is spent, council funding and help people have their say in budget setting

The council collects around £250 million in council tax each year, with around £50 million of income from business rates. It spends this income on providing a wide range of local public services. Of this estimated £300 million spend, just over £50 million is spent on the most visible, universal 'place' services, such as roads maintenance and waste collection, that many residents may first think of when thinking about the council's work. It is important that we listen to people and help them understand how the council's budget is prioritised and spent, and how they can have their say in the council's spending plans, for example, through the annual budget consultation.



### Priority 6 - Improve understanding about key universal services

Improve understanding about key universal services and how to access them, and the standards of service people can expect, supporting the customer experience strategy. For many residents, these are the most visible and/or most frequently experienced council services. We must also listen to what residents say about these services and promote opportunities to engage about them.

Includes:

- Road maintenance
- Waste and recycling
- Planning and development control



### Aim 3 – Be an effective voice which promotes Cheshire East's priorities, challenges and achievements

#### Priority 7 - Positively manage our relationships with local, national and industry media



The media landscape has changed significantly over the last ten years – and continues to do so. However, while the readership of local print newspapers has dropped significantly, readership of journalists' work in other media (online, social, broadcast etc) is thriving. Securing positive coverage about the council's priorities in local, national and industry media is a valuable part of ensuring that people can access information and news about the council and its services.

#### Priority 8 - Work as an effective partner

Cheshire East Council works alongside many partners, including NHS and other local service providers (such as police and fire and rescue), town and parish councils, VCFSE organisations, commissioned services / private businesses and government departments.

We must work effectively with key partners in health, VCFSE, communities, local public services and government departments to coordinate and maximise the impact of our communications on shared priorities and audiences.



#### Priority 9 - Develop the Cheshire East Council brand

It is important that the council is accountable and credited for its work and its impact on individuals, communities, economy and environment. Council taxpayers need to understand what the council does and what local taxation pays for.

The code of recommended practice for local authority publicity establishes the principle that publicly funded council communications material must be clearly identifiable as such.

Therefore, we must take steps to ensure that the council has a clear identity and a clear and consistent voice.

#### Priority 10 - An employer of choice - supporting the council's workforce strategy

The council's corporate plan includes the priority for the council to be an employer of choice.

The council's workforce strategy includes key priorities and challenges that communications activity for residents can support, including:

- Attracting and retaining talent and skills
- Competitive marketplace for people in skill shortage areas
- Challenging financial context

Like many councils and other employers, the council is facing challenges in recruiting to certain key roles and services. It also has a relatively older workforce and needs to ensure appropriate plans are in place to recruit and develop staff to ensure sustainable services and workforce.

In order to deliver against these priorities and meet these challenges, both internal and external communications will be required.

## Aim 4 – Build resilience to respond to new circumstances and emergencies

### Priority 11 - Maintain emergency preparedness and crisis communications protocols



Effective communications are essential in response to major incidents and emergencies.

The council has a duty under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 to “Put in place arrangements to make information available to the public about civil protection matters and maintain arrangements to warn, inform and advise the public in the event of an emergency.”



We must also be prepared to respond to unplanned opportunities and threats, alongside delivery of a planned and prioritised communications programme for the council.

The experiences of delivering communications throughout the COVID-19 pandemic have provided valuable opportunities for learning.



### Priority 12 - Horizon scanning

Effective horizon scanning activity will enable more effective communications planning and will help us respond more effectively to emerging trends, opportunities and risks.

There are many external factors that impact on the delivery of council services, priorities and communications activity, including:

- International affairs
- National government decisions and policy
- Partner and other local stakeholder activity
- Local political developments



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**[www.cheshireeast.gov.uk](http://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk)**

**Follow us**

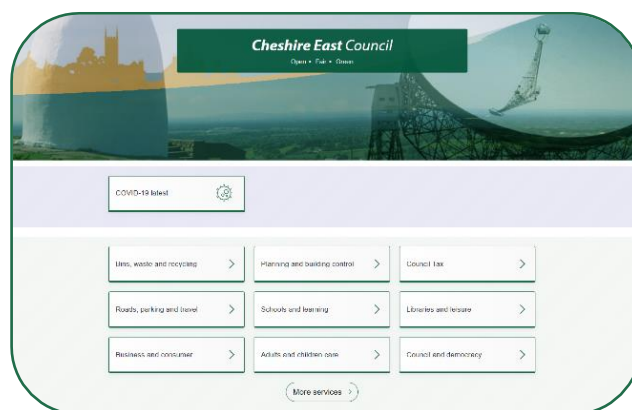
 **@CheshireEast**

 **/CheshireEastCouncil**

 **Cheshire East Council**

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## A summary of responses to Cheshire East Council's Communications Strategy for Residents Consultation 2022



## Executive summary

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### Introduction

Cheshire East Council consulted on a draft Communications Strategy for Residents in October 2022. The draft strategy set out how the council will communicate with residents in future.

Prior to this consultation the strategy had been drafted informed by feedback from Cheshire East residents in a survey conducted in May 2022, which was completed by 1,068 Cheshire East residents.

The consultation was widely promoted and received 151 responses in total, including 149 survey completions, and 2 email responses from Town and Parish Councils.

### The strategy vision

Opinion was fairly split on whether they felt the vision was a suitable one for the strategy, with 47% agreeing it was, and 33% disagreeing. The remainder neither agreed nor disagreed.

Some respondents felt that strategy visions generally speaking are “ornamental”, and that what actually happens is more important.

Others felt the council must improve its communications and transparency, especially around decision-making generally, that it feels remote, and that a shorter or more simplified vision may be desirable.

### The strategy aims

Support for the strategy aims was higher – 64% agreed the strategy aims were suitable with 19% disagreeing.

Some felt there is too much emphasis on council aims, and not enough emphasis on resident aims, and that the strategy is not felt to be 2-way, that it focuses too much on the provision of information. Others felt the aims could be simplified or written in plainer English.

### The strategy priorities

Support for the strategy priorities was also higher – 58% agreed the strategy priorities were suitable with 23% disagreeing.

Suggested improvements to the strategy priorities included that:

- 12 priorities may be too many – they could be simplified or reduced



- Some priorities seem contradictory
- Too much emphasis is put on digital communication, and that more effort is needed to ensure all have access to a good level of information
- The council should listen more to residents and engage in more 2 way dialogue

## **Final comments on the strategy**

Final comments on the strategy included that:

- The council listening is key, 2 way communication is important
- Residents want to be more involved in decision-making
- The council should share more information about their local area
- There is a need for alternative forms of communications, including postal, face to face and telephone
- The strategy has to actually be deliverable and not just a wish list
- The strategy should be simplified much more, written in plain English, and possibly reduced to a 1 page summary

## **Conclusions**

### **Consultation response**

The consultation received 151 responses in total, which is a fairly typical number of responses for a consultation on a strategy of this type.

However, more in-depth face to face engagement on the strategy, or on the key aspects of it, may be required in future to ensure the strategy is consulted on more widely, and remains relevant and effective.

Consultation responses are also weighted heavily towards Digital Influence Panel members, who are naturally more inclined to want to get involved in local decision-making than other stakeholders.

### **General support for the strategy**

It is positive to see general support for the strategy from those that fed back, with 64% of respondents agreeing the strategy aims are suitable, and 58% agreeing the strategy priorities are suitable.

### **Areas for improvement**

Respondents suggested the strategy could be improved by:

- Delivering on the vision, and making the vision shorter
- Having more emphasis on non-digital communication, such as postal, face-to-face and telephone communication

- Having more emphasis in the strategy on the council listening and on 2 way communication
- Making the strategy shorter and simpler, using plain English
- Having fewer priorities (12 may be too many)
- Involving residents more in decision-making processes

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Report produced 24 October 2022 by the Research and Consultation Team, Cheshire East Council. Email [RandC@cheshireeast.gov.uk](mailto:RandC@cheshireeast.gov.uk) for further information.

## Introduction

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### Consultation purpose

Cheshire East Council consulted on a draft of a Communications Strategy for Residents, which set out how the council will communicate with residents in future.

The strategy had been drafted informed by feedback from Cheshire East residents, which had been gathered through an extensive Communications Survey conducted between April and May 2022, and which was completed by 1,068 Cheshire East residents.

Feedback from the final consultation on the strategy would be used to finalise it, before it is considered for approval by the council's Corporate Policy Committee.

### Consultation methodology

The consultation was conducted between 19 September and 23 October 2022.

The consultation was widely promoted in the following ways:

- [On the Cheshire East Council consultations webpage](#)
- [Through public media releases](#)
- Via Social Media, including on Twitter and Facebook
- Through an email to 998 members of the council's Digital Influence Panel, sent on 27 September 2022
- Through an email to all Town and Parish Councils, and to Cheshire Association of Local Councils sent on 6 October 2022
- To Cheshire East Councillors through a Members Bulletin
- To Cheshire East Council employees, through internal employee newsletters
- To Cheshire East Council Managers through Manager Share and Support sessions

### Consultation response

In total 151 consultation responses were received.

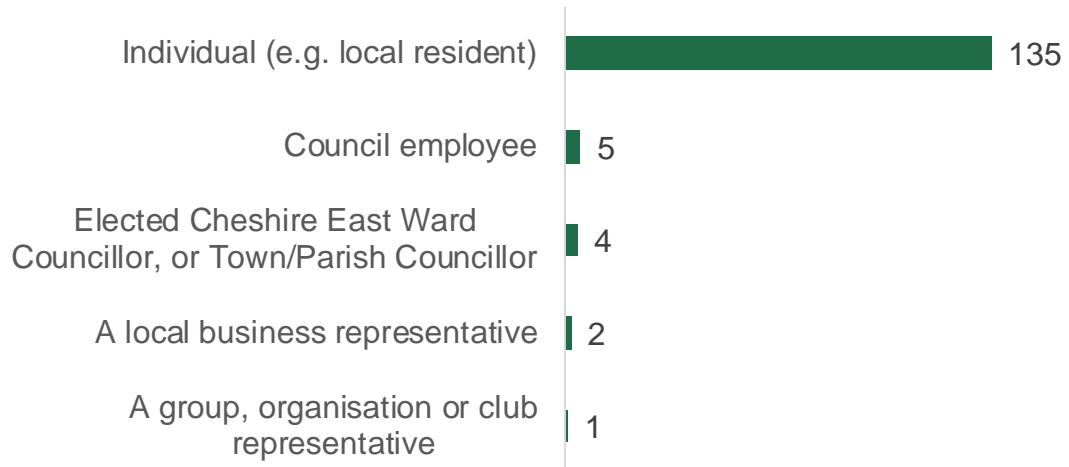
This included 149 respondents who completed the consultation survey, including:

- 115 via the Digital Influence Panel, at a response rate of 12%
- 25 via the consultation webpages
- 2 from Town and Parish Councils
- 7 from all other sources

In addition, 2 email responses were received – see Appendix 1 to read these.

The vast majority of respondents were individuals (e.g. local residents), with 5 council employees responding, and 4 local Councillors.

Number of survey responses, by respondent type:



## The Communication Strategy for Residents vision

### Support for the vision

The Communications Strategy for Residents vision is that:

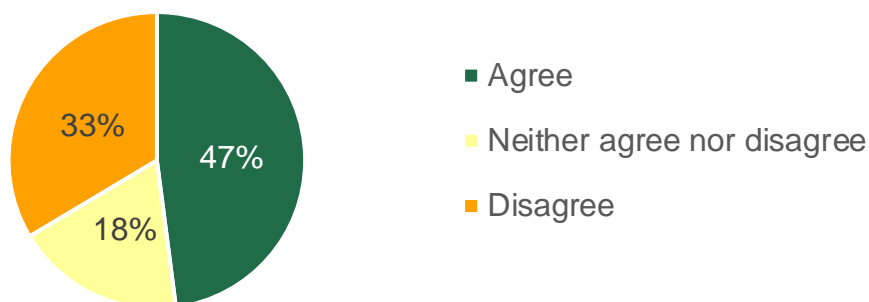
"People in Cheshire East are well-informed about their council and council services, and they know how to get involved.

They are aware of council decisions, how those decisions are made and how to influence them.

The council is seen as an open and transparent organisation that is working for the benefit of people in Cheshire East".

47% of respondents agreed that this is a suitable vision for the strategy, 33% disagreed.

How strongly do you agree or disagree this is a suitable vision for the strategy?



Number of responses = 146

### Comments about the vision

A total of 61 comments were left by respondents to the question "Do you have any comments to make about the vision", which were coded into four themes with a total number of 65 references. A comment could generate multiple references, so the total number of references can exceed the total number of comments.

A summary of all the comments and references made is provided below:

#### Transparency comment (23 references)

Respondents challenged the openness and transparency at Cheshire East feeling that their voices were not being heard or they were being involved after decisions had been made (18 references). Respondents also reported the council seeming 'remote' and that it was keeping residents in the dark about decision-making (5 references).

*“Cheshire East certainly does not act in an 'open and transparent' way – in fact communications have been designed to obfuscate”*

### **Improve communication comment (22 references)**

Respondents felt that communication with residents should be improved generally (12 references) and should be more regular (1 reference). Respondents felt that more should be done to inform them and that more advertising of upcoming decisions should be done with improvements to access to information (8 references). Concerns around an overreliance on digital methods was expressed (1 reference).

### **Vision comment (12 references)**

Respondents felt that the proof of the vision would be in the actions the council took in response to it, that it would mean very little until changes were made, and how would the impact be measured moving forward (10 references). Respondents also felt that it was too detailed and should be simplified for ease of reading (2 references).

*“Visions are there as part of the UK's essentially top-down and centralised governance system. For most people, the visions in local authority strategies are essentially ornamental: few members of the general public can easily identify with / own them, irrespective of the good intentions of local authority officers”*

### **General comment (8 references)**

Respondents left general positive comments such as support for the strategy (4 references). Respondents also left general negative comments such as the state of the roads and other items they felt should be a priority for the council over strategy development (4 references).

## The Communication Strategy for Residents aims

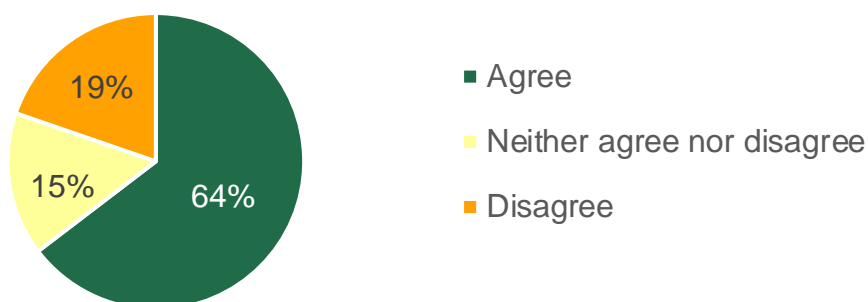
### Support for the aims

The Communications Strategy for Residents has the following 4 aims:

- Aim 1 – Promote council priorities through a coordinated programme of activity
- Aim 2 – Build engaged audiences from Cheshire East's diverse communities
- Aim 3 – Be an effective voice which promotes Cheshire East's priorities, challenges and achievements
- Aim 4 – Build resilience to respond to new circumstances and emergencies

64% of respondents agreed these are suitable aims for the strategy, 19% disagreed.

How strongly do you agree or disagree these are suitable aims for the strategy?



Number of responses = 147

### Comments about the aims

A total of 37 comments were left by respondents to the question "Do you have any comments to make about the aims?", which were coded into three themes with a total number of 44 references. A comment could generate multiple references, so the total number of references can exceed the total number of comments.

A summary of all the comments and references made is provided below:

#### Listening to residents (24 references)

Respondents generally felt the aims would not help them in terms of encouraging the council to listen and respond to them, feeling the council did not see communication as a two-way process and was only looking to inform them (16 references).

Respondents called on the council to consider them rather than focusing on council aims and priorities which they felt the aims currently did (8 references).



*“The overall balance of the strategy tends to come across as focussing on the delivery or provision of information. It could perhaps include more on the importance of communication as part of the consultation and engagement functions associated with service development and provision”*

*“As written the aims focus on ‘persuading’ the population to understand, and presumably accept what is decided. Communication is two way street not sure the wording sufficiently reflects community influence”*

### **Aims comments (16 references)**

Respondents raised concerns about the cost and effectiveness of some of the stated aims (2 references). Respondents also felt the aims were too generic and could apply to any council (2 references) and that the proof of their effectiveness would be in the actions taken by Cheshire East (4 references). Respondents also encouraged the council to rewrite these in plain English and to ‘keep it simple’ (4 references).

Respondents felt that the aim could consider the importance of communities more (3 references) especially in regard to making sure all were involved as well as having a more environmental focus (1 reference).

*The first priority is to meet the council's own needs. Shouldn't it be to meet the needs of its community?*

### **General comments (4 references)**

Respondents raised general negative comments such as sounding ‘wishy washy’ (2 references) and general positive comments such as the aims being ‘well intentioned’ (2 references).

## The Communication Strategy for Residents priorities

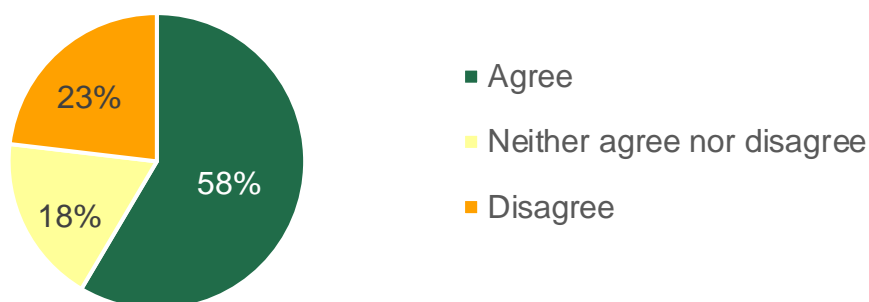
### Support for the priorities

The Communications Strategy for Residents priorities are:

- Priority 1 – Promote corporate plan projects, programmes and priorities
- Priority 2 – Improve understanding of how council tax is spent, council funding and help people have their say in budget setting
- Priority 3 – Improve understanding about key universal services
- Priority 4 – Support the shift to digital channels
- Priority 5 – Improve communication with under-served audiences
- Priority 6 – Help people to understand how to influence and get involved with council decision-making
- Priority 7 – Positively manage our relationships with local, national and industry media
- Priority 8 – Work as an effective partner
- Priority 9 – Develop the Cheshire East Council brand
- Priority 10 – An employer of choice - supporting the council's workforce strategy
- Priority 11 – Maintain emergency preparedness and crisis communications protocols
- Priority 12 – Horizon scanning for more detail about these priorities.

58% of respondents agreed these are suitable priorities for the strategy, 23% disagreed.

How strongly do you agree or disagree these priorities will deliver the strategy vision and aims?



Number of responses = 147

### Other priorities to focus on

A total of 50 comments were left by respondents to the question “Is there anything else you would like us to focus on?”, which were coded into four themes with a total number of 53 references. A comment could generate multiple references, so the total number of references can exceed the total number of comments.

A summary of all the comments and references made is provided below:

### **Priority focus (23 references)**

Respondents felt that 12 priorities for the council may be too many and that these should be simplified or reduced (11 references). Respondents made a number of comments about how some of the priorities seemed contradictory or that one should be more important than others (6 references).

Respondents felt priorities should have measurable outcomes (2 references) and that they should be service focused (4 references).

*"I feel Priority 1 should be placed around fifth - it detracts from the initial point; engaging with communities. Ensure you can reach your audience before telling them what you intend to do. I also feel that Priority 7 should be after Priorities 8, 9 and 10. Presenting a happy workforce reinforces a brand, presenting a more favourable media presence on any scale"*

*"12 priorities is a lot and arguably too many to clearly focus on. From a resident perspective starting with the dissemination of corporate information, whilst doubtless important, could be seen as looking down the wrong end of the telescope. Perhaps something more focussed on explaining how residents' diverse needs are being met might be a more popular starting point"*

### **Communication methods (15 references)**

Respondents raised concerns about the move to more digital communication methods and felt this may lead to more being excluded (9 references) and expressed preferences for postal and face to face communication (2 references). Respondents felt the council should do more to make sure all have access to a good level of information (4 references).

### **Resident voice (10 references)**

Respondents once again reiterated that they felt the council should listen more to resident concerns and that more two-way dialogue should take place (10 references). Respondents felt more consideration should be given to residents when decision-making and that when they contact the council more should be done ensure responses are given.

### **General comments (5 references)**

Respondents left both positive (1 reference) and negative (4 references) comments under this theme. Negative comments included issues with services or perceptions that this was a waste of money.

## Final comments on the strategy

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A total of 69 comments were left by respondents to the question “Do you have any other comments or suggestions you would like to make about the Communications Strategy for Residents?”, which were coded into four themes with a total number of 81 references. A comment could generate multiple references, so the total number of references can exceed the total number of comments.

A summary of all the comments and references made is provided below:

### Listening and transparency (26 references)

Respondents were clear in their request to feel listened to by Cheshire East, again iterating they felt this should be a key part of the strategy (15 references) and being more involved in an open decision-making process (4 references). Respondents felt the council should have a greater commitment to responding to residents and that the council should engage in more two-way dialogue (7 references).

*“There appears to be too little emphasis on the Council’s responsibility if not duty to respond to queries and complaints and requests made by the residents”*

### Communication methods (22 references)

Respondents generally felt that Cheshire East should do more to communicate and share information, particularly in regard to their local area (9 references). Respondents questioned the methods of making communication expressing a preference for postal, face to face and phone access (10 references).

Respondents raised a number of alternative communication channels they felt should be used more such as radio, establishing a podcast, or expanding the social media offering (3 references)

### Strategy comments (20 references)

Respondents had two key suggestions for the strategy under this theme. The first was to make sure that the strategy was actually deliverable and not just a wish list (10 references). The second was to simplify the strategy and question whether it needed a number of the aims, that is should be in plain English and a one-page summary format if possible (9 references). One group also commented on the need to focus on environmental issues and how this strategy could address the decarbonisation of Cheshire East and the information residents would need to do so (1 reference).

*“This feels like a communications strategy for the council not for residents”*

## **General comments (13 references)**

Respondents left general positive comments about the strategy (7 references) as well as general negative comments including topics such as the strategy, roads, local issues, or waste collection (6 references).

*“I particularly liked how the information was displayed in a visual format. It was interesting and the data was easy to access quickly and clearly. The aims stated are laudable and desirable. I did wonder if the strategy should have discussed how these aims are to be met in a little more detail”*

## Conclusions

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### Consultation response

The consultation received 151 responses in total, which is a fairly typical number of responses for a consultation on a strategy of this type.

However, more in-depth face to face engagement on the strategy, or on the key aspects of it, may be required in future to ensure the strategy is consulted on more widely, and remains relevant and effective.

Consultation responses are also weighted heavily towards Digital Influence Panel members, who are naturally more inclined to want to get involved in local decision-making than other stakeholders.

### General support for the strategy

It is positive to see general support for the strategy from those that fed back, with 64% of respondents agreeing the strategy aims are suitable, and 58% agreeing the strategy priorities are suitable.

### Areas for improvement

Respondents suggested the strategy could be improved by:

- Delivering on the vision, and making the vision shorter
- Having more emphasis on non-digital communication, such as postal, face-to-face and telephone communication
- Having more emphasis in the strategy on the council listening and on 2 way communication
- Making the strategy shorter and simpler, using plain English
- Having fewer priorities (12 may be too many)
- Involving residents more in decision-making processes

## Appendix 1 – Email consultation responses

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The following appendix includes all consultation email responses received that the council has permission to publish. Emails are listed in chronological order of when they were received.

### Email 1 – Crewe Town Council, Regeneration Team

Email received 10 October 2022:

“I agree with the majority of comments but would question the Council ‘Brand’ and promotion of Cheshire East.

Cheshire East does not have an identified place brand, however some of the places within Cheshire East have established or developing brands.

If the proposal is to promote the entire area then some consultation on what its brand values and identity are should be undertaken.

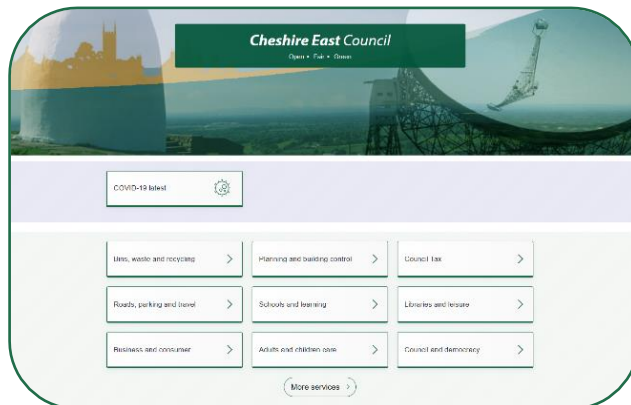
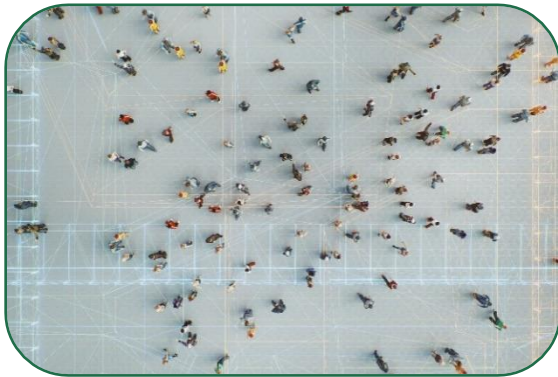
Where appropriate, the individual place brands should continue to be used.”

### Email 2 – Holmes Chapel Parish Council

Email received 18 October 2022:

“Please see below a response from Holmes Chapel Parish Council to the Communications Strategy for Residents:

This strategy appears to be somewhat one-way, focusing primarily on how Cheshire East are communicating, which is in essence just PR. It does not cover how to obtain feedback from residents and, in particular, from Town and Parish Councils. A greater emphasis on 2-way communication is needed. Cheshire East is not effectively communicating with Town and Parish Councils, in particular when receiving ideas and areas for improvements from Town and Parish Councils who have greater depth of knowledge and understanding of the issues facing their local areas. Town and Parish Councils can also be an effective conduit for information from Cheshire East for residents who would not look at Cheshire East’s website or literature. This strategy needs to address how to engage more with residents and other bodies, in particular Town and Parish Councils. Town and Parish Conferences that used to take place twice a year were also a useful forum for communication.”





## **CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL – EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM**

Guidance here: [Equality Impact Assessment Toolkit \(cccusers.com\)](http://cccusers.com/Equality%20Impact%20Assessment%20Toolkit)

# EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

**TITLE: CEC resident communications strategy 2022 - 2025**

### VERSION CONTROL

Date	Version	Author	Description of Changes
24-10-22	2.0	Michael Moore	Updated following public consultation on strategy

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## **CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL –EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

**Stage 1 Description:** Fact finding (about your policy / service /

<b>Department</b>	Corporate Services		<b>Lead officer responsible for assessment</b>		Michael Moore	
<b>Service</b>	Communications and media		<b>Other members of team undertaking assessment</b>		N/A	
<b>Date</b>	24-10-22		<b>Version 2.0</b>			
<b>Type of document (mark as appropriate)</b>	<b>Strategy</b> ✓	<b>Project</b>	<b>Function</b>	<b>Policy</b>	<b>Procedure</b>	<b>Service</b>
<b>Is this a new/ existing/ revision of an existing document (please mark as appropriate)</b>	<b>New</b> ✓		<b>Existing</b>		<b>Revision</b>	
<b>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)</b>  <b>Please attach a copy of the strategy/ plan/</b>	<p align="center"><b>CEC communications strategy for residents 2022 - 2025</b></p> <p>In January 2022 Corporate Policy Committee approved the development of a communications strategy for residents to address related corporate plan priority and actions. In July 2022, Corporate Policy Committee approved a draft strategy to go to public consultation.</p> <p>The strategy sets out the vision, aims and priorities for the council's news and public relations, and the promotion of key council services, policies, programmes and initiatives to residents.</p> <p>The principles of the draft strategy include that all council communications should be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accessible</li> <li>• Inclusive</li> <li>• Useful, relevant and engaging</li> <li>• Evidence-based</li> </ul>					

<b>function/ policy/ procedure/ service</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open and transparent</li> <li>• Value for money</li> <li>• Green</li> </ul> <p>This strategy covers the council's vision, aims and priorities for the council's news and public relations, and the promotion of key council services, policies, programmes and initiatives to residents.</p> <p>It includes the vision:          "People in Cheshire East are well-informed about their council and council services.          "They are aware of council decisions and how to influence them."</p> <p>And the aims:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Build engaged audiences from Cheshire East's diverse communities</li> <li>2. Promote council priorities through a coordinated programme of activity</li> <li>3. Be an effective voice which promotes Cheshire East's priorities, challenges and achievements</li> <li>4. Build resilience to respond to new circumstances and emergencies</li> </ol> <p>It works alongside other strategies and policies that cover the wider range of interactions between individual residents and the council, its officers and members. For example, the council's customer experience strategy sets out how we treat customers when they are trying to access our services - to provide the best possible experience for our customers, whoever they are and however they contact us.</p>
<b>Who are the main stakeholders, and have they been engaged with? (e.g. general public, employees, Councillors, partners, specific audiences, residents)</b>	<p><b>General public</b> – A representative sample of residents was surveyed about their communications needs and preferences. Responses to the survey have been analysed and inform the strategy. Residents have also been consulted on the draft strategy.</p> <p><b>Councillors</b> – The public consultation has been promoted to councillors. Councillors will have three opportunities in total to review and respond to the drafting of the strategy through the various stages of corporate policy committee decision making. It is anticipated that progress against the strategy will also be reported to the committee.</p> <p><b>Senior Officers</b> – Corporate Leadership Team will have opportunities to shape the strategy through their meeting cycle. A wider cadre of senior managers are also consulted on the communications work programme throughout the year and agree, with the communications team, individual communications strategies and plans.</p> <p><b>Staff</b> – Staff have been invited to respond to the consultation.</p> <p><b>Partners</b> – Partners, including town and parish councils have been invited to respond to the consultation.</p>

<b>Consultation/ involvement carried out.</b>	YES ✓	NO
<b>What consultation method(s) did you use?</b>	<p>The draft Communications Strategy for Residents was subject to formal consultation between 21 September and 23 October 2022. The consultation was promoted on the council's website and through local media and social media. A survey questionnaire was available online and as a paper copy for postal responses. It was issued to the Digital Influence Panel and promoted in our local libraries. It was also promoted to Cheshire East Council staff, including managers, Cheshire East members and was sent to Town and Parish Councils.</p> <p>Prior to drafting the communications strategy for residents, a postal survey of a representative sample of Cheshire East residents was undertaken.</p>	

#### Stage 2 Initial Screening

<b>Who is affected and what evidence have you considered to arrive at this analysis? (This may or may not include the stakeholders listed above)</b>	<p>The communications strategy relates specifically to our work to communicate effectively with residents. Census and local population data provide a wealth of information regarding the varying demographic, socio-economic and geographic diversity of that population.</p> <p>We also have the findings of the survey and consultation itself.</p>
<b>Who is intended to benefit and how</b>	<p>One of the aims of the draft strategy is to establish "Engaged audiences from Cheshire East's diverse communities" and principles include that our communications with residents should be accessible and inclusive. The communications survey and consultation about the strategy itself helps us understand who may be under-served or seldom-heard by our current practice and identify ways we can improve equity and inclusiveness of our communications activity.</p> <p>This may mean specific work to reach and engage groups who identify with particular protected characteristics, live in particular areas, are in particular socio-economic groups and/or have limited access to or opportunity to use particular channels.</p>
<b>Could there be a different impact or outcome for some groups?</b>	<p>Yes. A key outcome for this work is intended to expose inequalities in access to our communications. This means that some individuals and groups should benefit from improved access to communications from Cheshire East Council. This may include people who, for example, identify with particular protected characteristics, live in certain parts of the borough, or have limited access to digital communications.</p>

<b>Does it include making decisions based on individual characteristics, needs or circumstances?</b>			Potentially yes, should the survey, consultation and ongoing strategic communications work suggest that certain groups are under-served by the way we communicate we may need to make decisions to make more effort to target specific groups and/or provide communications in different formats.					
<b>Are relations between different groups or communities likely to be affected? (eg will it favour one particular group or deny opportunities for others?)</b>			There is a risk that, if we make adjustments to accommodate the needs or preferences of certain groups, people from outside those groups may see this as making an unnecessary concession / discrimination – particularly if this is seen to incur additional expenditure or provide unfair advantage.					
<b>Is there any specific targeted action to promote equality? Is there a history of unequal outcomes (do you have enough evidence to prove otherwise)?</b>			Anecdotally, we hear that some groups find it harder to access communications from the council. We are also aware, through member engagement, surveying and consultation that some people are unable or choose not to use digital channels of communication. This may more frequently be older people, people with some types of disability, people living in more rural areas or in conditions of more deprivation.					
<b>Is there an actual or potential negative impact on these specific characteristics? (Please tick)</b>								
Age	<b>Y</b>	<b>N</b>	Marriage & civil partnership	<b>Y</b>	<b>N</b>	Religion & belief	<b>Y</b>	<b>N</b>
Disability	<b>Y</b>	<b>N</b>	Pregnancy & maternity	<b>Y</b>	<b>N</b>	Sex	<b>Y</b>	<b>N</b>
Gender reassignment	<b>Y</b>	<b>N</b>	Race	<b>Y</b>	<b>N</b>	Sexual orientation	<b>Y</b>	<b>N</b>

**Stage 3 Evidence**

<b>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</b>	<b>Level of Risk (High, Medium or Low)</b>
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<b>Age</b>	While the reality is more complex and nuanced in many cases, it is still a reasonable assumption, borne out by some evidence (ref survey and consultation), that older people may not have access to, or choose to use, digital channels for communication. While many older people routinely use digital channels, there is evidence to suggest that older people are less likely to use them than other age groups.	<b>High</b>
<b>Marriage and Civil Partnership</b>	No evidence that marriage or civil partnership is a significant factor in people accessing, understanding and engaging with Cheshire East Council's communications. However, the full spectrum of marriage and civil partnership must be represented in our communications to ensure inclusivity.	<b>Low</b>
<b>Religion</b>	<p>People who practice religions other than Christianity, or practice no religion, may feel excluded when, on rare occasions, the council participates in civic or traditional events that link to Christian worship – for example, where the Mayor chooses to have a civic service, appoint a Mayor's chaplain and/or have prayers at council meetings – at this time, these are likely to be based in the Christian religion.</p> <p>We must also consider that different days, dates and times can have significance for different religions – so, the timing of events, for example, could inadvertently exclude certain groups by coinciding with religious observance.</p>	<b>Medium</b>
<b>Disability</b>	A number of disabilities may impact on the ability of people to access, understand or engage with the council's communications. This includes, visual impairment, hearing impairment and neuro disabilities, and also mobility issues, where, for example, access to an in-person event or physical communications asset is limited due to physical location and accessibility. Also, representation in our communications must be balanced and not stereotypical to ensure inclusivity. We must use the correct terms when talking about disability.	<b>High</b>
<b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b>	No evidence that pregnancy and maternity is a significant factor in people accessing, understanding and engaging with Cheshire East Council's communications. However, pregnancy and maternity must be represented in our communications to ensure inclusivity.	<b>Low</b>
<b>Sex</b>	No evidence that sex is a significant factor in people accessing, understanding and engaging with Cheshire East Council's communications. However, representation in our communications must be balanced and not stereotypical to ensure inclusivity.	<b>Medium</b>
<b>Gender Reassignment</b>	No evidence that gender reassignment is a significant factor in people accessing, understanding and engaging with Cheshire East Council's communications. However, representation in our communications must be balanced and not stereotypical to ensure inclusivity. We must use the correct terms when talking about gender reassignment.	<b>Low</b>
<b>Race</b>	There are a number of factors and considerations relating to race, nationality and ethnicity and effective and equitable communications.	<b>High</b>

	<p>Language can be a significant consideration for some of our residents – 108 languages are spoken across Cheshire East and 3% of Cheshire East households have members for whom English is not the main language and, in half of these households, no members have English as their main language.</p> <p>However, other less obvious considerations can also inadvertently exclude people of different ethnicity or nationality – for example, where (both geographically and digitally) communications are made available.</p> <p>Representation in our communications must be balanced and not stereotypical to ensure inclusivity. We must use the correct terms when talking about race, heritage and ethnicity.</p>	
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>	No evidence that sexual orientation is a significant factor in people accessing, understanding and engaging with Cheshire East Council's communications. However, representation in our communications must be balanced and not stereotypical to ensure inclusivity. We must use the correct terms when talking about sexual orientation.	<b>Medium</b>

#### Stage 4 Mitigation

<b>Protected characteristics</b>	<b>Mitigating action</b> <i>Once you have assessed the impact of a policy/service, it is important to identify options and alternatives to reduce or eliminate any negative impact. Options considered could be adapting the policy or service, changing the way in which it is implemented or introducing balancing measures to reduce any negative impact. When considering each option you should think about how it will reduce any negative impact, how it might impact on other groups and how it might impact on relationships between groups and overall issues around community cohesion. You should clearly demonstrate how you have considered various options and the impact of these. You must have a detailed rationale behind decisions and a justification for those alternatives that have not been accepted.</i>	<b>How will this be monitored?</b>	<b>Officer responsible</b>	<b>Target date</b>
<b>Age</b>	<b>Accessibility:</b> Use alternatives to digital channels where possible to enable access for those who cannot or choose not to use the, - e.g. local media. Cascade via ward member, town and parish council etc.	Through communications planning and	Head of communications	Ongoing

	<p><b>Inclusivity:</b> Representation in our communications must be balanced and not stereotypical to ensure inclusivity. We must use the correct terms when talking about age.</p>	evaluation process, and strategy review		
<b>Marriage and Civil Partnership</b>	<p><b>Accessibility:</b> No impact in relation to accessibility based on marriage or civil partnership status has been identified.</p> <p><b>Inclusivity:</b> Representation in our communications must be balanced and not stereotypical to ensure inclusivity. We must use the correct terms when talking about marriage and civil partnership.</p>	Through communications planning and evaluation process, and strategy review	Head of communications	Ongoing
<b>Religion</b>	<p><b>Accessibility:</b> We must consider that different days, dates and times can have significance for different religions – so, the timing of events, for example, could inadvertently exclude certain groups by coinciding with religious observance.</p> <p><b>Inclusivity:</b> Representation in our communications must be balanced and not stereotypical to ensure inclusivity. We must use the correct terms when talking about religion and belief.</p>	Through communications planning and evaluation process, and strategy review	Head of communications	Ongoing
<b>Disability</b>	<p><b>Accessibility:</b> All digital communications must be accessible to assistive digital technologies. Plain English is preferred, with, in some cases, easy-read options being appropriate. We know that some disabilities correlate with limitations on access to digital channels, so non-digital, audio, verbal and/or visual alternatives may be required.</p> <p><b>Inclusivity:</b> Representation in our communications must be balanced and not stereotypical to ensure</p>	Through communications planning and evaluation process, and strategy review	Head of communications	Ongoing



	inclusivity. We must use the correct terms when talking about disabilities.			
<b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b>	<p><b>Accessibility:</b> No impact in relation to accessibility of communications, based on pregnancy or maternity status has been identified.</p> <p><b>Inclusivity:</b> Representation in our communications must be balanced and not stereotypical to ensure inclusivity. We must use the correct terms when talking about pregnancy and maternity.</p>	Through communications planning and evaluation process, and strategy review	Head of communications	Ongoing
<b>Sex</b>	<p><b>Accessibility:</b> No impact in relation to accessibility of communications, based on sex has been identified.</p> <p><b>Inclusivity:</b> Representation in our communications must be balanced and not stereotypical to ensure inclusivity. We must use the correct terms when talking about sex, sexual orientation, gender and gender reassignment.</p>	Through communications planning and evaluation process, and strategy review	Head of communications	Ongoing
<b>Gender Reassignment</b>	<p><b>Accessibility:</b> No impact in relation to accessibility of communications, based on gender reassignment has been identified.</p> <p><b>Inclusivity:</b> Representation in our communications must be balanced and not stereotypical to ensure inclusivity. We must use the correct terms when talking about sex, sexual orientation, gender and gender reassignment.</p>	Through communications planning and evaluation process, and strategy review	Head of communications	Ongoing

<b>Race</b>	<p><b>Accessibility:</b> An individual's race, ethnicity, heritage or culture may also correlate to language and preferred (or available) sources of information. Alternative language versions of communications must be considered and available on request. We must also build on community connections built through COVID-19 pandemic to ensure essential information reaches all ethnic and cultural groups effectively. Ward members, town and parish council and other community leaders have a role to play.</p> <p><b>Inclusivity:</b> Representation in our communications must be balanced and not stereotypical to ensure inclusivity. We must use the correct terms when talking about race, culture, heritage and ethnicity.</p>	Through communications planning and evaluation process, and strategy review	Head of communications	Ongoing
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>	<p><b>Accessibility:</b> No impact in relation to accessibility of communications, based on sexual orientation has been identified.</p> <p><b>Inclusivity:</b> Representation in our communications must be balanced and not stereotypical to ensure inclusivity. We must use the correct terms when talking about sex, sexual orientation, gender and gender reassignment.</p>	Through communications planning and evaluation process, and strategy review	Head of communications	Ongoing

#### 5. 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
Equality accessibility and inclusivity to be built into all future communications plans	Through communications planning and evaluation process, and strategy review	Head of communications	Ongoing
Easy read training for members of the communications team	Communications service workforce development plan	Head of communications	Ongoing
Digital accessibility training for members of the communications team	Communications service workforce development plan	Head of communications	Ongoing
Please provide details and link to full action plan for actions	N/A		
When will this assessment be reviewed?	Assessment will be reviewed as progress against the strategy is reviewed (this is subject to committee approval)		
Are there any additional assessments that need to be undertaken in relation to this assessment?	Equality impact Assessments may need to be undertaken for individual communications projects.		
Lead officer sign off	Michael Moore	Date	24-10-22
Head of service sign off	Michael Moore	Date	24-10-22

Please publish this completed EIA form on the relevant section of the Cheshire East website

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*Working for a brighter future together*

## **Corporate Policy Committee**

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<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	1 December 2022
<b>Report Title:</b>	Consultation and Engagement
<b>Report of:</b>	Jane Burns, Executive Director Corporate Services
<b>Report Reference No:</b>	CP/48/22-23
<b>Ward(s) Affected:</b>	All

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### **1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to update Corporate Policy Committee on progress made to deliver a coordinated and collaborative approach to consultation and engagement, since the previous report considered in July 2022.
- 1.2. The new approach, endorsed by the Committee, will support all of the aims and objectives in the Council's Corporate Plan 2021-25 but particularly supports two priorities within the "Open" aim, these are: to listen, learn and respond to our residents, promoting opportunities for a two-way conversation and to promote and develop the services of the council through regular communication and engagement with all residents.
- 1.3. Officers have produced an operational 'toolkit' which is a clear guide to how the Council will undertake consultation and engagement.

### **2. Executive Summary**

- 2.1 Following the Committee's approval of co-ordinated and collaborative approach to consultation and engagement, a new toolkit has been developed by a cross council officer Task and Finish group. This has brought together expertise, advice and resources in one place. The aim of the toolkit is that there is one clear guide, which sits above directorate and service specialist resources, to driving greater consistency and information sharing within the council, increasing our external conversations and engagement activity and ultimately increasing participation and improving resident satisfaction.

- 2.2** The refreshed approach to Consultation and Engagement has considered three elements: development of a toolkit as an overarching “one Council” guidance resource, a consolidated programme of planned activity and development of a community of practice to regularly share insight and intelligence arising from consultation and engagement activities.
- 2.3** The July committee advised of the need to streamline and prioritise consultation and engagement activity to avoid “consultation fatigue”. The committee also requested that officers give consideration to the accessibility of consultation and engagement activities, particularly to those who lack IT skills, or who do not have devices or data to enable them to connect to the internet.
- 2.4** The July committee further advised to engage with members on this issue and Councillor Rhodes invited officers to use the Member Input Panel (MIP) for this purpose. The MIP gave the following feedback:
- Members were supportive of the development of stakeholder databases for consultation and engagement (with appropriate consents) and suggested that Residents Associations be added to the database.
  - Members advised that consultations should be publicised as much as possible, and supported the use of social media to publicise consultations
  - Members communicated that the process was not considered to be open and transparent by some residents i.e., the public’s views were not considered or did not make a difference. Officers confirmed that a section in the toolkit would emphasise the importance of feeding back to residents who had engaged with consultation and engagement activities so they could clearly see how their feedback had been considered.
  - The MIP also If there are too many frequent activities, residents may not clearly understand the relevance or impact of the issues being consulted upon which may mean they are reluctant to engage.
  - The MIP also discussed the challenge that the subject of a consultation was often about making economies, which immediately created a negative focus in residents’ minds. The challenge is to meaningfully engage and listen to dispel views that decisions are pre-determined.
  - Members advised that priority should be given to publicising examples of consultations where the public’s views had been taken on board and the Council had acted accordingly.
  - The MIP advised that the Council should work with targeted groups on changes which directly affected them and accommodate those who did not have access to a computer or the internet
- 2.5** The feedback from the July Corporate Policy Committee meeting and the Member Input Panel was shared with the cross council officer working group, and the toolkit was developed with consideration to the areas raised.

### **3. Recommendations**

- 3.1.** To note the Cheshire East Council Consultation and Engagement toolkit (Appendix 1).
- 3.2.** To note the programme of consultation and engagement activities planned for the remainder of 2022/23 (Appendix 2).
- 3.3.** To note the development of the new Town and Parish Council network.

### **4. Reasons for Recommendations**

- 4.1.** The recommendations have been made to support progress against delivery of the Corporate Plan. This report particularly suggests activities that support implementation of the priorities to listen, learn and respond to our residents, promoting opportunities for a two-way conversation and to promote and develop the services of the council through regular communication and engagement with all residents.

### **5. Other Options Considered**

- 5.1.** In terms of the new approach to Consultation and Engagement the committee could agree not to proceed and instead continue the status quo. The risk to this option is of duplication of resources in both resident and officer resource and disparate activity, which may be costly, inefficient and influence the reputation of the council.

### **6. Background**

- 6.1.** In early 2022 a cross council officer working group was established to review the consultation and activities taking place across the council and to consider how these activities could be better aligned to achieve our corporate plan priorities.
- 6.2.** In July 2022, Corporate Policy Committee considered the initial findings of the officer working group and approved the new approach to Consultation and Engagement. The previous report detailed the outputs of the new approach as: (i) a Consultation and Engagement toolkit setting out a consistent process for different forms of consultation and engagement (ii) a new community of practice to share insight and intelligence to inform strategic developments, using the new Cheshire East Council Intelligence Network (CECIN), and (iii) a clear programme of consultation and engagement activity to support delivery of the Corporate Plan. The desired outcome of this work is that the resident voice is considered in all that we do, that residents and other stakeholders feel genuinely listened to, increased participation, there is equitable access to consultation and the ability to influence for all and that ultimately resident satisfaction levels with the council are increased.

- 6.3.** The new approach recommended includes both internal and external focus. Internally, officers want to have clearer guidance for consultation and engagement activity and to be able to share insight and intelligence across the council. Externally, the new approach also focuses on connecting and increasing activity, such as more engagement with Town and Parish councillors and sharing data obtained from stakeholder focus groups, such as the Voluntary and Faith sector networks, the Business Forums and intelligence gained from the Communities team.
- 6.4.** A Cheshire East Council Consultation and Engagement toolkit has been developed, with officers from across the Council, through a session with the Member Input Panel, and through a session with the Brighter Futures Champions. The toolkit has sought to bring together best practice from across the Council to provide an overview guide to undertaking consultation and engagement at Cheshire East Council.
- 6.5.** The toolkit will be available as a free-standing document for officers and members to access. It will also be developed into a Centranet (the Council's intranet) resource, so that access can be gained to resources and links within the toolkit. This will enable individual elements of the toolkit to be easily accessed and allows for updating of individual elements.
- 6.6.** The toolkit will be owned by the Council's Research and Consultation team who will administer a quarterly Consultation and Engagement group. The aim of the group will be to share best practice, to share intelligence and insight from consultations and engagement activity, and to identify opportunities for shared consultation and engagement activity.
- 6.7.** Information has been shared by Directorates, through the business planning process, to consolidate key consultation and engagement activities. The plan for the remainder of 2022/23 is at Appendix 2. The plan evidences consultation, engagement and survey activities. A key annual activity is engagement around the budget to inform the Medium-Term Financial Strategy. A report elsewhere on this agenda explains the process and timescale which will be necessary this year in view of national developments.
- 6.8.** As part of the refreshed approach to Consultation and Engagement, the need to strengthen relationships and communication channels with town and parish councils was identified. A new Town and Parish Council network has been established to enhance any existing arrangements that Members may have with their own local councils. The new engagement network (official name to be confirmed) will take place approximately every 6 weeks and will be chaired by the Chief Officer of Cheshire Association of Local Councils. The first session will take place on 30 November 2022. Details of the sessions for 2022/23 are at Appendix 3. The network aims to be a regular session to support consistent and effective communication and engagement between Cheshire East Council and Town and Parish Councils.



- 6.9.** The officer working group on Consultation and Engagement also identified that successful engagement in other local authority areas, included participatory approaches, sometimes referred to as “Citizens Assemblies” or “Citizens Panels”. In October 2022, the Council undertook a pilot project, partnering with a nonpartisan organisation called “Positive Money” to test a participatory approach in Cheshire East. Positive Money contributed £12,000 to this project.
- 6.10.** Cheshire East Council called this project the Cheshire East People’s Panel. The People’s Panel met over two weekends in October 2022, to consider the question “what can be done to make life more affordable for those most affected by the rising cost of living?”. 21 Cheshire East residents, selected to be as representative of the population as possible, heard from national and local speakers, participated in a series of deliberative workshops, and developed and voted on recommendations. The Panel have presented their draft recommendations to the Council, and the final report of recommendations is awaited. This report will be shared with members. The Council have committed to responding to the Panel by the end of January 2023. An evaluation of this participatory approach will be undertaken, with recommendations as to how this approach may be used to inform further development of consultation and engagement.

## **7. Consultation and Engagement**

- 7.1.** Engagement on the new approach was undertaken with the Member Input Panel and the Brighter Futures Champions.
- 7.2.** The pilot of the Cheshire East People’s Panel, a participatory democracy approach, took place in October 2022, with the formal report due in December 2022.

## **8. Implications**

### **8.1. Legal**

Councils have a statutory requirement to consult residents in certain areas, for example for issues such as planning or redevelopment. Statutory consultations are bound by legal requirements. If there is a need to run a statutory consultation in line with legislation, there is a risk of judicial review.

### **8.2. Finance**

Consultation and engagement activities are delivered within existing resource. The People’s Panel project received funding of £12,000 from Positive Money. Any additional financial implications would be subject to production of a business case and would be in line with the Medium-Term Financial strategy.

**8.3. Policy**

This report is in line with our Policy objectives as set out in the Council's Corporate Plan.

**8.4. Equality**

An aim of this report is to ensure that consultation and engagement activities are inclusive and accessible. Each specific planned consultation or engagement activity is informed by an Equality Impact Assessment.

**8.5. Human Resources**

It is possible that more dedicated consultation and engagement resource may be required to support our Corporate Plan aspirations, this will be considered within the restructure of Policy and Change.

**8.6. Risk Management**

Consultation and engagement activity can influence reputational risks to the council and the activity proposed is to increase resident satisfaction.

**8.7. Rural Communities**

If approved, the new approach to Consultation and Engagement will consider how to engage best with rural communities. A stakeholder list for rural community representatives has been established. The People's Panel included residents from rural communities under the methodology used to ensure that the Panel was representative.

**8.8. Children and Young People/Cared for Children**

The new approach to Consultation and Engagement proposed supports a "One Council" approach. This includes the consultation and engagement channels that are led by Children's services with children, young people and families across the borough.

**8.9. Public Health**

The new approach supports public health priorities. The new council Cheshire East Council Intelligence Network (CECIN) has recently been established and is chaired by Public Health. Under the new approach it is proposed this will be the internal mechanism through which officers share insight and intelligence, promote collaborative working and reduce duplication. This will ensure that all findings inform our joint strategic needs assessments, and a promote a robust and comprehensive approach to addressing inequalities and to health and care transformation.

### 8.10. Climate Change

The new approach includes digital consultation and engagement channels, as preferred first options, to support reduction of our carbon footprint and to achieve environmental sustainability.

Access to Information	
Contact Officer:	Sarah Bullock, Director of Policy and Change <a href="mailto:Sarah.bullock@cheshireeast.gov.uk">Sarah.bullock@cheshireeast.gov.uk</a>
Appendices:	<b>Appendix 1</b> – Draft Consultation and Engagement Toolkit  <b>Appendix 2</b> – Consultation and Engagement Programme 2022/23  <b>Appendix 3</b> – Town and Parish Councils Network dates 2022/23
Background Papers:	<b>Background paper 1-</b> Report to 14 July 2022 Corporate Policy Committee, entitled “Approach to Consultation and Engagement” CP/6/22-23  <a href="#">Decision report template (cheshireeast.gov.uk)</a>

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# Cheshire East Council's Consultation and Engagement toolkit

**Our One Council approach to Consultation and Engagement**



# Cheshire East Council's Consultation and Engagement toolkit

## Our One Council approach to Consultation and Engagement

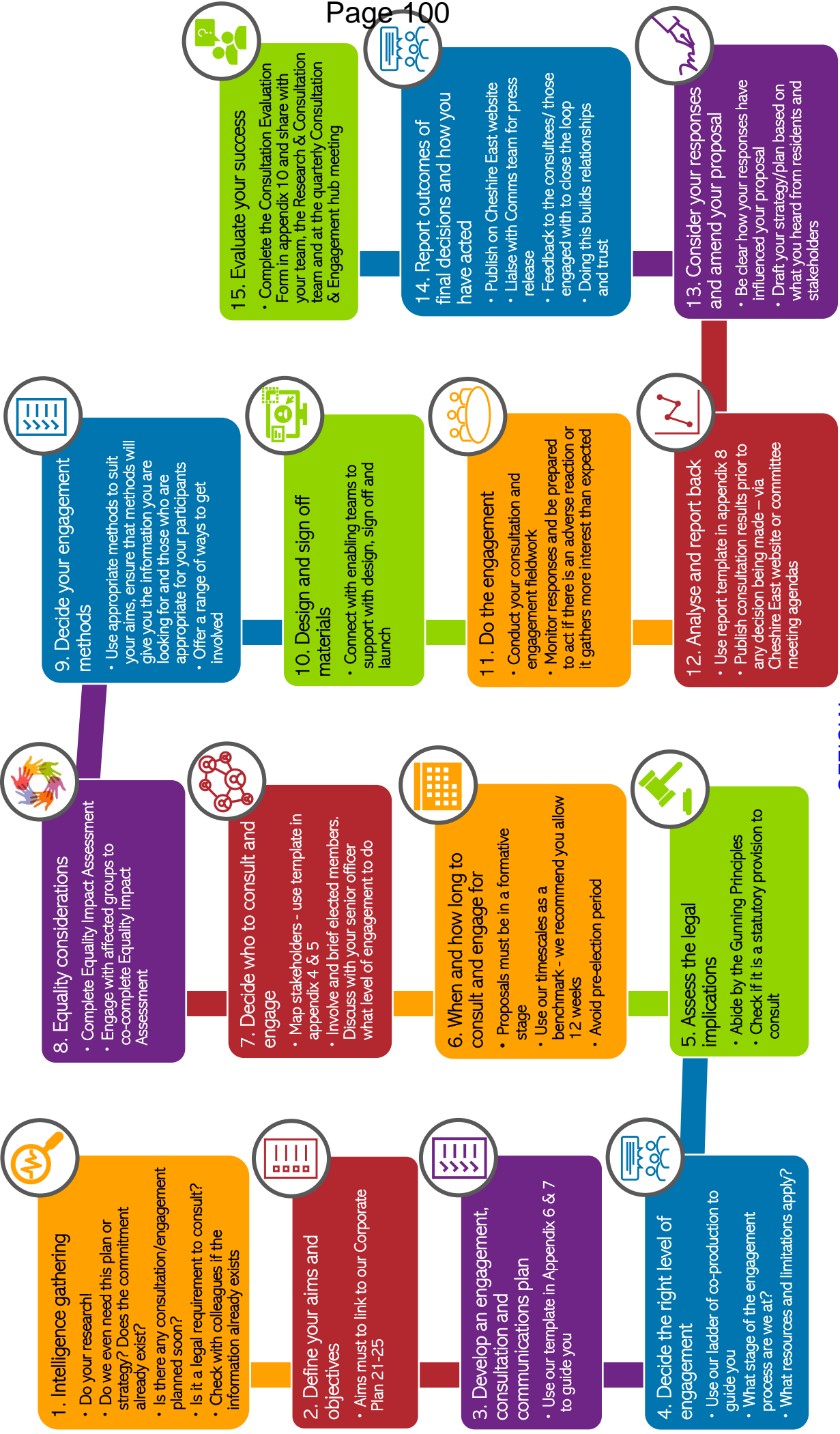
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# Executive Summary – 15 Steps to Success





# Introduction

Welcome to Cheshire East Council's Consultation and Engagement Toolkit.

Through Cheshire East Council's *Open – Fair – Green* vision, the Council is committed to:

- ensuring that there is transparency in all aspects of the Council decision making
- listen, learn and respond to our residents, promoting opportunities for a two-way conversation.

## Our mission is simple.

We will work together as One Council in equal partnership with residents and stakeholders to deliver meaningful consultation and engagement.

## What does success look like?

- Working together as One Council, our residents and stakeholders' voices will be considered in all that we do
- People will feel genuinely listened to
- Everyone will have the ability to influence and there will be increased participation in Council activity, and not just from the same voices we typically hear from.

## How do we get there?

1. By following the One Council Consultation and Engagement Toolkit
2. Through forward-planned activity
3. By working together as One Council with our residents and stakeholders through co-design principles and improved engagement techniques.

**Everyone has a role to play in helping us achieve our mission.**

## How to use this toolkit

This toolkit is designed to be a supportive, easy-to-follow, practical guide to help you deliver meaningful consultation and engagement. It provides an overview on the key aspects of consultation and engagement and includes links to supportive resources. It has been designed so that you can dip in and out as appropriate.

There may be instances where you require more thorough guidance in designing aspects of public research, engagement or consultation activity. Further guidance is provided in the forms of quick guides on Centranet. These are listed in the resource section (Appendix 12). Alternatively, you can contact the Research & Consultation team for advice at [randc@cheshireeast.gov.uk](mailto:randc@cheshireeast.gov.uk). This is a live document and will be reviewed and updated every 12 months.

This toolkit comprises five sections:

**Section 1** – Consultation, engagement, and co-production, and our golden principles

**Section 2** – Do your research and set out your plan

**Section 3** – Do the engagement

**Section 4** – Analysing and feeding back about your activities

**Section 5** – Consider who can support you, data protection, health & safety, equality impact assessments and safeguarding

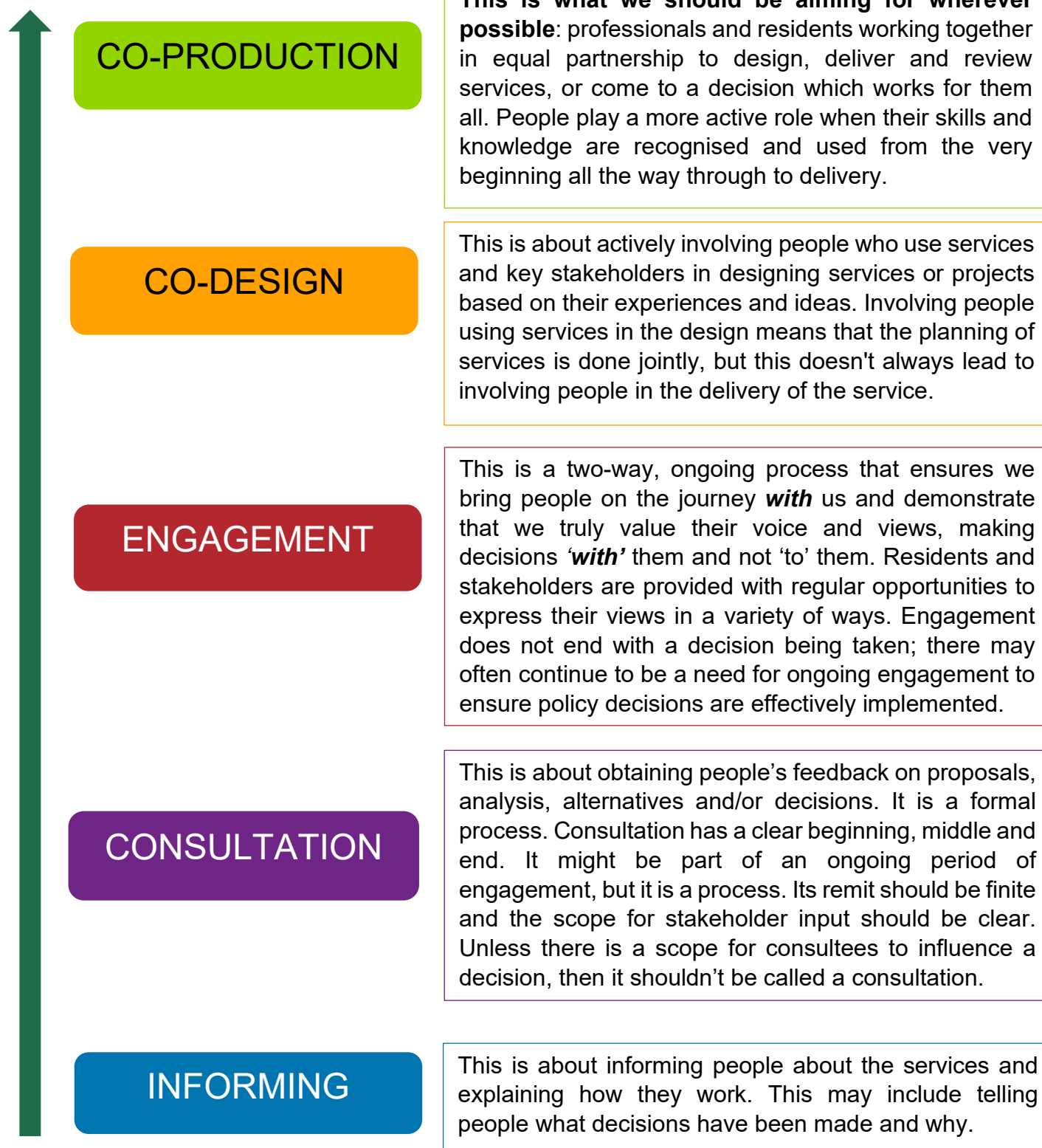
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If you feel there could be improvements to this toolkit, we value your feedback and want to hear from you. Please contact the Research & Consultation team at [randc@cheshireeast.gov.uk](mailto:randc@cheshireeast.gov.uk).

# Section 1: Consultation, engagement, and co-production, and our golden principles

## Ladder of co-production

This toolkit is based on the following ladder of participation<sup>1</sup>:



Developed by Sherry Arnstein in 1969<sup>1</sup>

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## Our five golden principles

The following five golden principles are listed here for all staff to follow, to bring about improved planning, co-ordination and consistency to consultation and engagement activities. The points made within these principles are covered throughout the toolkit in more detail.

All consultation & engagement activity undertaken by Cheshire East Council should be:

1. **Necessary** – has the information already been gathered previously, or does the information already exist somewhere else in the Council? Does the strategy or commitment already exist? We will check if anyone else has already undertaken consultation or engagement in the area and if appropriate, share the information. We will use the Cheshire East Intelligence Network to check this out. We will reduce duplication and unnecessary repetition in the process.
2. **Timely and well planned** – we will review consultation and engagement evaluation forms and seek to learn from past consultation and engagement activity before embarking on a new journey. This will increase trust from our residents and key stakeholders. We will allow sufficient time to get the best consultation and engagement outcome, so that people have a real chance to get involved. We will be innovative and be prepared to try new ideas. Planning for appropriate methods will not be undervalued. Planning time to co-produce, engage, consult, analyse the results and report back will not be underestimated. All consultation and engagement activity will be discussed with the service and the Research & Consultation team at the planning stage. All planned activity will be added to the Consultation Forward Plan hosted by the Research & Consultation team and teams will be signposted to enabling teams (for instance, Communities team for engagement) at this point. We will use methods that make the best use out of resources, for example by connecting with enabling teams in the 'Who can support me' section.
3. **Clear, concise and relevant** – we will be open and explain why we are consulting or engaging, how we are going to take people's views into account as a part of the decision-making process. All our information will be worded clearly, using plain English and avoiding jargon.
4. **Inclusive and accessible** – we will involve our diverse communities in our engagement and consultation activity, including hardly reached voices and marginalised communities. We will tailor our approach to our audience, ensuring that we are flexible to reduce barriers to engagement and consultation. For example, consider the level of understanding in our audience, flexible timeframes, accessibility of venues, accessibility and length of documents (strategy on a page), childcare, language barriers and using appropriate means of communication. This approach will help the Council meet its statutory equalities obligations.
5. **Action focussed** – we will act on the findings to improve services and quality of life for our residents. We will report back to the public what they have told us and what we have done as a result. Where we have not acted on feedback, we will clearly tell our residents and stakeholders why not.

### Top tip!

Use our handy checklist in Appendix 1 to ensure you have covered everything you need

## Section 2: Do your research and set out your plan

### Gather intelligence and insight

Before embarking on your consultation and engagement, it is crucial you consider the following:

1. **Do your research!** Is there any national, regional, or local data or research that could help address what you're trying to find out?
2. **Do we even need this plan or strategy?** Check if similar strategies, plans or commitments already exists within the Council.
3. **Is it a legal requirement to conduct the piece of engagement/consultation/research?** Use the legal implications section to guide you and ask for advice from the Research & Consultation team and from the Legal team.
4. **What do you already know?** Have similar or recent engagement and/or consultation exercises already taken place internally or by our partners? Has the data you are looking for already been collected? You can check this out with the Cheshire East Intelligence Network (CEIN), the Research & Consultation team or the Business Intelligence Team. You do not want to repeat work that has already been carried out.
5. **Is there any engagement or consultation planned soon?** You should maximise the opportunity for joined up work.

### Define your aims and objectives

Next, you should think why you are undertaking the exercise and what it is you want to find out.

- What are the key aims?
- What will you do with the outcomes and what decisions will be influenced?
- What will the information be used for?

#### IMPORTANT!

All activity must link to the Corporate Plan 2021-25 and feed into our corporate performance indicators

## Develop a consultation, engagement and communications plan

### Consultation, engagement and communications plan

Consultation and engagement projects should be run in-line with project planning guidance.

Project or Consultation Plans should be created to ensure smooth project management. It is also important to develop a communications plan setting out how each of the stakeholders will be engaged with, by who, and at what dates. Planning must not be underestimated; we recommend starting this as soon as possible to ensure the best chance of success.

#### Top tip!

Use our example consultation, engagement and communications template to guide you! This can be found in Appendix 6 and 7 – though these templates, along with all other templates provided in this toolkit, should be tailored to the specific needs of the project.

## Decide the right level of engagement

Do you need to consult, engage, co-produce, or do something else?

The answer to this will differ depending on what you are trying to achieve and your audience. We recommend you reflect on the following questions and use our ladder of co-production (on page 6) to guide your thinking:

- What is the purpose and intended outcome of the engagement?
- Who are your audience and what are their needs?
- What stage of the engagement process are we at?
- What resources and limitations apply?

The following link provides further guidance to support you to answer the questions above:

[LGA guide to engagement](#)

### CAUTION!

**Be clear when defining the scope of involvement to your stakeholders so they are aware what they can influence / have a shared responsibility for!**

- Co-production isn't always suitable and sometimes it is not always possible to co-produce fully on an initiative. This could be because people were not engaged at the outset, there is insufficient time or resource available to work in equal partnership or the decision-making process makes certain elements of the project unsuitable for co-production
- You may agree to co-produce one or more aspects of the overall project, choose to co-design certain aspects or take a different, equally valid approach to engagement entirely

It is also important to assess the legal implications at this point, as this will help determine your level of engagement.

## Assess the legal implications

There are circumstances when there is a legal expectation to consult, whereas with engagement and co-production there is not. This is known as doctrine of legitimate expectation (common law).

There is a legal expectation to consult when:

- There is a statutory requirement to consult on an issue
- We have consulted on an issue in the past (and have set a precedent)
- We have publicly stated we would consult on an issue (and set an expectation)
- The Council is proposing a significant change to a service
- There is a withdrawal of a benefit with significant impacts to be considered
- Where the nature of the relationship would create unfairness if there were to be inadequate consultation.

Essentially, where people have come to legitimately expect a process of consultation, for example, with local authority budget cuts or healthcare changes, there are grounds for a judicial review should a public consultation not take place.

Similarly, a consultation must be conducted properly should the choice be taken to embark on one (whether a legal requirement exists for it or not). This is part of ensuring that the consultation process remains a fair one.

### THINK!

Integrity: You must have an honest intention, be willing to listen and be prepared to be influenced

## Gunning principles

Whether or not there is a legal obligation to consult, if consultation takes place, it must be carried out fairly and comply with the Gunning principles.

Consultation is only legitimate when these four principles are met:

- 1. Proposals are still at a formative stage** – A final decision has not yet been made, or predetermined, by the decision makers.
- 2. There is sufficient information to give ‘intelligent consideration’** – The information provided must relate to the consultation and must be available, accessible, and easily interpretable for consultees to provide an informed response
- 3. There is adequate time for consideration and response** – There must be sufficient opportunity for consultees to participate in the consultation. There is no set timeframe for consultation, despite the widely accepted twelve-week consultation period.
- 4. ‘Conscientious consideration’ must be given to the consultation responses before a decision is made** – Decision-makers should be able to provide evidence that they took consultation responses into account.



## Judicial review

As public bodies, local authorities make thousands of public-facing decisions. Each decision has the potential to impact on individuals and groups. A judicial review gives the public the chance to challenge the Council's use of its administrative powers. Where there is a claim against a decision in the public realm, a case may be heard by the courts.

## Decide when and how long to consult and engage for

### When?

As stated in the Gunning Principles, consultations must take place when the proposals are in a formative stage. Other elements you should be mindful of:

- **Democratic processes can take a long time** – If a consultation needs to be approved by a Council committee and/or Corporate Leadership Team, and a Council committee needs to consider consultation results before deciding on an outcome, timescales can be significantly increased. You must account for this at the planning stage.
- **Be aware of the pre-election period** – You should carefully consider whether a consultation or engagement activity should go ahead during the pre-election period, or whether consultation or engagement activity during this period would be seen as being controversial. Consulting on high profile topics should generally be avoided during the pre-election period. Further advice should be sought if you are unsure whether to consult or engage during the pre-election period, either from Legal or Democratic Services. Usually, elections occur during May and guidance is applicable from March of the same year.
- **Avoid doing consultation or engagement activity solely during school holidays** – If a consultation or engagement exercise is to take place over a period when consultees are less able to respond, for example over the summer or Christmas break, or if the policy under consideration is particularly complex, you should consider extending the period of consultation/engagement to allow for sufficient engagement.
- **Assess if you have adequate skills and resources** – Administering a consultation is time consuming, can be costly and can require specialist software. Consultation is also a professional discipline for which training and experience is desirable.

### How long

The below timescales are the ideal minimum timescales that any engagement and consultation should take – **note that 12 weeks is the minimum amount of time a consultation will usually take.**

The timescales depend on several factors including:

- The amount of pre-consultation engagement you decide to do (this will add time to your plan)
- The stakeholders being consulted with (e.g. consulting with residents, children or vulnerable adults may take longer to engage with)
- The engagement techniques being used (e.g. postal surveys and engagement events take significantly longer than online surveys)
- The complexity of the material being consulted on (e.g. a lengthy strategy document may require more time for consultees to absorb the content and respond meaningfully)

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Engagement	Stage	Minimum timescales	Comments
Pre-consultation engagement	Research and planning	2 weeks	Do your research and check if we need this engagement/consultation activity to take place.  Consider if teams/existing networks already have the answer.
	Engagement	Project dependent	Link in with the Communities team and our networks to engage with our partners and residents.  <b>Note:</b> extra time will be needed for pre-consultation engagement and options development.
Consultation / Engagement Development	Fieldwork	<b>For Consultations:</b> Minimum 4 weeks	<u>Consultation</u> Except for some statutory consultations, there is no legally required minimum time period a consultation should open for.  Judge the length of the consultation on the basis of legal advice and taking into account the nature and impact of the proposal. Consulting for too long will unnecessarily delay policy development. Consulting too quickly will not give enough time for consideration, will reduce the quality of responses and could lead to a legal challenge.
		<b>For Engagement:</b> project dependent	<u>Engagement</u> Engagement could be a couple of sessions, or it could span over the lifecycle of the project. Use our expertise from the Communities team to help shape your plan and fieldwork.
	Results analysis and reporting	2 weeks	Allow at least 2 weeks for analysis and report writing after the consultation/engagement finishes before results are published
	Results consideration	2 weeks	Allow at least 2 weeks for consideration of results and responses by decision makers before any final decision is made
Post-consultation engagement	Report back your findings	2 weeks	We recommend you share the results of the consultation / engagement activity with residents and stakeholders and seek feedback on your findings. If appropriate, make changes to the material based on your findings.
	<b>Total time</b>	<b>12 weeks</b>	<b>This is the minimum amount of time, however, in reality many consultations, including pre and post engagement, will take significantly longer.</b>

## Decide who to consult and engage

### Stakeholder mapping

Stakeholder mapping is a **crucial stage of any consultation or engagement process**.

#### THINK!

**Visibility:** All who have the right to participate should be made reasonably aware of the consultation or engagement

**We can't engage all of the people all of the time.** People don't want to be engaged on everything. Knowing who you need to engage with at an early stage of your planning will not only assist with planning, but also support you to prioritise engagement and support you to make a judgement on where to invest your efforts.

### Stage 1 – List the stakeholders

When we talk about engaging with our communities and stakeholders, we make a commitment to engage, as appropriate, with as many of the following who might have an interest in the consultation or engagement:

- Residents – borough-wide, engaging with those from rural and urban communities and of all ages
- Community groups and clubs
- Users of specific Council services
- Vulnerable groups and those with protected characteristics as defined within the Equality Act (2010)
- Children and young people including those on the Youth Forum (e.g. Cheshire East Youth Council, My Voice, Jigsaw)
- Employees of the Council
- Area-based groups
- Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise (VCFSE) sector groups
- Racial, ethnic and cultural groups
- Web-based or virtual groups
- Relevant Trade Unions
- Local business owners and business forums
- Those who visit, work, or participate in activities in the borough
- Residents associations
- Charities
- Our democratically elected Councillors
- Town and Parish Councils
- Members of Parliament
- Partner organisations
- Specific subject forums
- Any other body or group with an interest in the work of the authority

## Stage 2 – Map the stakeholders

The next stage is to map each stakeholder using the stakeholder mapping chart below. You should only list stakeholders at the highest level, for example 'Town & Parish Councillors', rather than listing specific individuals or identifiable names.

For each stakeholder, assign a score out of 10 for:

- Their strength of their voice (where 0 is no voice, and 10 is very strong voice)
- Their level of interest in the consultation topic (where 0 is no interest at all, and 10 is very interested)

With these scores each stakeholder can then be mapped onto the below chart, and will fall into one of the four quadrants:

### **Regular contact** (*Low interest / Low strength of voice*)

These stakeholders require the minimum level of engagement, our job is to push information to them and keep them informed, with the onus on them to read what we publish.

### **Keep informed** (*Low interest / High strength of voice*)

These require the same as the “regular contact” cohort, except with extra vigilance given due to their high strength of voice. They should be engaged with and monitored in case their level of interest in the consultation rises. Given their high strength of voice it is in our interest that they understand the key issues so they can promote the consultation positively.

### **Manage closely** (*High interest / High strength of voice*)

These are some of the most important stakeholders and given their high strength of voice it is vital to ensure they are closely engaged with and involved in the consultation process early, ideally through co-production. It is vital to the success of the consultation that these stakeholders are well managed.

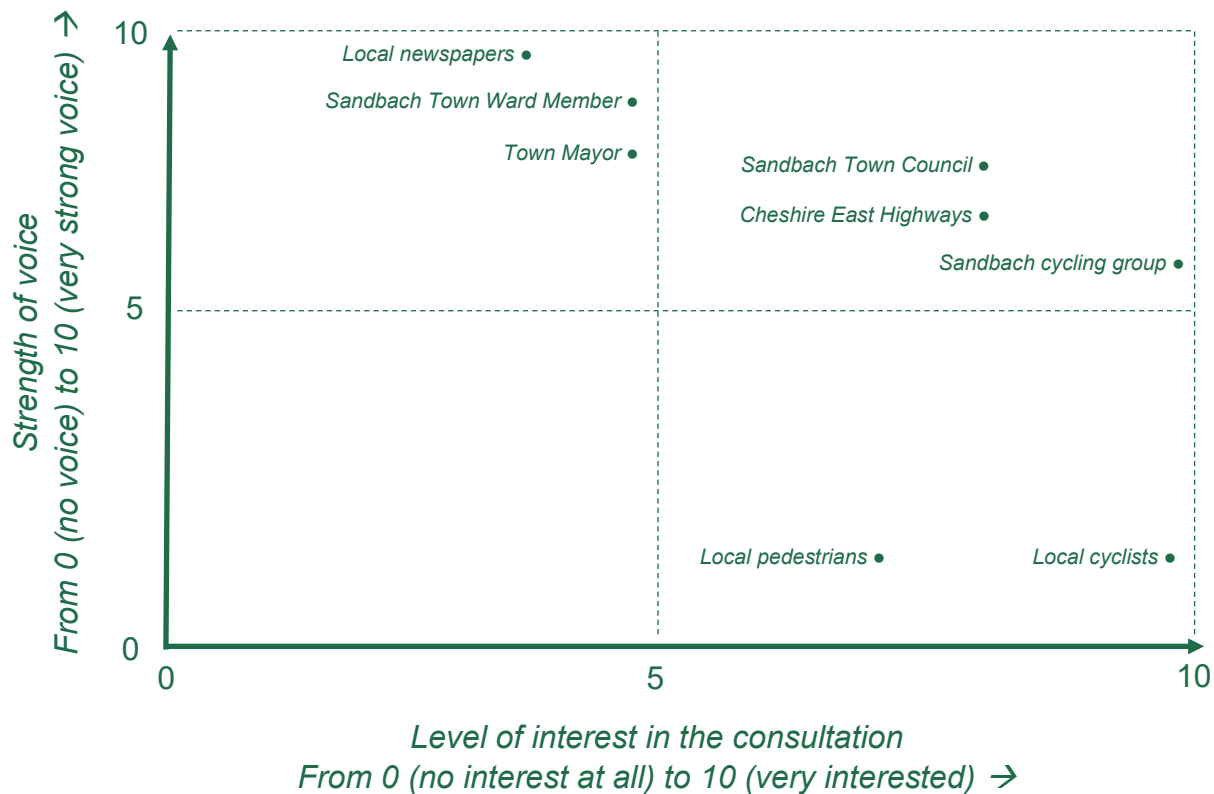
### **Anticipate and meet needs** (*High interest / Low strength of voice*)

Similar to the “manage closely” cohort, except they need extra attention to ensure their views are sought and acted on, given these stakeholders are most likely to be affected by proposals, but have low strength of voice to get their views across. Extra effort must be taken to identify and engage with these stakeholders, and many will be identified through Impact Assessments.

## **CAUTION! MANAGERS:**

Please be aware of reputational risk and Freedom of Information sensitivities that are required as part of any stakeholder analysis. It's important to speak to your Communications Business Partner if you think your consultation/engagement will have these types of risks so that the messaging and communications cascade can be managed. Contact [communications@cheshireeast.gov.uk](mailto:communications@cheshireeast.gov.uk) to find out who your Communications Business Partner is.

An example of a stakeholder map for a consultation about a new cycling scheme in Sandbach might be set out as per the below:



## Managing expectations

It's important to manage your stakeholders' expectations and be clear on the strength of their voice. This is where our Communications team play an important role in communicating this. You need to consider how much weight does the consultation have in terms of the decision-making process.

If in doubt, approach your Communications Business Partner for further advice.

## Considerations for seldom heard communities

Certain individuals or groups find it difficult to take advantage of the available opportunities of consultation and engagement. These are known as the 'seldom heard', 'hard to reach' or 'hardly reached'. There is no single list that defines all groups of people we may find hard to reach. Who you need to target more specifically or directly will depend on the aims of your project and the outcomes of your stakeholder analysis.

Below is a table of some examples of hardly reached groups and the key considerations. Our Community Development team have useful links with our Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise (VCFSE) sector colleagues; this is a good place to start when targeting such groups.

We also have a wealth of resources kept up to date on our [Cheshire East Live Well](#) website, where you will find details of community groups and supportive forums.

Seldom heard voices	Key Considerations
<b>People from ethnic minority backgrounds</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider providing material in alternate languages, in plain English and in easy read formats</li> <li>Provide an interpreter for face-to-face activities</li> <li>Try and avoid religious festivals if holding an event and be aware of any cultural needs or dietary requirements</li> <li>Utilise existing forums, groups support networks and partners e.g. Cheshire East Equality, Diversity and Inclusion staff forums such as the Black and Minority Ethnic network, VibranCE (LGBTQIA+) and Cheshire East Equality Champions</li> </ul>
<b>Children and Young People</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure the language used is plain, age appropriate and jargon free</li> <li>Consider designing different versions of the material to cover differing age groups</li> <li>Use mediums that children and young people value e.g. visual aids, online tools and music, be creative and make it fun!</li> <li>Be mindful of data protection, confidentiality and anonymity requirements were applicable</li> <li>Ensure you have appropriate guardian permission before engaging with children. Remember if relying on consent for your legal basis for processing personal data, only those aged 13 or over, are able to provide their own consent if they have sufficient maturity or capacity otherwise the permission of a responsible guardian is required.</li> <li>Utilise existing forums, groups support networks and partners e.g. Cheshire East Youth Council, SEND Youth Forum, Schools, Children's centres, Youth services</li> </ul>
<b>People with disabilities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure your documentation is in an accessible and readable format, use easy read versions</li> <li>Ensure that there is appropriate access to events and provide a British Sign Language interpreter if required</li> <li>Utilise existing forums, groups, support networks and partners e.g. Disability Positive, Cheshire Eye Society, Deafness Support Network, the Disability Information Bureau</li> </ul>

<b>Older People</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give more consideration to using non-digital engagement and feedback mediums</li> <li>• Use facilities and places that are accessible for older people</li> <li>• Ensure your documentation is in an accessible and readable format, consider larger print versions</li> <li>• Utilise existing forums, groups, support networks and partners e.g. Age UK, Age UK Cheshire, South Cheshire Pensioners Association</li> </ul>
<b>Those rurally isolated</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some areas will not have sufficient internet connections to take part in online activities</li> <li>• Ensure face to face events are held in an easily accessible location</li> <li>• Utilise existing forums, groups, support networks and partners e.g. Residents Associations, Town and Parish Council Network, Cheshire Community Action</li> </ul>
<b>Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities may be digitally excluded, so give more consideration to using non-digital engagement and feedback mediums</li> <li>• Ensure your documentation is in an accessible and readable format, consider providing material in alternative languages and in easy read format</li> <li>• Consider providing an interpreter for face-to-face activities</li> <li>• Try and avoid religious festivals if holding an event and be aware of any cultural needs or dietary requirements</li> <li>• Utilise existing forums, groups support networks and partners e.g. Community Liaison Officers, Cheshire East Gypsy Roma Traveller Operational Group (Chaired by Sandra Murphy), Pride of Romany community group</li> </ul>

## Impact Assessments

There are a number of impact assessments you may need to complete as a part of your consultation and engagement activity. The **Equality Impact Assessment is a key tool that must be completed for all activity**, however other impact assessments to consider include an Environment Impact Assessment, Social Impact Assessments, Economic Impact Assessments, Health Impact Assessments, Data Protection Impact Assessments, Crime and Disorder Impact Assessment, and so on. Seek relevant guidance from your Manager if you do need to consider these.

### Equality considerations

When carrying out engagement work, Councils and other public authorities have a duty to assess and address the barriers to engagement with groups or individuals whose voices are seldom heard.

**Equality Impact Assessments** should be considered as a key tool in policy making and form an **integral part** of continuous service planning, policy development and consultation activity. **Impact assessments are vital for credibility and reliability.**

You should complete an Equality Impact Assessment when developing new, or reviewing existing policies, guidelines, services, functions or projects. More information on the Equality Impact Assessment, go to page 30 in this toolkit. To access the equality impact assessment form and guidance, go to our [Centranet page](#).

### Top tips!

- Involve people with protected characteristics early on (e.g. young people, older people, people with disabilities, etc.). This can help to shape proposals and approaches to consultation to make them work for as many people as possible
- Recognise that sometimes how people experience what we do may not be what we expected or intended



## Decide on your engagement methods

There are a varying range of tools and techniques that you can use as part of your engagement or consultation project and which method(s) you use will depend on what stage of the design making process you are at, who your stakeholders are, what resource or budget you have available and the aims and objectives of your exercise.

### THINK!

**Accessibility:** All engagement/consultation methods must be appropriate for the intended audience. Additional methods should be used to cater for hard-to-reach groups and those with special requirements

The methods can be split broadly into two categories; using a combination of these methods provides the best insight.

- **Qualitative methods:** These are more exploratory and provide deeper insight into an issue or viewpoint, they will help gain an understanding of underlying reasons, opinions, and motivations. Some common methods include focus groups, workshops, and in-depth interviews.
- **Quantitative methods:** These methods are useful for providing a snapshot of opinion and attitudes by asking people questions in a more structured way to produce facts and statistics. Quantitative research is usually conducted via surveys and questionnaires and can be postal, online, face to face or telephone.

You can [explore a range of methods on the Involve.org website.](#)



A few key examples are:

Method	Explanation	Strengths	Weaknesses	Length of Process / number of participants
<b>Questionnaires / Surveys</b> <i>Good for agenda setting / to consult</i>	Ask various questions in a structured way to gather views & opinions and to measure attitudes, satisfaction & performance. Can be postal, online, telephone or face to face.	Allows a large number of people to contribute. Gives all participants an 'equal voice' gaining wide range of opinion.	Can receive biased feedback. Difficult to gain deeper understanding of an issue.	4 - 12 weeks / Unlimited
<b>Focus Groups</b> <i>Good for: Policy development / to consult</i>	Guided discussion led by a facilitator to gauge views and attitudes on a subject.	High level of participant interaction. Greater understanding of how people think about issues.	Dependent on a skilled facilitator. Cannot be used to gauge wider opinion.	2 hours / 6-12
<b>Virtual whiteboards, comment boards, interactive maps</b> <i>Good for agenda setting / to consult</i>	Stakeholders can discuss issues or initial ideas with the use of online and interactive tools.	Visual aspects are engaging. Can take part regardless of location.	Excludes those not online. Need to be moderated carefully to discourage off topic / derogatory comments.	Unlimited / Ongoing as required
<b>World Café</b> <i>Good for: Agenda setting / to involve</i>	Explore an issue by discussing it in small table groups. Discussion is held in multiple rounds of 20-30 minutes, with the cafe ambiance intended to allow for more relaxed and open conversations.	Good at generating ideas, sharing knowledge & stimulate innovative thinking. Creates a sense of community and mutual respect.	Can be difficult to record and report on the discussions. Cannot deliver clear and accountable direct decisions, detailed plans or a statistical view of different opinions.	2 - 4 hours / 12-1200
<b>Citizens assembly</b> <i>Good for: decision making / to involve</i>	A group of the public who are brought together to consider a public issue in depth over multiple days and meetings.	Can be high profile and provide a good way of drawing attention to an issue. Can bring out diverse perspectives on complex and contested problems offering insight on public opinion.	Can be challenging and expensive. Danger of being seen as a publicity exercise if not followed by real outcomes.	Several weekends / 50 - 250
<b>Citizens jury/ People's Panel</b> <i>Good for Policy development / to involve</i>	A small group representative of the demographics of a given area, come together to deliberate on an issue.	Interrogation of issues and experts/evidence giving impartial and objective decisions. Highly specified outcome delivered through a verdict.	Top-down framing of the question. Small sample of citizens involved.	2-7 days / 12-24
<b>Citizens advisory groups</b>	Members of the public who sit as a committee to inform and advise	Can provide an early warning of potential problems / useful	Requires a long-term commitment from participants.	20 - 30 Ongoing

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Good for Implementation / to involve	decision making over an extended period.	sounding board to test plans and ideas. Increases accountability in governance due to the more transparent process.	Can appear exclusive and does not provide statistically significant data.	
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## Channels of engagement

There are many channels of engagement, here are some to consider when planning your engagement.

- **Our staff** are a valuable asset to us. In the context of consultation and engagement, staff can support in promoting activity. Our staff may also be residents living in Cheshire East and so any activity relating to consultation and engagement may impact them. You could engage with staff who are also residents for your engagement/consultation activity. There are many ways to engage staff who are also residents, such as targeted Team Voice news items.
- **Our Brighter Future Champions** are also a valuable asset to use. As culture champions, they are a sounding board and consultative forum who share honest feedback on new initiatives, policies, etc. This is useful to get a sense from the champions whether your planned consultation/engagement will work or not, whether there is anything missing, and so on.
- The **Manager Share and Support and Wider Leadership sessions** are a great method to gather feedback on your initiative/engagement/consultation. It is also a good way to get messages out to the organisation.
- You can promote consultation and engagement activity through the **team/service newsletters**, such as Highway's newsletter, the Carbon Neutral newsletter, and so on.
- **Our Customer Contact Centre** speak to thousands of customers each week. Depending on your consultation, they may be able to promote this when speaking directly to customers.
- **Our Libraries** also engage with a high volume of customers daily and may be able to offer support.
- **Our Town and Parish Council network** and our democratic services are a brilliant channel to engage with our Members and Town & Parish Councillors.
- And don't forget things like **email signatures and relevant website pages!**

## Design and sign-off materials

So, by this point, you've done your research, defined your objectives, created your plan, mapped your stakeholders, and decided upon your methods and approach. Next, you need to design your materials and liaise with colleagues to make your engagement or consultation ready to go-live!

### THINK!

**Disclosure:** All relevant information which could influence responses including areas where decisions have effectively been taken already and where views cannot influence the situation should be disclosed.

This will include writing content for the website, developing communications materials, designing a questionnaire, developing a topic guide for a focus group, developing leaflets or other forms of advertisement for your engagement.

Who is going to be impacted?

**At this point, you might find it helpful to involve:**

- Customer services and frontline services for support with engagement and consultation activity
- Communications team for advice and guidance on branding and media releases
- Communities team for support in promoting and doing consultation and engagement activity
- Organisational development for staff engagement – but consider, who is going to be impacted by your engagement or decisions made
- Research & Consultation for final sign off on documents. You should ensure you contact them with as much notice as possibly, preferably at the project planning stage, so they can work with you to ensure your content is up to the required standard

**The type of materials you may want produced may include:**

- briefings for Councillors, letters to residents etc
- materials produced by external or third parties such as architects. This is vital to ensure management of the brand and messaging
- final versions of the consultation document, clearly showing how you arrived at your options/proposal
- posters or leaflets to promote your activity
- consultation document or paper copy of the questionnaire
- supporting statistical data and reports

### CHECK:

**Is it relevant?** Ensure the materials are relevant to your key audience.

**Is it accessible?** Your materials must be accessible for all groups to enable the best possible chance of engagement (e.g. short documents, lay language, plain English, no jargon, digital and non-digital formats).

**Have you been open and transparent?** Make sure you present how you arrived at your options in the proposal and that this is clear to the reader.

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## Section 3: Do the engagement

- Conduct your consultation and engagement fieldwork
- Use the 'Who can help me' section to guide you in promoting the activity, engaging with stakeholders all the way through the activity and offering the opportunity to influence and actually impact on decisions.
- Monitor responses and be prepared to act if there is an adverse reaction or it gathers more interest than expected

## Section 4: Analyse and report back

### Analysing feedback

During consultation or engagement, you will collect a variety of feedback from a number of different platforms, including online and paper surveys, emails, letters, focus groups, meetings, exhibitions, social media and online comments boards.

The validity and reliability of the consultation results not only depend upon the number and representativeness of respondents, but also on the robustness of the data processing and analysis. Responses must be processed carefully and quality assured to ensure they are recorded accurately, then analysed equally carefully to ensure results are a fair reflection of what respondents have said.

#### THINK!

**Fair Interpretation:** Information and viewpoints gathered have to be collated and assessed promptly and objectively.

Each of these sources of information are analysed and presented in slightly different ways, as set out in the table below:

Feedback type	Presentation method	Things to consider
Survey closed questions	Present results in charts and tables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure results are presented alongside the number of respondents that answered the question</li> <li>Ensure that result comparisons are statistically significant</li> <li>The conclusions drawn depend on the number of responses and whether responses are reflective of the wider population</li> <li>Results taken from random sample resident surveys are much more reliable than those taken from a survey conducted with a self-selecting group of people.</li> </ul>
Survey open comment questions	Code responses & present as a written summary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Open comments are coded into key themes, with sub-codes provided within each theme</li> <li>Provide a summary of each theme and present this alongside the numbers of comments made within each theme</li> <li>The analyst has to ensure that every unique point made is coded within the themes.</li> </ul>
Email and letter responses	Print responses verbatim in appendices of most significant respondents, redact personal and sensitive data where necessary. Alternatively provide a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When published verbatim, explicit consent to publish is required</li> </ul>

	summary similar to open question analysis	
Focus Groups, meeting & exhibition notes	Provide a written transcript / detailed notes of the event, or for more detailed analysis code responses & present as a written summary similar to open question analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comments and statements are coded into key themes, with sub-codes provided within each theme</li> <li>• A summary of each theme is presented alongside the numbers of comments made within each theme</li> <li>• The analyst has to ensure that every unique point made is coded within the themes</li> </ul>
Social media posts & online public discussion forums / comments boards	Print responses verbatim in appendices of most significant respondents, redact personal and sensitive data where necessary. Alternatively provide a summary similar to open question analysis	

## Writing up the results

Once a consultation closes, feedback is analysed and usually presented in a report for consideration by decision makers, before any final decision is taken.

### THINK!

**Publication:** It is good practice to publish the results of your engagement/consultation and let participants know about the changes, improvements or decisions which have been influenced by the results/findings.

Example reports can be found on the [Cheshire East consultation results page](#), with reports usually set out with the sections and content described in Appendix 7.

## **‘You said, we did’... Report back your results and how you have acted**

**It is really important you report your findings to the public and those who participated and detail what action you have taken and why.** Explain how the feedback received has amended and shaped the final output. If you have decided to take no action at all, it is just as important to explain why and be open about this.

This is called closing the feedback loop and it lets your consultees know about how their voice has helped as a part of the decision-making process. If you have a communications plan, this will help you to plan the timing, channels and methods for how you will do this based on the audience.

### **THINK!**

**Transparency:** Those involved expect full transparency of the decision-making process which will follow and explanations of the decisions taken.

This will help us to remain open and transparent with our residents and stakeholders, building relationships and trust. It will also enable us to achieve our aim of being a listening organisation facilitating two-way conversations.

Publish your report on the Council’s consultation results page, our Democratic Services colleagues are excellent at publishing decisions details. This transparent approach shows the timelines and decision details and is a good example of our commitment to being open and fair. These are also reported on the Council’s consultation results page.

All feedback and reports will be published on our website at [the Council's consultation results pages](#) – to do this please contact the Research and Consultation Team by email at [RandC@cheshireeast.gov.uk](mailto:RandC@cheshireeast.gov.uk).

## **Evaluating the success of engagement and consultation activity**

Effective evaluation can help you find out what did and didn't work and the reasons why. Always ask participants for their views about the engagement and consultation process and how it could be improved.

Your evaluation should not only consider the number of responses received, but also the quality, cost, and timeliness of the consultation and the overall usefulness of the results in helping to inform decisions. An evaluation template can be found in Appendix 5.



## Section 5: Consider who can support you with data protection, health & safety and safeguarding

### Who can support me?

Teams across the Council can support you in your engagement and consultation activity. Drawing upon networks and expertise will strengthen the activity, making it robust, inclusive, accessible, and well-informed.

#### Your colleagues

In Appendix 8, you will find more detail about each team, how they could help you and how much notice they require to be involved in an engagement or consultation activity. The teams listed are:

- Communications
- Communities
- Public Health
- Research & Consultation
- Adults Social Care
- Economic Development
- Children's Social Care
- Policy & Change department
- Customer Services

#### Cheshire East Intelligence Network (CEIN)

The Cheshire East Intelligence Network is an informal group open to all Cheshire East Council staff interested in data, evidence and intelligence for and about Cheshire East.

The purpose of the Network is to increase collaboration over data sharing and intelligence and save time and effort across the Council by:

- Helping people to make connections and work together
- Enhancing understanding
- Providing a forum to ask and answer questions
- Sharing reports and resources, insights and best practice
- Raising awareness of and access to each other's work within the Council
- Reducing duplication

The meetings are bi-monthly. To join the meetings, please email the Public Health Intelligence Team at [PHIT@cheshireeast.gov.uk](mailto:PHIT@cheshireeast.gov.uk). There is also a [Teams channel](#) - anyone can join the Teams channel, it is a quick way to connect with colleagues and quickly find out the answer to your question about data and intelligence.



## Town and Parish Councils

We are establishing a regular network of engagement with our Town and Parish Councils.

The network meetings will take place every 6 – 8 weeks and will be a forum where staff can engage with and share information with Town and Parish Councils on Council activity.

It is a 2-subject agenda and will take place over Teams. Special meetings can be set up if a more urgent response is required. It is expected you prepare a 15-minute presentation and then there will be time for an informal discussion.

The network is managed by the Policy and Change team and chaired by the Chair of the Cheshire Association of Local Councils.

For more information about the network and to arrange to attend a meeting, please contact the Research and Consultation team at [RandC@cheshireeast.gov.uk](mailto:RandC@cheshireeast.gov.uk).

### Top tips!

- When you are writing your presentation, think about the outcome you want and make it relevant to the audience
- Prior to attending the meeting, ask yourself what can Town and Parish Councils do to help?

## Internal Networks and Resident Panels

There are many networks and panels already set up by teams in the Council. We have plenty of opportunities to engage with established networks. To find out more about our established networks, contact the Research & Consultation team for more information. They will have a conversation with you and signpost you to the right team.

## Tools

We have a number of tools that can support your consultation and engagement activity. We hold corporate accounts for all these tools, please contact the Research & Consultation team to find out more. The tools we use are:

- **Dashboards:** Power BI
- **Analysis tools:** SPSS, R, Data Science Virtual Machine
- **Survey tools:** Corporate account with SmartSurvey, MS Forms ([guidance here](#))
- **Mapping:** QGIS
- **Digital Influence Panel**

## Data protection and GDPR, data retention and privacy notices

Everyone who is responsible for using data about people must follow strict rules called '[data protection principles](#)'. The [Data Protection Act 2018](#) and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) apply to personal information in all formats, including electronic and paper based records.

### Consider:

- How you are going to collect and store participants' personal information
- Do you need to share participants' personal details with others?
- Will the information that participants give you be presented anonymously?
- Discuss the consultation with your manager / Research and Consultation team / Senior Information Standards Officer (Data Protection team - [dp@cheshireeast.gov.uk](mailto:dp@cheshireeast.gov.uk)) to ensure you are meeting data protection standards
- If you are processing personal data, check you meet one of the [following conditions](#) before processing
- Ensure that participants know who to contact if they would like further information
- Ensure you know your data retention periods. For advice on this contact Sam Ryan or visit Centranet to see the [Corporate Records Management Policy](#).

Further information about data protection and our policies can be found on [Centranet](#).

## Freedom of Information Act 2000

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 creates a public "right of access" to information held by public authorities. Consultation should be transparent but has to be balanced against Data Protection principles.

## Privacy notices

Being transparent and providing information to individuals about how we use their personal data is a key element of the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA) and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). The most common way to provide this information is in a privacy notice.

All teams collecting data should have a privacy notice in place. It's essential when collecting data that people link to an accurate and up to date Privacy Notice.

Further information on privacy notices can be found on [Centranet](#).

## Safeguarding, health and safety, and Equality Impact Assessments

In any engagement or consultation activity, in order to ensure high standards, safeguards and meet statutory requirements, it is important that the activity is undertaken in line with any government and organisational policies and procedures.

**At all times, you are responsible for the safety and wellbeing of all participants and for maintaining appropriate confidentiality. If you are not clear on any of the below, check with your manager in the first instance.**

### Consider:

- Child and vulnerable adult protection issues
- Are your participants likely to disclose sensitive information about themselves or others during your activity? How will you support them or pass on their concerns?
- When working with children, young people and vulnerable adults, be clear on what additional safeguards may be required (for example, informed consent, DBS checks etc)
- Check your child and vulnerable adult protection policies and discuss your engagement activity with your safeguarding lead.

### Health and safety

- Check your health and safety policies if you are organising a public event

## Equality Impact Assessment

### What is an Equality Impact Assessment?

An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is a way of understanding and assessing the impact that services, strategies, procedures and functions have on different people who are protected by the Equality Act 2010.

An EIA helps to demonstrate that decisions are based on evidence, and made in a fair, inclusive and transparent way. An EIA helps a local authority to understand a potential impact or risk but does not prevent a local authority from making difficult decisions such as service reductions, or from making decisions which may negatively affect some people more than others.

### Why do I need to carry out an Equality Impact Assessment?

The reason why the Council is required to undertake EIA's is set out in the general equality duty in the Equality Act 2010. The duty requires public sector organisations to have 'due regard' to the need to; eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of



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opportunity and foster good relations. This means that when the Council is considering proposals it must assess the potential impact of its decision making on people with one or more protected characteristic.

Protected characteristics covered by the Equality Act 2010 are: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnerships, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion, sex, and sexual orientation.

It is important to consider the impact of your proposal, and how will it affect residents, communities or staff. Consider this in terms of the numbers of people affected and the likely extent of the impact. **Generally, if the proposal is going to affect residents, communities or staff it is important to complete an EIA.**

**All EIAs must be published on the website at the same time as the consultation go-live date.**

## Links to Council strategies

It is important to note that our new approach to consultation and engagement is not a stand-alone suite. The consultation and engagement toolkit has direct links to a number of key strategic documents:

### Corporate Plan 2021 – 2025

Consultation and engagement will support all of the aims and objectives in the Council's Corporate Plan 2021-25 but will particularly support two priorities within the "Open" aim. These are:

- to listen, learn and respond to our residents, promoting opportunities for a two-way conversation
- to promote and develop the services of the Council through regular communication and engagement with all residents.

### Communications Strategy

Communications activity can directly support the Council's approach to consultation and engagement, and participation in local democracy.

Through effective communication with residents, people in Cheshire East will be well-informed about their Council and Council services, and they will know how to get involved. They will be aware of Council decisions, how decisions are made and how to influence them.

All of the key aims in the Communications Strategy are relevant to this toolkit, but particularly these three aims:

- Promote Council priorities through a coordinated programme of activity
- Build engaged audiences from Cheshire East's diverse communities
- Be an effective voice which promotes Cheshire East's priorities, challenges and achievements.

### Connected Communities Strategy 2021-2025

The Connected Communities Strategy takes an asset-based approach to working with communities, aiming to *work with* communities, to enable them to be more self-organising and empowered to do things by themselves. This relies on listening and acting on information provided by communities.

### Customer Experience Strategy 2021-2024

Our Customer Service Strategy puts our customers at the heart of everything we do, reflecting their feedback in the design and delivery of services.

- Staff will work as one organisation offering a clear and consistent experience wherever and however our customers interact with us
- We will listen to customer feedback and data to design and offer services based on what customers need and what works for them
- We will also work with partners and residents to co-design services.

# Appendix 1: Consultation and Engagement Checklist

## Step 1. Do your research and link in with others

- ☐ We have looked at and gathered existing data and evidence
- ☐ We have researched previous/planned consultations/engagement activity and liaised with the Cheshire East Intelligence Network
- ☐ We have used the learning from previous consultation and engagement activity and applied this learning to our plans
- ☐ We have notified the Research & Consultation team about the activity so it can be added to the Consultation and Engagement Forward Plan
- ☐ We have linked in and liaised with other appropriate departments, partners and enabling teams
- ☐ We have assessed any statutory requirements, legal implications, data protection requirements and risk of the activity

## Step 2. Plan your activity

- ☐ We have clearly defined our aims, objectives and scope of involvement (using the ladder of co-production)
- ☐ We have prepared a consultation, engagement and communications plan and shared this with all appropriate enabling teams
- ☐ We have assessed and defined the timescales of the project with consideration to any committee requirements, holiday periods or Purdah
- ☐ We have undertaken stakeholder analysis and mapping to identify our key target audience/s
- ☐ We have ensured the activity is in line with our equalities duty and completed an equalities impact assessment (required for consultation activity)
- ☐ We have determined the most appropriate method/s of engagement based on our key target audience, the scope of involvement (using the ladder of co-production) and budget available
- ☐ We have drafted all appropriate supporting documents ensuring they are written clearly (plain English, no jargon), are transparent, and provide sufficient information to enable informed decision making
- ☐ We have drafted our questions / discussion guide for engagement and / or consultation and had these quality assured by the research and consultation team and / or piloted them with a sample of stakeholders
- ☐ We have considered the need for alternate formats of any document or survey based on the target audience e.g., online versions / paper versions / easy read / large print / child friendly versions / alternative languages
- ☐ We have made the necessary arrangements for any planned events e.g., advertising, facilitators, note taking, room bookings, interpreters, travelling arrangements, refreshments

## Step 3. Conduct your engagement / consultation activity

- ☐ We have promoted, advertised and shared the engagement or consultation activity through all appropriate methods e.g., on the current consultations page on the website, directly to

appropriate stakeholder groups, through a media release / social media, via our communities team

## Step 4. Analyse and feedback

- ☐ We have gathered and analysed all the feedback and produced a report on the findings of the engagement / consultation activity
- ☐ We have ensured all the feedback is duly considered as part of any decision making
- ☐ We have ensured the final report is publicly available on the Cheshire East consultations results page and directly shared this with the relevant stakeholders
- ☐ We have produced an outcomes document which outlines what was said and what decisions / changes have been made as a result of feedback. In instances where we couldn't act on certain feedback, we have clearly outlined the reasons why and outlined any mitigations / alternatives. This has been publicly shared on the Cheshire East consultations results page and directly with the relevant stakeholders
- ☐ We have evaluated the engagement / consultation activity considering the number of responses received, the quality, cost and timeliness of the activity and overall usefulness.
- ☐ We have shared this evaluation with the Research & Consultation team and will share this learning with the quarterly Consultation and Engagement meetings



## Appendix 2: The 6 main elements of co-production

There are six main important elements to co-production:

**Recognising people as assets:** People are seen as equal partners in designing and delivering aspects of the service or project

**Building on people's capabilities:** Everyone recognises that each person has abilities. People are supported to develop these and use what they are able to do to benefit their community, the service or project.

**Developing two-way reciprocal relationships:** Mutuality, both between public service professionals and the individuals who are involved.

**Encouraging peer support networks:** Building and supporting networks alongside support from professionals.

**Blurring boundaries between delivering and receiving services:** The usual line between those people who design and deliver services and those who use them is blurred with more people involved in getting things done.

**Facilitating not delivering to:** Enabling things to happen, rather than provide services themselves. An example of this is when a Council supports people who use services to develop a peer support network.



## Appendix 3: Examples of good practice

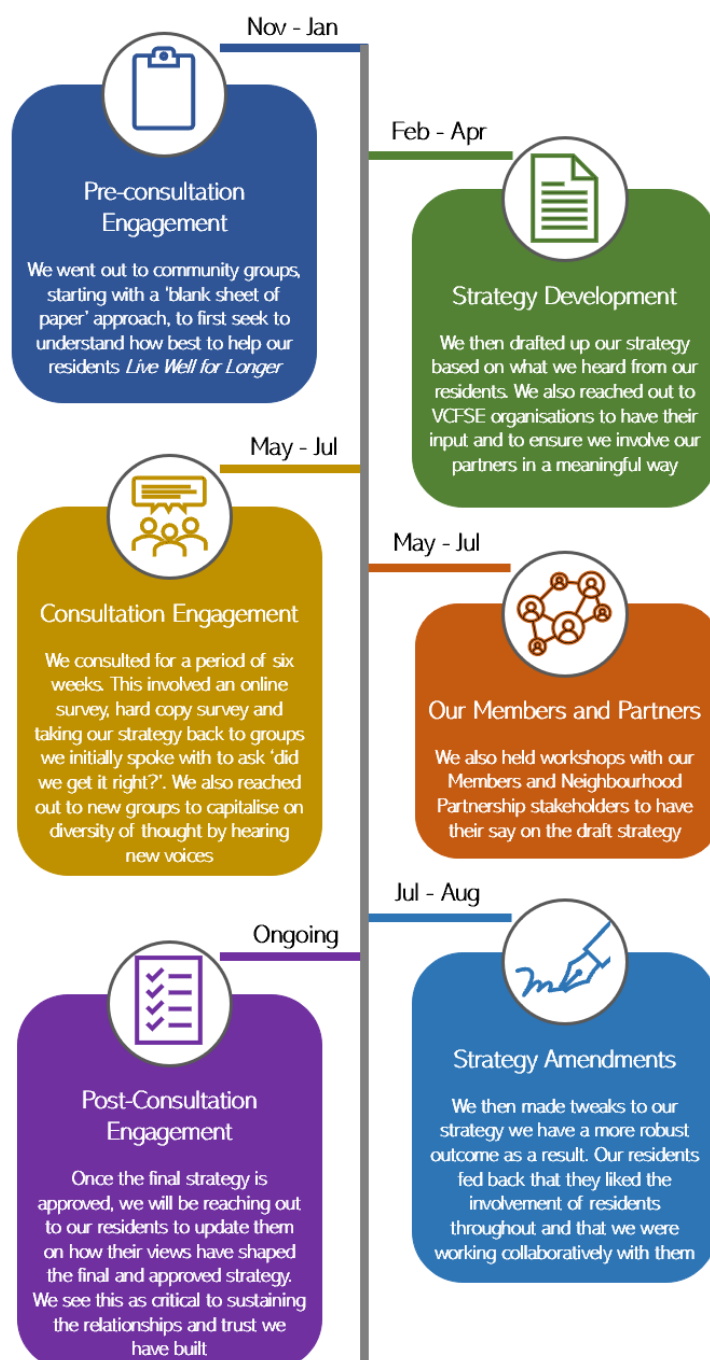
### Consultation

An example of good practice consultation conducted by Cheshire East Council is a Bus Services Review conducted in 2017. A report summarising this consultation and its findings can be found [on the Cheshire East Council webpages](#). This is an example of good practice consultation due to the pre-consultation engagement that took place, the wide range of methods used to engage with those that were affected by proposals, and because of the way the Council listened to what residents were saying, and altered the original proposals as a result. As a result of feedback received, the total amount of savings to be made from bus services was reduced from £1.6 million down to £1.0 million, and many bus routes which were identified for closure were saved.

### Engagement and co-production

The *Live Well for Longer Plan* was co-produced in partnership with residents and stakeholders. A significant level of engagement was conducted throughout the whole process, and as a result there is a plan reflective of our residents wants and needs. This is a brilliant example of engagement and co-production that we encourage more teams to learn from and use. The engagement timelines can be seen in Figure 1 on the right.

*Figure 1. Live Well for Longer Plan engagement timeline*

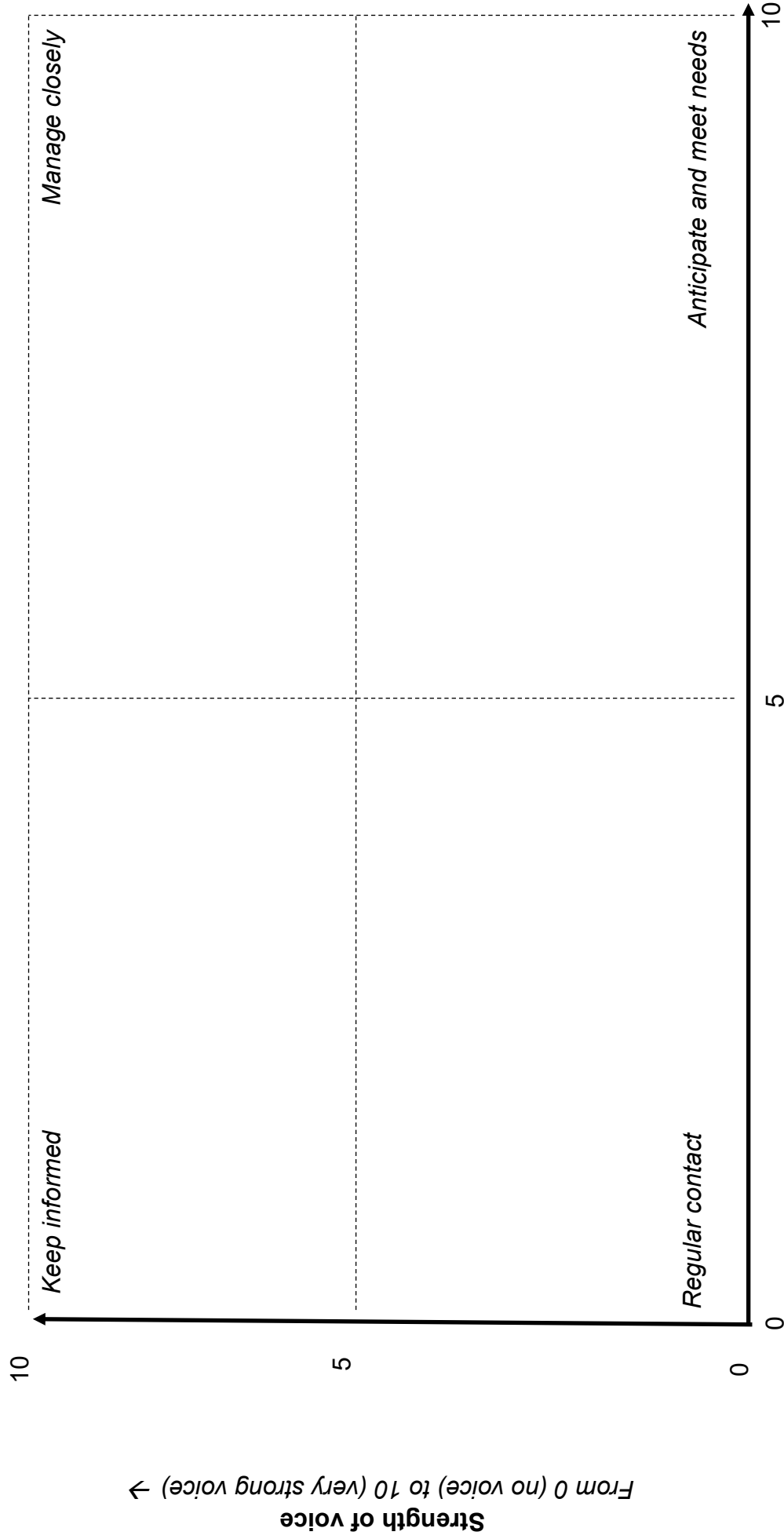


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**Managers:** Please be aware of reputational risk and Freedom of Information sensitivities that are required as part of any stakeholder analysis. It's also important to speak to your communications business partners if you think your consultation will have these types of risks so that the messaging and communications cascade can be managed.

[illegible]

# Appendix 5: Blank Stakeholder Matrix Template



## Appendix 6: Blank Consultation and Engagement Plan

<b>Name of engagement / consultation activity:</b>	
<b>Lead Officer:</b>	
<b>Project Manager (PM) (if part of a Project):</b>	
<b>Service / team:</b>	

The outcome of this Consultation and Engagement will report to:	
Name	Role

Version control:			
Version	Author	Date	Description
v1			

### Consultation and Engagement purpose and background

*An explanation of the issues and the purpose of the project, key information to set the scene*

--

### Strategic Objectives

*What the key strategic objectives of the project are, and how these relates to the corporate plan*

--

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## Engagement approach

*A description of the engagement approach to be used, describing the various engagement stages and methods*

--

## Stakeholders and methods

*A summary of the people and groups you want to engage / consult with from your stakeholder analysis including impacted groups from your equality impact assessment. The methods you will use to gather information, based on the best ways to target your key audiences or impacted groups*

Stakeholder	Method	What stage
e.g., CE residents	e.g., Online / paper survey	e.g., Consultation stage

## Activity plan

*The time to take for each stage including preparation, live engagement / consultation, analysis phase and feedback phase*

Activity	Who / team responsible	Estimated date / timescales
e.g., Draft questions	e.g., John Smith, Public health	e.g Before 10th June

# Action plan

Communications tactics to promote the engagement / consultation

Activity	Audience	Channel	Date / timescale	Who
e.g., Press release	Residents & wider stakeholders	e.g., Issued to all media	e.g., September 2nd	e.g., Media Team

# Analysis, Reporting and feedback

How will analysis be carried out / how will the draft feedback be reported and shared with participants.

Analysis tools and expertise required:	
Reporting required:	
Public feedback methods:	

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## Budget and Resource

*What funding and resources do you need in order to successfully deliver the plan?*

<b>Budget / costs:</b>	
<b>Resources:</b>	

## Risk Assessment

*What are the anticipated risks and mitigations?*

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>

## Appendix 7: Blank Communications Template

### Comms ## - Title here

#### Classification, resources and timescale

Service		Committee	
Corporate Plan Priority		Communications Strategy for Residents Priority	
Subject			
Comms lead		Type	
Budget		Bloom	
Start		Go-live	End

### Background / narrative

*An overview of the project.*

### Communications objectives/outcomes

Communications activity tries to change what people:		
Know	➡	Provide or clarify information and/or correct misinformation, misconception – in ways that are accessible and easy to understand
Think	➡	Put information into context of other knowledge and values, helping people reflect on what information means to them
Feel	➡	Nudge emotional response and personal relationship to knowledge
Do	➡	Provoke or call to action

*Communications-specific outcomes and objectives for this plan*

### Audiences and stakeholders

Communications activity can take people on an engagement journey:					
Unaware >>>>	Aware >>>>>	Informed >>>	Interested >>>	Involved >>>	Leadership
We must consider people's starting attitude and position in relation what we are doing:					
Advocate	Agnostic	Sceptical	Critical	Cynical	

*Edit / add new rows as the project requires*



Audience / stakeholder	Notes
Residents and customers	
Children, young people, parents and carers	
Seldom-heard communities	Define for each project
Staff	
Managers	
Borough Councillors	
Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise (VCFSE) sector organisations	
Key community influencers	
Businesses (local, regional and national)	
Developer and investor community	
Service delivery partners	
Schools, colleges, early years providers	
Town and parish Councils	
MPs	
Local, regional and national public sector agencies.	
Add more rows as required...	

## Tactics / Approach

*How we are going to achieve the communications objectives / outcomes*

## Products / types of activity

*Examples of what we are going to do*

## Key messages

*The key messages and lines to take*

Action plan and timeline

#	Date/time	Activity/Event	Comms/lead	Audience(s)	Channel	Notes
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						
8						
9						
10						
11						
12						
13						
14						
15						
16						
17						
18						
19						
20						

## Evaluation, performance, reporting

How are we going to demonstrate how well we have delivered the communications objectives and outcomes?

## Communications products

Record / link to final versions of media releases, statements and other products.

## Notable coverage

List press, online, broadcast and social coverage

## Appendix 8: Report Template

Report section	Contents
Executive Summary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Short introduction</li> <li>• Short summary of the main report</li> <li>• Short summary of the conclusions</li> </ul>
Contents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contents page</li> <li>• Author / Team name</li> <li>• Report publication date</li> </ul>
Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purpose of the consultation</li> <li>• Detailed consultation methodology</li> <li>• Number of consultation responses</li> <li>• Details</li> </ul>
Main report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Split into sections based on themes</li> <li>• Summarises all survey closed comment survey questions by theme</li> <li>• Summarises all survey open comment questions by theme</li> <li>• Summarises all other consultation responses by theme</li> </ul>
Conclusions	Overall final conclusions drawing on a data presented within the report to draw conclusions – the author here has more license to add opinion to the facts presented within the remainder of the report
Appendices	<p>Appendices are used to present supplementary information too long to be included in the main report, and may cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More detail about the consultation methodology</li> <li>• Reporting on consultation responses broken down by protected characteristics / resident demographics</li> <li>• A map of respondent locations</li> <li>• Full email / letter responses printed verbatim (but redacted where necessary)</li> <li>• Full written analysis of open comment questions</li> <li>• Full social media analysis</li> <li>• Project analytics</li> </ul>

## Appendix 9: How your colleagues can support you

Team	What do they do	How can they support me	Notice required to support engagement / consultation activity
<b>Communications</b>	The team plans, manages and delivers news, public relations and promotion for the Council services, initiatives, projects, programmes and priorities to a wider range of audiences, internal and external stakeholders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote and encourage engagement on information or two-way conversation opportunities with internal and external stakeholders, including residents</li> <li>Oversight of wider co-dependencies and relationships that can help position service-specific engagement activity in the wider context of policy and public discourse</li> <li>Access to internal and external channels, management of organisational reputation</li> <li>Manage campaign and marketing of consultations</li> <li>Assist with storytelling as to why engagement and consultation is important</li> </ul>	<p>Depends on prioritisation or relative reputational impact.</p> <p>Rule of thumb: 4 - 6 weeks</p>
<b>Policy &amp; Change</b>	<p><b>Business Performance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Statutory performance returns</li> <li>Quarterly performance reports</li> </ul> <p><b>Research and Consultation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data and insight about Cheshire East across a broad range of topics</li> </ul>	<p><b>Research and Consultation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support with access to the Open Data site</li> <li>Knowledge of research and gathering evidence</li> <li>Record of consultations that have been on the Council website</li> <li>Experts on consultation and the law</li> <li>Manage the digital influence panel</li> </ul>	4 - 6 weeks

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Host the open data Cheshire East website <a href="#">Insight Cheshire East</a></li> <li>• Act as the corporate tool for consultation within Cheshire East. Provides specialist advise and supports other directorates when required.</li> <li>• Manage the Cheshire East <a href="#">Digital Influence Panel</a></li> </ul> <p><b>Programme Management Office</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project and programme management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advice on what a statistically sound data sample would consist of</li> </ul> <p>Contact us to present to the new Town and Parish Councils network!</p>	
<b>Communities Team</b>	<p><b>Community Development Officers:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• work together with residents and established partnerships to build safe and healthy communities with services in the right place at the right time</li> <li>• actively listen to our communities, striving towards co-production where our communities feel empowered and able to make a difference for their fellow residents</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use an asset-based community development approach to build trust and strong relationships with local residents and within the VCFSE sector to better understand community needs</li> <li>• Actively listen, understand and engage with residents to ensure their voice is heard/gaps are identified,</li> <li>• Work together with local networks and residents</li> <li>• Ensuring residents have an opportunity to connect with local decision making</li> </ul>	<p>No notice required, we regularly engage with residents and VCFSE sector partners</p>

Public Health	<p><b>Health improvement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wide ranging action to improve health and wellbeing and to reduce health inequalities</li> </ul> <p><b>Health protection</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Action for clean air, water and food, infectious disease control, protection against environmental health hazards, chemical incidents and emergency response</li> </ul> <p><b>Health services</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting the contracting and development of locally commissioned services</li> <li>• Working with partners in the NHS and VCFSE to advise and support with transformation, wider service planning, commissioning and development, quality improvement, equity of access, clinical effectiveness, governance and efficiency</li> </ul> <p><b>Public health intelligence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Surveillance, monitoring and assessment of health and the determinants of health, plus the development of the public health evidence base and knowledge</li> <li>• Health needs assessments incorporating qualitative and quantitative data</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Principal source of advice on matters relating to population health, wellbeing and inequalities</li> <li>• Provide advice and support with data and intelligence, health needs assessments, and policy and strategy development</li> <li>• Signposting to a wide variety of relevant stakeholders in relation to health and wellbeing</li> <li>• Members of the Public Health team also contribute to the Cheshire East Intelligence Network, which is chaired by a Consultant in Public Health</li> </ul>	Flexible, little notice required
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<b>Customer Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and drive standards of customer services across the Council</li> <li>• Delivery of frontline services delivered via the Customer Service Centre</li> <li>• Leading the development of the Councils digital service, providing customers and staff with accurate and timely information via the Cheshire East website and Centranet site, delivering an excellent online experience and driving the take up of digital services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to customer data on service requests, methods of contact, complaints etc</li> <li>• Team of staff who have regular contact with multiple customers - potential to support engagement/consultation activity</li> <li>• Digital Team who can develop and support online consultation and engagement</li> </ul>	
<b>Economic Development</b>	<p>Support the delivery of the development and regeneration projects and schemes agreed within Cheshire East's capital programme, and which contribute to the Borough's economic strategy.</p> <p>The team also engages with businesses, developers and agents across the borough to inform and support development plans and inward investment enquiries.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Co-ordinating Cheshire East Council input from other services such as legal team, highways team, planning team, etc.</li> <li>• Access to business contacts for businesses that have previously engaged with the service. The team maintains a business contact CRM system with contacts for circa 3,000 businesses in the borough</li> <li>• Facilitate workshops and discussions with key employers represented on various Business Forums. This includes the Cheshire East Business Forum and the Cheshire Business Leaders Group.</li> </ul>	As much notice as possible



<b>Adult Social Care</b>	Overall management of Adult Social Care	Experience working with groups of service users, safeguarding service user group, learning disability partnership board, mental health partnership board.  Multi-agency working with partners via Local Safeguarding Adult Board, Safer Cheshire East Partnership Board.	2 weeks' notice
<b>Children's Social Care</b>	<p>The Children's Development and Partnerships Team leads and co-ordinates on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>partnership working including support to The Children and Young People's Trust, the Corporate Parenting Committee, 0-25 Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Partnership and the Early Help Together Board</li> <li>strategy development and implementation including the Children and Young People's Plan, Corporate Parenting Strategy and SEND Strategy</li> <li>cross-service business functions for Children's and Adults Services and ensuring communication and engagement across the service is coordinated and consistent</li> <li>support embedding participation into frontline and strategic children's services, partner services, commissioning, recruitment of frontline and senior managers.</li> </ul>	<p>We work across children's services and partnerships so have access to a range of distribution lists and forums to engage with residents, staff and partners.</p> <p>Contact the team email address for any requests for consultation and engagement with young people: <a href="mailto:participation@cheshireeast.gov.uk">participation@cheshireeast.gov.uk</a></p> <p>The groups on offer:  <a href="#">Cheshire East Youth Council</a>   <a href="#">CheshireEast MarketPlace</a>  <a href="#">My Voice   CheshireEast MarketPlace</a>  <a href="#">Jigsaw for young people with additional needs   CheshireEast MarketPlace</a></p> <p>When groups aren't suitable, Children's Social Care can access other groups in the wider Youth Support Service or school groups that they have links with.</p>	As much notice as possible

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• support young people to campaign on issues that are important to them, linking to regional and national campaigns including the UK Youth Parliament.</li></ul>		
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## Appendix 10: Consultation and Engagement Evaluation Form

This evaluation form is for each project lead to complete after a consultation or engagement activity. We want to create a culture of learning, and so by completing and sharing this learning with colleagues and internal forums will help us move forward together along the transformation journey.

Please email this document to the **Research and Consultation Team** at [randc@cheshireeast.gov.uk](mailto:randc@cheshireeast.gov.uk) for their records. The learning will be shared at the quarterly Consultation and Engagement hub meetings.

Question	Evaluation (What went well, what didn't go so well, what could be improved in the future)
Did everyone involved (staff, consultees, partners) understand the objectives of the exercise?	
Were the right stakeholders involved and did you successfully reach all your stakeholders?	
Were the numbers who took part as expected? (If you had set a minimum response level, did you reach your targets?)	
Were you successful in reaching groups or individuals whose views have not traditionally been recognised?	
Did you get the level of information you provided right? (e.g. it was easy to access, relevant to the consultation, produce in plain language, easy to understand and available in other languages and in other formats, e.g. Braille and audio cassette, where necessary)	

Was the engagement/consultation accessible (e.g interpreters were provided if necessary, venues were accessible, seating and set up encourage participation)?	
Did the methods used achieve the objectives? (Consider the balance between quantitative and qualitative methods and if one method worked better than the other and why)	
Was the timescale and process kept to? If not, why not?	
What were the costs (include staff time)? Were there any unforeseen costs?	
How did the participants evaluate it? - What did they think of the information provided?	
Did it lead to a change of policy, service etc.? How?	
What would you do differently next time?	

## Appendix 11: Jargon and definitions

Try to be as clear and transparent as possible and use plain and simple language that everyone can understand. Agree what terms and definitions you are going to use and stick to them.

Here are some of the most common with suggested alternatives:

Jargon	Definition
Best practice	Best bits/Best work/Best results/Best ideas
Bottom up	From local people
Capacity	Ability/Size
Capacity building	Skilling up
Community engagement	Talking to local people
Consensual	Everyone agrees
Core message/Core value	Most important thing
Coterminous/Coterminosity	Common/Same boundaries
Cross-cutting	Working together (affecting several services or different communities)
Empowerment	Giving people the chance
Engagement	Discussions/Talks/Meetings
Engaging users	Talk to people
Evidence base	Proof/Research shows
External challenge	Issues/Problems/Tests to face
Facilitate	Make possible/Help/Aid/Assist
Framework	Outline
Good practice	Good bits/Good work/Good results/Good ideas
Income/Funding streams	Cash
Initiative	Idea/Plan/Proposals/Scheme
Level playing field	Equal/Give everyone the same chance
Multi-disciplinary	Many groups (with different skills) working together
Outcomes	Results
Output	Results
Partnerships	Work with each other
Pathfinder	Pioneering/Leading/Trailblazing
Priority	Main concern
Revenue streams	Cash
Risk based	Carefully judged
Scoping	Researching/Investigating/Studying
Signpost	Pointers
Stakeholder	Organisations/People
Strategic/Overarching	Big picture
Streamlined	Modernise/Update
Sustainable	Long term
Top down	From Central/Local government
Transparency	Clarity
Value added	Giving better value/More for your money
Vision	Idea/Plan/Report

## Appendix 12: Resources

<b>Internal guides</b>	<a href="#">Consultation guide</a> <a href="#">Survey vs. consultation</a> <a href="#">Methods of consultation</a> <a href="#">A quick guide to focus groups</a> <a href="#">Quick Guide Quantitative Research</a> <a href="#">A quick guide to questionnaire content and design</a> <a href="#">A quick guide to Customer Satisfaction Measures</a> <a href="#">Quick Guide to Reliable Results</a> <a href="#">A quick guide to surveys and sampling</a> <a href="#">Sample Size Tables</a>
<b>External resources</b>	<a href="#">FrameWorks Institute</a> <a href="#">PHRASES: Public Health Reaching Across Sectors</a> <a href="#">Employee Words for Public Health Communication</a> <a href="#">Community Planning Toolkit</a>
<b>Statutory Planning Consultation Considerations</b>	<a href="#">Statement of Community Involvement 2022</a>
<b>Co-production</b>	<a href="#">Understanding integration: how to listen to and learn from people and communities</a> <a href="#">Co-production: Working on different levels - Subtitled - YouTube</a> <a href="#">The Parable of the Blobs and Squares - YouTube</a> <a href="#">Stronger-Together - An Age-Friendly co-production toolkit</a>
<b>Working with Children and Young People</b>	<a href="#">Children's Trust</a> <a href="#">Cheshire East Youth Council   CheshireEast MarketPlace</a> <a href="#">My Voice   CheshireEast MarketPlace</a> <a href="#">Jigsaw for young people with additional needs   CheshireEast MarketPlace</a>





open

fair

green



## Consultation and Engagement Programme 2022/23

Name of Project	Type of Activity	Service Area	Nov-22	Dec-22	Jan-23	Feb-23	Mar-23
<b>Planned Activities</b>							
Section 11 Audit (Multi Agency Safeguarding)	Audit	Childrens Safeguarding					
Learning Disability Strategy Refresh	Survey	Commissioning					
Lindlow Community School Proposal	Consultation	Schools					
Middlewich Primary School Proposal	Consultation	Schools					
Cemetries Strategy Consultation	Consultation	Environmental Services					
Cheshire East Web Page Annual Survey	Survey	Corporate					
Home for Ukraine Feedback Survey	Survey	Communities					
Cheshire East People's Panel	Engagement	Business Change					
Budget Engagement	Engagement	Finance					
Bus Service Criteria Review	Consultation	Transport					
Digital Inclusion Strategy	Consultation	Public Health					
Cultural Framework Consultation	Consultation	Cultural Economy					
Crewe Mini-Holland	Engagement	Highways (Jacobs)					
EV Infrastructure Strategy	Consultation	Highways (Jacobs)					
Local Transport Plan (Refresh due to updated Guidance possibly Summer 23)	Consultation	Highways (Jacobs)	TBC				
Bollington Town Rural Housing Needs Survey	Survey	Strategic Housing	TBC				
Participatory Budgeting - Community Funding	Engagement	Communities	TBC				
<b>Ongoing Activities</b>							
Tuition Team Service Evaluation Survey (Annual Survey)	Survey	Childrens and Families					
CDAP Feedback Survey	Survey	Children and Families					
Client's perception of the Independent domestic violence advisory (IDVA) Service	Survey	Domestic Abuse Family Safety Unit					
Cutomer Satisfaction Surveys	Surveys	Customer Services					

Car User Allowance Eligibility Assessment 2021	Audit	HR					
Exit Interview Survey - Further	Survey	HR					
Digital Influence Panel	Project	Business Intelligence					
Environmental Health Satisfaction Surveys	Survey	Environmental Health					
Live Well Website Feedback	Survey	Public Health					
Countryside Ranger Events Satisfaction Survey	Survey	Countryside Ranger Service					
County Parks Satisfaction Survey	Survey	Countryside Ranger Service					
Consultation Results Pages - Update	Project	Business Change					
Consultation & engagement toolkit / guides	Project	Business Change					
Customer satisfaction - Quick Guide Refresh	Project	Business Intelligence					

**Cheshire East Council**  
**Town and Parish Councils**  
**Network**

***A programme of online engagement meetings between Cheshire East Council and town and parish councils in partnership with Cheshire Association of Local Councils.***

<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Venue</b>
Wednesday 11 January 2023	6-7pm	Online via Microsoft Teams
Thursday 16 February 2023	6-7pm	Online via Microsoft Teams
Tuesday 28 March 2023	6-7pm	Online via Microsoft Teams

**To register your interest in attending these meetings email**  
**[nikkihewitt@chalc.org.uk](mailto:nikkihewitt@chalc.org.uk)**

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*Working for a brighter future together*

## **Corporate Policy Committee**

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<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	1 December 2022
<b>Report Title:</b>	Workforce Strategy 2021-2025 – Progress Update
<b>Report of:</b>	Jane Burns - Executive Director, Corporate Services
<b>Report Reference No:</b>	CP/24/22-23
<b>Ward(s) Affected:</b>	ALL

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### **1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to update members on progress against delivery of Cheshire East Council's Workforce Strategy 2021-2025 up to September 2022. It also includes an update on the Mutually Agreed Resignation Scheme (MARS), and a review of the programme of activities supporting organisational culture.
- 1.2. The Strategy sets out how the Council will develop the capacity and capability of our workforce to support the priorities identified within the Corporate Plan and deliver our Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).
- 1.3. The Workforce Strategy supports the Council's vision for an open, fairer, greener Cheshire East, as set out in the Corporate Plan. In particular, the Strategy supports the priorities for an open and enabling organisation, by putting in place plans to support and develop our workforce to be confident, motivated, innovative, resilient, and empowered.

### **2. Executive Summary**

- 2.1. The Council's Workforce Strategy was agreed by Corporate Policy Committee in November 2021. Progress is reported below against the Strategy's four agreed strategic themes. Included within this, is a high-level overview of the recent activity in relation to organisational culture.
- 2.2. To note the re-introduction of an application window to the Mutually Agreed Resignation Scheme for staff.

### **3. Recommendations**

- 3.1. It is recommended that Corporate Policy Committee:

- 3.1.1. note progress in delivering the Workforce Strategy, and the programme of activities to support organisational change; and
- 3.1.2. agree to receive further updates every six months to monitor progress.

#### **4. Reasons for Recommendations**

- 4.1. The Workforce Strategy outlines a clear vision for the development and retention of our workforce, to enable the Council to have in place the resources required to deliver against its commitments as set out in the Council's Corporate Plan 2021-25. Corporate Policy Committee has oversight of progress against the actions contained within the Strategy as part of the Council's commitment to openness and transparency.

#### **5. Other Options Considered**

- 5.1. Not applicable.

#### **6. Background**

- 6.1. Our four-year strategy was adopted in November 2021 and builds on the previous workforce strategy, its achievements, and our organisational cultural change programme. The Strategy was developed, using our workforce profile to identify key issues and in consideration of the feedback provided through Service Workforce Plans. It is built around four strategic priorities; Delivering Our Future, Living Our Values and Delivering Our Employee Deal, Inclusive Workforce – Ensuring Everyone has a Voice and Empowering Our Workforce. An update against each of these priorities is set out in the next section of this report.
- 6.2. Following the Local Government Association's independent culture review in 2018 and acceptance of the report recommendations, the Council's Brighter Future Together (Culture) Programme was created. Since 2020, there has been a slight shift in emphasis to continue working towards the agreed vision for the Council's organisational culture, whilst paying a particular focus on supporting staff and promoting their wellbeing throughout the Covid-19 pandemic and the transition to a new way of working. More recently, the focus has been on supporting recruitment and retention initiatives and from a wellbeing perspective for staff, the increases to the cost of living.
- 6.3. The Council developed the Mutually Agreed Resignation Scheme (MARS) in 2018 to achieve savings identified in the Medium-Term Financial Strategy. Flexibility to offer MARS is included within Council's Pay Policy Statement (PPS) each year and delegated authority is given to the Chief Executive. There have been two MARS cycles, in 2018 and 2019. it has not been used during the period of the COVID-19 pandemic. The decision to run the scheme is delegated to the Chief Executive.
- 6.4. MARS provides an opportunity for employees, in agreement with the Council, to choose to leave their employment voluntarily in return for a discretionary severance payment. This is not the same as voluntary redundancy as the post itself is not deleted. MARS is non contractual and has no pension liabilities. For the Council, it provides an opportunity to create job vacancies

that may be filled by the redeployment of staff from other jobs or for those seeking career developments.

## **7. Progress to Date – Delivering Our Future**

- 7.1.** Strategic workforce planning is critical to our longer-term success, using the insight and data that is available to us. Work has continued at pace on understanding how we can use the HR metrics, available through Unit 4 ERP to better inform workforce planning. In the interim, HR has been working closely with senior managers across the Council to develop a manual monthly ‘dashboard’ of workforce data, focusing initially on vacancy rates to identify priority areas for recruitment and retention support. This data reports a 9.69% vacancy rate across the Council for October 2022. This report will be developed to incorporate additional workforce information to provide further insight and inform future workforce planning.
- 7.2.** Recruitment and retention are a priority nationally and for the Council. To address this, a programme of work is underway, supported by the data identified in paragraph 7.1. A Steering Group has been established to oversee this work programme, chaired by the Executive Director for Corporate Services, with senior service user representation from each Directorate. Activity includes:
- the launch of a new ‘employee benefits’ brochure;
  - updated recruitment web pages, a review of the Council’s recruitment process to understand if it is possible to make this a faster process;
  - piloting sub-regional recruitment fairs, with applications for roles being taken on the day;
  - recruitment via a wider range of social media platforms;
  - and a review of our employee offer to ensure Cheshire East Council remains attractive in an increasingly competitive employment market.
- 7.3.** Due to the current budgetary challenges, consideration has also been given to a range of actions by which we can address the financial pressures whilst minimising the impact on services to residents and staff. On this basis, it has been decided to run another cycle of MARS. Initial and informal discussions with the trade unions indicated that they are supportive of using MARS as an alternative to reducing terms and conditions. The trade unions have now been advised that the decision has been taken to run the scheme again. The intention is to approve as many applications as possible. However, due to business requirements some applications may not be approved. This will take into account those who are employed in an area or role where is currently difficult to recruit and where budgeted staffing levels need to be maintained in a particular area. It is envisaged that successful applicants will leave their employment with Cheshire East Council between late January and April 2023.
- 7.4.** An updated programme of face-to-face senior leadership engagement and development has been delivered for both the Wider Leadership Team and the Wider Leadership Community. These sessions are aligned to our

corporate priorities and designed as an opportunity to promote a 'one team' approach. Manager Share and Support sessions continue to run each week for all line managers across the Council as a mechanism for cascading initiatives, sharing best practice and to allow remote networking. Formal management development at all levels is also provided via the apprenticeship levy, with staff accessing programmes through a range of training providers.

- 7.5.** Work has been continuing to achieve the actions set out in the Council's Apprenticeship Action Plan. Apprenticeship training continues to be commissioned using the approved YPO procurement framework wherever possible.
- 7.6.** The take-up of new apprenticeships has begun to recover post pandemic. Overall figures up to the end of quarter 2 are set out below. In addition to the 41 new starts below, there are also an additional 33 planned starts over the coming weeks, including a cohort of 7 onto the social work degree apprenticeship programme. With these anticipated new starts in place already for quarters three and four, the Council should come close to reaching its target. Schools and ASDVs remain behind the target at this point in time.

2022-2023 (Q2)	CEC	AH&I	Children's	Corporate	Place	Schools	ASDVs	Total
Headcount	3590	991	1049	773	770	2525	492	
Target	83	23	24	18	18	58	11	152
Uptake								
New		0	2	2	1	3	0	8
Staff		6	5	9	4	9	0	33
Total	29	6	7	11	5	12	0	41

- 7.7.** The range of apprenticeships offered at the Council is constantly under review, specifically in line with workforce skills gaps to support recruitment and retention. Relevant new apprenticeship standards are put into place as soon as they become available. Annual cohorts of social work degree apprentices have increased as one of the measures to address recruitment and retention in social work. For the first time, Children's Services has opened their social work degree apprenticeship scheme to external applicants, alongside its internal programme and has attracted five candidates, who will start their programme with Staffordshire University alongside an additional two candidates from Adults, Health & Integration.
- 7.8.** Feedback from schools indicates that apprenticeship uptake would be improved by the introduction of more relevant apprenticeship standards by the Institute of Apprenticeships. Schools have confirmed that there is a



priority need for a SEND qualification through the apprenticeship route. A SENCO level 7 is still at the development stage.

- 7.9.** In addition to this and as part of the workforce planning cycle and development of training plans for each service area, discussions are held with each team to identify apprenticeship opportunities that might be appropriate, paying close attention to skills gaps and succession planning, career pathways and building future resilience. The CPD process is also monitored to ensure apprenticeships are maximised for any training and development needs identified for staff.
- 7.10.** A spotlight on care leaver apprentices continues with HR supporting the Care Leaver Apprenticeship Review Action Plan, led by colleagues in Children's Services. All care leaver apprentices receive additional financial support through the Government's financial incentives and will also receive additional practical support through their apprenticeship from colleagues in Children's Services and the Workforce and Organisational Development Team. One care leaver has very recently started an apprenticeship within the Youth Support Service at Cheshire East Council.
- 7.11.** Cheshire East Council's Apprenticeship Levy Transfer Fund scheme continues successfully. Since February 2021, £244,000, of apprenticeship levy funding has been transferred to other businesses in Cheshire East to support them in upskilling staff and taking on new apprentices. An additional £23,133 of levy funding is also currently pending transfer. This scheme has prevented this funding from reverting to the Government.
- 7.12.** The HR Operations team continues to work closely with maintained schools and academies to support them to meet their workforce needs in terms of employment relation issues and longer-term needs through restructures and academisation. This has been a challenging period, given the introduction of a new HR and Payroll system, as part of Best for Business. The team has provided support during the implementation of the Unit 4 ERP system to ensure accurate and timely processing of salary and HR records for the workforce.

## **8. Progress to Date – Living Our Values and Delivering Our Employee Deal**

- 8.1** Our cultural transformation journey began in 2018 following a review by the LGA review and significant progress has been made since then, supporting Cheshire East Council to become the place where people want to work. Workplace culture has a significant impact on recruitment and retention and forms a key part of the recruitment and retention work set out above in paragraph 7.2.
- 8.2** Work continues on a fundamental review of the way in which we work, moving towards a hybrid model of working. This is constantly under review to ensure it is fit for purpose, whilst also allowing our staff to maintain an improved work life balance. The model is balanced alongside customer need, recruitment and retention challenges, service delivery but also supporting our priority as a council to be carbon neutral by 2025.

- 8.3** The Council has made a clear commitment to every member of staff, through the Employee Deal, to care for their health and wellbeing. More recently, the cost-of-living crisis has been a focus of much of this wellbeing work. To help support staff, wellbeing messages have been increased, including financial wellbeing tips and links. This includes the launch of a fortnightly 'Autumn Wellbeing' e-newsletter. Following feedback from our Brighter Future Champions, dedicated cost of living support information pages on Centranet have been created with a purely staff focus to ensure all the information is easily accessible. New 'Cost of Living: In It Together', weekly staff support calls have been introduced as an opportunity for colleagues from around the Council to share tips they may have that could help others or share how they are feeling with others in a safe space. Work has been undertaken to engage with staff, Brighter Future Champions, managers and senior managers to understand what else the Council can do to help and support staff through this challenging time. This is linked into the Council's wider cost of living programme.
- 8.4** HR has been providing support to managers in relation to managing absence and a comprehensive action plan is in place to continue to undertake focussed activity to proactively manage and reduce absence.
- 8.5** Engagement with the Made My Day has remained steady, with approximately 200 still sent each month, a slight increase on the figures from last year which averaged at approximately 170 per month. There has also been an increase in team recognition through the Made my Day, following improvements to the online submission form and nominators now also have the option to include manager details in their submission to increase visibility. Made my Day figures are promoted within Team Voice on a regular basis and examples of why some Made my Days have been sent shared, again to help promote the scheme.

## **9. Progress to Date – Inclusive Workforce – Ensuring Everyone has a Voice**

- 9.1** New joint trade union and management consultative arrangements were implemented from January 2022 and work is on-going to embed these to ensure efficient and effective processes, with decisions being made at the appropriate level to support business delivery and good employment relations throughout the organisation. The arrangements will be reviewed in early 2023 to ensure that they continue to meet these aims.
- 9.2** The programme for staff engagement has aligned to hybrid working and HR continues to support weekly themed 'Manager Share & Support' sessions. Attendance and feedback on these sessions continues to be excellent. 'Conversation With' events have re-started with our Executive Directors, with two being held in November. These sessions provide staff with the opportunity to meet and speak with Executive Directors, to share their experiences and find out what's happening across the Council. 'Coffee and Chat with Lorraine' sessions have also been put in place for small groups of staff to engage informally and directly with the Chief Executive. These monthly sessions are held face-to-face in different locations across the borough. Again, the sessions have been very well received by those staff that have attended.

- 9.3** Since 2018, our Champions Community has continued to play a key role in our culture journey, as an important link between staff and the organisation. The Brighter Future Champions have provided feedback on different initiatives, raised concerns and have shared information with their teams when required. A review of this group of dedicated and enthusiastic staff has been completed to ensure it is as fully representative as possible of our workforce. This has resulted in new staff champions coming forward.

## **10. Progress to Date – Empowering Our Workforce**

- 10.1** The Council's e-learning platform, Learning Lounge, was significantly redeveloped at the end of 2021, with additional functionality to book onto all training courses being switched from the Oracle system to Learning Lounge. The system is now operated by single sign-on and the electronic recording of PDRs through Learning Lounge recommenced in April 2022. This provides a platform to record PDR conversations and allows managers to track completion rates of both PDRs and training for their staff.
- 10.2** The new system has been demonstrated through all the staff engagement routes and HR continue to offer support and demonstrations to ensure functionality is maximised.
- 10.3** Training programmes have been commissioned across all directorates in line with identified skills gaps. Continuing Professional Development (CPD) requests continue to fund individual development needs not available via the apprenticeship levy.

## **11. Implications**

### **11.1. Legal**

- 11.1.1. There is no legal requirement to produce a Workforce Strategy. However, it is necessary to provide a clear articulation of our workforce priorities and to ensure alignment with the Corporate Strategy.
- 11.1.2. The MARS scheme is not contractual and does not form part of staff terms and conditions. All applications will be monitored to ensure that decisions taken are not directly or indirectly linked to a protected characteristic, for example age, sex or disability. The Equality Impact Assessment has been updated for this exercise.

### **11.2. Finance**

- 11.2.1. The delivery of the actions set out in the Workforce Strategy is within existing budgets and approved business cases.
- 11.2.2. Those actions contained within the strategy that relate to the delivery of apprenticeship will be funded through the Council's existing apprenticeship levy funding.
- 11.2.3. Given the prevailing economic and industrial relations conditions, it is anticipated that savings from MARS could be realised in 2022/23, but it is very difficult to quantify the level of savings that MARS could generate as the level of saving depends on the number, and grade, of posts that are deleted as a result of MARS.

- 11.2.4. It should be noted that the first £30,000 of any MARS payment will be classed as a severance payment and would be paid free of income tax and national insurance. As Settlement Agreements will be required there will be costs incurred in respect of this legal process.
- 11.2.5. Cheshire Pension Fund have previously confirmed that early payment of an unreduced pension to anyone over 55 years of age would not apply as the scheme does not constitute Voluntary Redundancy or Early Retirement. Staff who accept the offer of MARS who are over 55 would have the choice to take an actuarially reduced pension or to defer their pension benefits to a later date.

### **11.3. Policy**

- 11.3.1 The Workforce Strategy supports the Corporate Plan and the Council's vision for an "Open, Fairer, Greener Cheshire East". The Strategy supports the priorities for an open and enabling organisation, by putting in place plans to support and develop our workforce to be confident, motivated, innovative, resilient, and empowered.

### **11.4 Equality**

- 11.4.1 The Workforce Strategy aims to improve the experience of working for the Council for all members of staff. It also sets out key priorities and actions to ensure our workforce is inclusive to all and our recruitment and selection processes promote recruitment and selection for all underrepresented groups. It supports the delivery of the Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy.

### **11.5 Human Resources**

- 11.5.1 The Workforce Strategy covers the breadth of services with HR and sets the priorities for Human Resources to work towards for the next four years.
- 11.5.2 An Equality Impact Assessment for MARS has been updated taking into account any exclusions of staff/services who may be undergoing restructuring. The Council is also able to control the numbers and areas in which staff can leave and if a genuine business case for this is not justified any applications can be rejected. Effective communication with the workforce will be required in relation to this offer.
- 11.5.3 The Trade Unions are supportive of using MARS as an alternative to reducing terms and conditions including mileage rates.

### **11.6 Risk Management**

- 11.6.1 There are risks to service delivery across the Council if plans are not put in place to address skills gaps and work is not undertaken in relation to recruitment and retention in an increasingly competitive market.

**11.7 Rural Communities**

11.7.1 There are no specific implications for rural communities.

**11.8 Children and Young People/Cared for Children**

11.8.1 The delivery of the Council's Action Plan for Apprenticeships includes work to increase the number of apprenticeships available across the Council for our cared for children.

**11.9 Public Health**

11.9.1 There are no public health implications.

**11.10 Climate Change**

11.10.1 The delivery of the priorities within the Workforce Strategy that are focussed on new ways of working and the delivery of the agile working policy will contribute towards our workforce becoming more carbon neutral, through reduced commuting into work and commuting in between buildings to attend meetings in person.

<b>Access to Information</b>	
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Appendices:	None
Background Papers:	None

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*Working for a brighter future together*

## **Corporate Policy Committee**

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<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	1 December 2022
<b>Report Title:</b>	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion – Annual Review
<b>Report of:</b>	Jane Burns, Executive Director of Corporate Services
<b>Report Reference No:</b>	CP/61/22-23
<b>Ward(s) Affected:</b>	All

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### **1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to update members on progress against delivery of the Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy 2021-2025.
- 1.2. The strategy supports our corporate plan vision of an open, fair and green Cheshire East. It particularly promotes our “fair” vision of reducing inequalities, promoting fairness and opportunity for all and support for our most vulnerable residents.

### **2. Executive Summary**

- 2.1 The infrastructure for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion has developed over the last year. This is shown in the diagram at Appendix 1.
- 2.2 Progress has been made to implement the Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion strategy during 2022. The accompanying action plan contains 29 actions, 12 of these have been achieved (41%) and 17 have been partially achieved (59%).

### **3. Recommendations**

- 3.1.** The Committee is asked to note progress in delivering the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and highlight any areas of risk, challenge and good practice.

### **4. Reasons for Recommendations**

- 4.1.** The EDI strategy outlined our ambitions to reduce inequalities and promote fairness for all and supports achievement of our Corporate Plan. Oversight of progress of implementation of the objectives of the strategy is part of the Council's commitment to openness and transparency.

### **5. Other Options Considered**

- 5.1.** Not applicable.

### **6. Background**

- 6.1.** The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy was approved in April 2021 by the former Cabinet. It sets out refreshed ambition and objectives as part of the duty to comply with the Equality Act 2010 and to improve public services for everyone. The strategy set the vision to ensure that Cheshire East is an area of equal opportunity where everyone has a fair chance, and people from all backgrounds take part in community life.
- 6.2.** The EDI strategy set out five key objectives, which are:
- Include – listen and involve all voices;
  - Inspire – celebrate and promote diversity and the positive opportunities it brings;
  - Integrate – deliver and promote accessible services for all; and
  - Inform – empower people to respectfully challenge discriminatory and poor behaviour
  - Impact – support and deliver meaningful change
- 6.3.** A workplan was developed to document the key actions proposed to deliver the ambitions of the plan. The plan has been led collectively from officers across the council. Progress against the plan is regularly considered by the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Board.
- 6.4.** The infrastructure for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion has developed over the year. The Council has an overarching EDI Board which is chaired by an Executive Director. The Executive Director lead for equality, diversity and inclusion is the Executive Director for Children and Families. The Member champion for equality, diversity and inclusion, Councillor Houston, sits on the Council EDI Board. The Board has oversight of all EDI activity at the Council. Every Directorate within the Council has an EDI Board, which reports into the Council EDI Board. The Directorate Boards consider EDI



activities, challenges and awareness days in relation to the specific service areas within the Directorate. The Council also has 7 staff network groups. These are: VibranCE, the Racial Equality Network, the Differently Abled Network, The Circle, the Early Careers Network, the Women's Network and the Armed Forces network. The latter four of these networks have been established in the last year. The organisation is also supported by EDI Champions. The Champions are staff who are committed to creating a culture of tolerance, kindness and inclusivity at Cheshire East Council. Champions commit to undertaking a series of EDI related training course and meet as a group to raise any issues coming from the workforce, and to feedback on any suggested improvements.

- 6.5. A "stock take" review of the EDI strategy was undertaken in November 2022. This has provided an opportunity to assess progress made to date in delivering the identified actions to implement the ambitions of the strategy. This is captured in detail in Appendix 2.
- 6.6. The review of progress is to ensure that the actions are progressing to plan and are meeting the agreed aims and objectives of the strategy. The review also offers an opportunity to identify areas of good progress, and areas which may benefit from accelerated focus.
- 6.7. In summary, 41% of actions have been achieved, and 59% of actions have been partially achieved. This evidences considerable progress since the last review, when 17% of actions had been achieved, 52% had been partially achieved and 31% had not yet been progressed. All actions within the EDI strategy workplan have now been progressed.
- 6.8. Highlights in the progression of the strategy after the second year of implementation are as follows:

#### **Include**

The council have refreshed the infrastructure for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and this is set out in Appendix 1. Staff networks have increased significantly, from 3 groups to 7.

The Council has developed a Consultation and Engagement toolkit, which supports equality, diversity and inclusion and has recently undertaken a People's Panel, which attracted a diverse range of residents, including those who do not usually engage with the Council.

The Armed Forces Event that took place in Queen's Park in June 2022 had an unprecedented success with a 28,402 people attending over the 2-day period.

#### **Inspire**

A key EDI events calendar was agreed for 2022. This will be refreshed at the EDI Board in January 2023. Awareness events and days have been

marked by the Council, directorates and staff network groups throughout the year.

The Council were a key partner in Crewe Pride in October 2023. This has led to a network of the 9 Pride events across Cheshire to be created, with a view to developing a series of themed events in 2023.

When the 2023 events calendar is agreed, an associated communications plan will be developed. Work is already progressing for International Women's Day in March 2023, which is being led by the Women's Network.

Data concerning around residents and communities will be enhanced through the release of Census 2021 data. Plans are being established to provide reports and analysis once the multi-variate tables are released by ONS for the Cheshire East area and these will ensure that the content and style of reports and analysis enable an improved understanding of how the population has changed over time.

In 2021 there were 3 staff peer networks, in 2022 this has increased to 7 peer networks, with over 100 members of staff regularly involved. Staff networks have been asked to support a range of initiatives, such as the development of the Heritage Centre in Crewe, the recruitment and retention group and the development of hybrid working models.

The Council has registered as a member of the Sunflower Lanyard recognition Scheme to support people with hidden disabilities. The package purchased comes with posters and training materials and is designed to support both staff and visitors in council premises. It will be in place initially in libraries and customer service centres, and a communications launch is planned for late 2022.

The Council is on track to achieve Disability Confident Level 1 status by 2023.

In 2022 an upgrade to learning lounge now provides managers with a dashboard, where they can see who in their teams have completed training. Managers can take ownership to encourage staff to complete the mandatory training and set this as an action on their Personal Development Review as required.

### **Integrate**

Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) are a standard part of committee reports and accompany all key decisions. EIA s are published on the Councils website. In 2022 to date, 15 new EIAs have been published on the website.

A new template for EIA completion and associated EIA guidance are being developed to ensure that they are enabling a more comprehensive analysis of impact to be undertaken. A refreshed EIA process will support understanding of both individual and cumulative impacts of proposals.

The TOGETHER principles will be published in the Consultation and Engagement toolkit as the agreed approach to co-production. The Consultation and Engagement toolkit also guides staff on how to engage and work with our local communities to co-produce and co design our local service offer and the design and delivery of services.

The Councils Social Value Policy and Framework have been updated. The Social Value Webpages provide a catalogue of resources, and evidence of impact. From a monitoring perspective our key Social Value measures which include ongoing measures previously used within our annual SV survey, are now in the process of being embedded within our new contract management system (Atamis).

### **Inform**

The council continues to offer a range of training and development activities to staff through its “Learning Lounge” system. Courses such as unconscious bias, helping disabled customers, supporting carers in the workplace, and mental health awareness have taken place. Staff can now upload their Personal development Review objectives to learning lounge, including any agreed development needs. The following mandatory eLearning modules are available on the Learning Lounge to support the HR policies and procedures, and are updated in line with the policies:

- Dignity at Work (all staff)
- Disciplinary Procedure (managers)
- Equality in the Workplace (all staff)
- Grievance Policy and Procedure (managers)

There have been several activities undertaken during 2022 to tackle hate crime and promote the reporting of such crimes. Cheshire Constabulary launched a website for victims of hate crime which includes an online reporting form to enable victims to report hate crime online. Work has also been undertaken to raise awareness of Hate Crime to minority communities across Cheshire East. This includes welcome packs provided at the hotel for Afghans, and staff on site to address any concerns and literature displayed at the location for advice and support. Advice and Information leaflets have also been produced for schools across Cheshire East. A multi-agency Gypsy and Traveller Operational Group has been established to support members of this community. In June 2022 a Pride of Romani Event was launched, raising awareness of Hate Crime, including talks at the event and information on how to report. Officers and staff have attended events and festivals to provide information and raise awareness on reporting of Hate Crime. Information and guidance for Hate Crime provided to those receiving support as part of the CE Ukrainian Support Scheme. Additionally, a Graffiti policy is in place to remove offensive remarks from Council property.

### **Impact**

An annual progress report in relation to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion is scheduled on the work programme for Corporate Policy Committee each year.

- 6.9.** In 2021, the first year of the implementation of the EDI strategy coincided with the period when the Council was continuing to respond to the coronavirus pandemic. During 2022, the Council has been able to accelerate progress towards achievement of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion strategy.

## **7. Consultation and Engagement**

- 7.1.** Consultation was undertaken to inform the Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy in 2020/21. The outcome of the consultation can be found via the following link:

[Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Consultation Results](#)

## **8. Implications**

### **8.1. Legal**

The strategy, and its associated workplan, have been developed in the context of our obligations under the Equality Act (2010) and the Public Sector Equality Duty.

The Public Sector Equality Duty (Equality Act 2010) requires the council to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

### **8.2. Finance**

There are no direct financial implications of this report. Areas identified for acceleration will be subject to a Business Case being submitted, in order to provide any necessary funding.

### **8.3. Policy**

The equality, diversity and inclusion strategy is a key policy document for the council and supports the Corporate Plan.

**8.4. Equality**

The EDI strategy sets the vision and objectives for the council's approach to equality, diversity and inclusion.

**8.5. Human Resources**

There are no direct human resources implications of this report.

**8.6. Risk Management**

There are no key risks identified in relation to the Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion strategy. There have been some low-level risks identified in relation to the pace of progress. Risks continue to be managed by the EDI Board and mitigating actions developed to manage emerging risks.

**8.7. Rural Communities**

The "integrate" objective of the EDI strategy focuses on delivering and promoting accessible services for all. Rural communities should be positively impacted by implementation of the strategy.

**8.8. Children and Young People/Cared for Children**

Children and Young People and Cared for Children should be positively impacted by the implementation of the EDI strategy. They are particularly considered in relation to the "include" objective, which refers to "listen and involve all voices".

**8.9. Public Health**

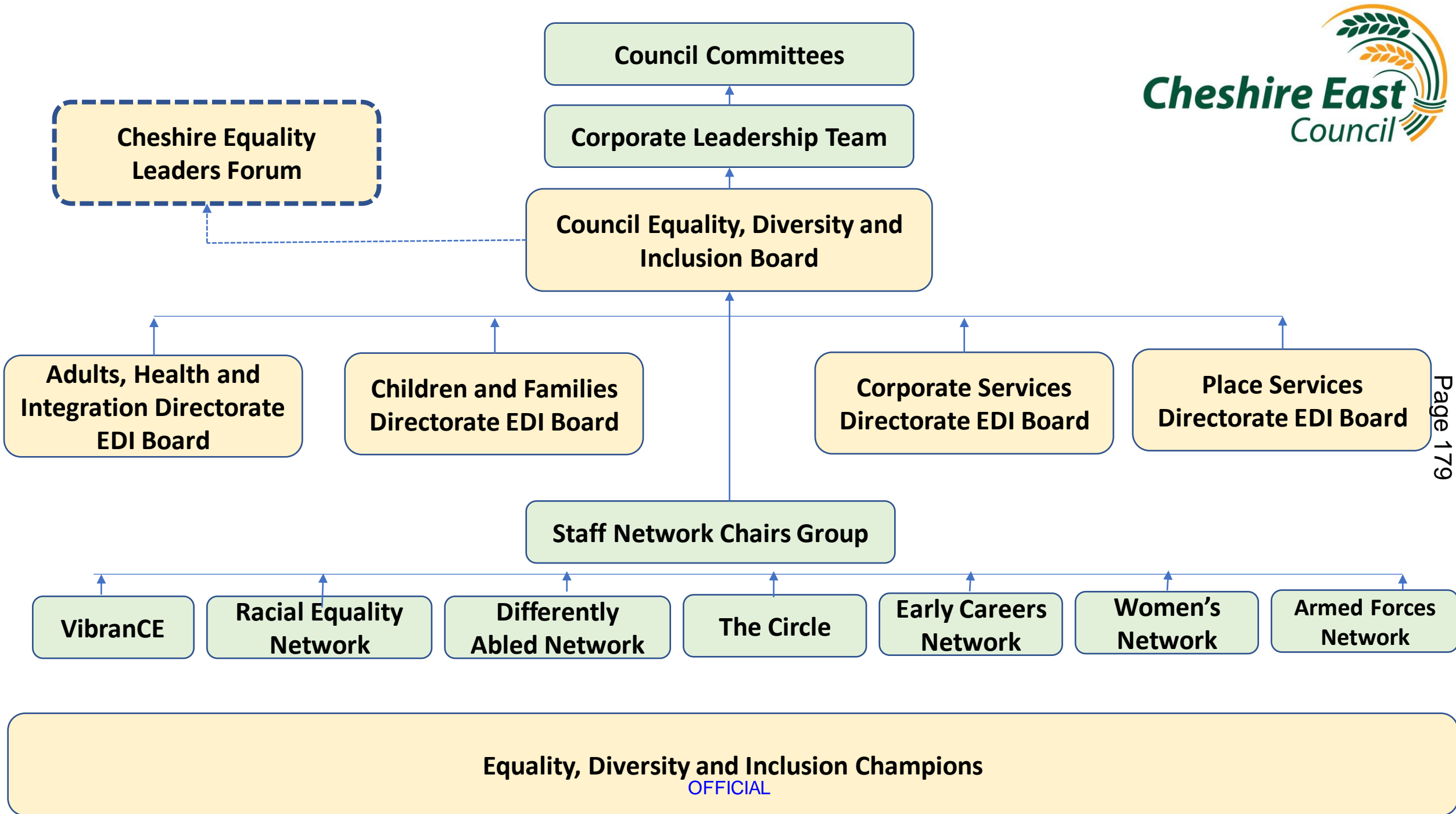
Progression of the EDI strategy promotes and supports public health. The strategy commits to strive to provide equal life opportunities for all residents. These include not only those with protected characteristics but also those who may be disadvantaged through socio-economic factors, such as employment opportunities, physical and mental health and access to educational opportunities.

**8.10. Climate Change**

The EDI strategy was developed in accordance with the "green" priority of the Corporate Plan.

<b>Access to Information</b>	
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Appendices:	<b>Appendix 1</b> – Cheshire East Council EDI Infrastructure  <b>Appendix 2</b> – EDI Strategy Progress Review

Background Papers:	<p>Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy 2021-2025</p> <p><a href="http://moderngov.cheshireeast.gov.uk/ecminutes/documents/s84312/Equality%20Objectives%20-%20report%20final.pdf">http://moderngov.cheshireeast.gov.uk/ecminutes/documents/s84312/Equality%20Objectives%20-%20report%20final.pdf</a></p> <p>Corporate Policy Committee Report CP/47/21-22</p> <p><a href="#">Report Template v5 (cheshireeast.gov.uk)</a></p>
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## Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy – Progress Review November 2022

<b>Objective 1: INCLUDE – Listen and involve all voices</b>					
<b>1a We will promote inclusive opportunities for two-way conversations</b>					
<b>Key Actions</b>	<b>Target Date</b>	<b>Expected Outcome</b>	<b>Data Source and Evaluation methodology</b>	<b>Lead responsibility</b>	<b>Update – November 22</b>
1. Develop our network of equality champions both internal and external to the council, as advocates and promoters of equality and inclusion	Ongoing	Opportunities for inclusive two-way conversations grow Policies and strategies are co-created Staff Groups represented at the EDI Board	HR provide the number of equality champions (40 in 2020) Stakeholder list of external equality champions to be developed	Policy and Change  Staff Network Chairs	<p><b><u>Partially achieved</u></b></p> <p>The equality champions network has been refreshed and progressed in 2022. Plans are being developed to look at stabilising the current membership and refining the expected duties of the role.</p> <p>A training group has been created to support annual training for current members and to ensure that the knowledge of all champions is current.</p> <p>Alongside this, a terms of reference has been drafted and agreed by the current members of the group. The next step to ensure progression and growth is to appoint an EDI officer, which will ensure that the role and champions can compliment each other in driving the EDI agenda for the council.</p> <p>There are now 7 EDI Staff Network groups, and a regular meeting of Network Chairs. These groups have supported developments with regards to particular protected characteristics.</p> <p>There has been progress in engaging with external groups, for example with Body Positive based in Crewe. There is further work required to develop an EDI external stakeholder list.</p>
2. Commit to sharing and presenting information in appropriate and accessible formats.	Ongoing	Documentation and other published material are suitable for the audiences which are accessing it.		Web team & EDI officer to monitor publications online and check all documentation is accessibility checked.	<p><b><u>Achieved (and ongoing)</u></b></p> <p>One output which will support this action, is the development of a consultation and engagement toolkit. The toolkit will include guiding principles for staff to ensure engagement and consultation activity are inclusive and accessible. For example, one-page summaries, using plain English, short strategy documents and coproducing where possible.</p> <p>All documents are routinely checked by Digital Customer Services Team (Web Team) prior to publication to ensure accessibility</p> <p>“Silktide” software enables constant review of the website to check for accessibility Rating Q1 – 93%</p> <p>Microsoft Teams contains several accessibility features, and the EDI Board</p>

					<p>received a demonstration of these from ICT.</p> <p>Ensuring document accessibility is a core requirement for all visual materials produced through the council's corporate framework contract for graphic design and communications projects.</p> <p>Corporate document templates are under development that have accessibility 'built-in' - to make it easier for officers to ensure that all documents produced for Cheshire East Council are accessible by default.</p> <p>In 2022, accessibility standards have been promoted through internal communications (Team Voice and Centranet) <a href="#">Why accessibility matters - an interview with Steve Bennett (cheshireeast.gov.uk)</a></p> <p>There is the functionality to add alt-tags to all images corporate social media output through our social media management system.</p> <p>Documentation has been produced in various languages and formats for several key targeted campaigns, including test and trace, COVID vaccination, Homes for Ukraine scheme, and to support promotion of domestic abuse support.</p>
3. Work collaboratively with voluntary, community and faith organisations to share key messages and opportunities for engagement.	Ongoing	Collaborative activities and communications are developed and promoted where appropriate.	Agreed list of awareness days and events will be used.	Communities team. Communications team. Policy and Change department.	<p><b><u>Achieved (and ongoing)</u></b></p> <p>An asset-based approach is taken to developing services in the Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise (VCFSE) sector. Experts by experience are sought and use a suite of resources to develop services with our communities to empower them to serve themselves.</p> <p>Cheshire Social Action Partnership have established a VCFSE Leaders Board and a Faith Leaders subgroup, which offer regular opportunities for the Council to share key messages and to engage with the sector.</p> <p>In 2022, the Homes for Ukraine scheme offered the opportunity to strengthen the relationship with the VCFSE sector as they played a vital role in understanding and supporting our communities needs.</p> <p>The Adult Safeguarding Board has arranged a bespoke event with our Faith Organisations on 24 November 2022, as part of Adult Safeguarding Week. This is aimed at raising awareness about Adult Safeguarding and to promote engagement.</p>

<b>1b We will seek to listen in order to understand</b>					
1. Expand our opportunities and methods of engaging with residents, partners and stakeholders to ensure that we are proactive and inclusive.	Ongoing	To ensure that all residents can engage with the council. To support digital inclusion. To understand barriers preventing effective engagement and working to remove them.	Consultation and Engagement data will be used to evidence an increase in the involvement of underrepresented groups.	Communities Team Policy and Change Department	<p><b><u>Partially achieved</u></b></p> <p>One output from this group is a consultation and engagement toolkit for implementation across the Council. This toolkit will provide staff with the tools, knowledge and skills to be able to carry out effective and meaningful engagement and consultation with residents and partners. It will promote more engagement for two-way conversations with residents.</p> <p>Another output of this group is scoping a digital engagement platform. The aim of the digital engagement platform is to add to our methods of engagement with residents and stakeholders, and to improve two-way conversations by providing an open feedback site.</p> <p>A workshop involving potential suppliers and members of the consultation and engagement group took place in September 2022, and the information gathered will inform an options appraisal.</p> <p>A refresh of the Cheshire East Partnership digital inclusion strategy 2023-2026 is underway, which is being coproduced with residents and stakeholders. It will be taken to the Health &amp; Wellbeing Board in March 2023.</p> <p>The Council piloted a participatory democracy approach, the Cheshire East People's Panel in October 2022. This offered an incentive scheme (of shopping vouchers) to attend, which encouraged people that do not traditionally engaged with the council. The Panel were selected to ensure that people had a range of protected characteristics and represented the Cheshire East population.</p>
2. Know our audience and communities through robust and up to date stakeholder mapping and management	July 2022	The veteran community will have up to date information on where local support is available -Support mental health -Safe place for veterans -Volunteering opportunities -Bring the community together -Create a charity network -Public awareness	The Communities team will capture both quantitative and qualitative feedback directly from people attending events.	Communities team	<p><b><u>Partially achieved</u></b></p> <p>The draft Communications Strategy for Residents includes Aim 2 - Building engaged audiences from Cheshire East's diverse communities, and Priority 5 - Improve communication with under-served audiences. As part of this, we need to ensure that our communications and channels enable armed forces members and veterans' easy access to information and news about our work to specially support them and wider council services.</p> <p>Significant progress has been made in the engagement with the Armed Forces Community. In collaboration with several charity groups a number of breakfast clubs were opened in different parts of Cheshire East with the aim to tackle socioeconomic issues and mental health and isolation, that</p>

		<p>around our veteran community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Services working together</li> <li>-Family fun days</li> <li>-Veterans into employment</li> <li>-Training opportunities</li> </ul>			<p>the veterans are currently facing.</p> <p>New projects regarding digital inclusion, homelessness support for veterans into emergency accommodation are being developed with the aim to implement them by the end of the financial year.</p> <p>The Armed Forces Event that took place in Queen's Park in June 2022 had an unprecedented success with a 28,402 people attending over the 2-day period.</p> <p>The progress within this workstream culminated with the receipt of the Silver Award in May 2022 from the Covenant in recognition of all the support our services and employees are offering veterans within our communities.</p> <p>An output from the cross-council consultation and engagement group is a toolkit for implementation across the Council. This toolkit will provide staff with the tools and knowledge to be able to carry out effective and meaningful engagement and consultation with residents and partners, including stakeholder mapping and stakeholder engagement.</p> <p>In terms of the JSNA business as usual, we are making progress with the deep dive reviews, which support up to date stakeholder mapping and management. A draft Equality Impact Assessment has been developed in relation to the JSNA work.</p>
3. Use and consider information including data and intelligence to inform our thinking and action	June 2022	<p>Develop an EDI scorecard to monitor performance and diversity across services. The scorecard will ensure: -</p> <p>The organisation understands the effects of employment policy and practice on its workforce.</p> <p>The organisation has sufficient information about staff to inform robust equality analysis.</p> <p>The workforce profile is updated regularly.</p>	Unit 4 ERP system	Business Intelligence team	<p><b><u>Partially achieved</u></b></p> <p>An Analyst started in post in 2022 to support with the analysis of the data from the Unit 4 system. However, there are challenges with the capture and extraction of data from Unit 4 which are the key priorities for the council. A strategic risk has been established referencing the functionality of unit 4 specifically around this action point within the EDI strategy.</p> <p>Equalities data is being enhanced through the releases of Census 2021 data. Plans are being established to provide reports and analysis once the multi-variate tables are released by ONS for the Cheshire East area. These will ensure that the content and style of reports and analysis enable an improved understanding of how the population has changed over time. The Census 2021 data provides an updated picture of the profile of our residents.</p> <p>Working alongside the customer experience project will ensure that analysis and assessment of needs, dependent upon resident type and characteristics, can be undertaken. This will support more accurate analysis of need and priority identification for our local areas.</p>

		<p>Data is looked at organisationally and service by service.</p> <p>It is possible to analyse data by all of the protected characteristics.</p> <p>The organisation has gathered and published information and data on the profile of its communities and the extent of inequality and disadvantage. Plans are in place to collect, share and use equality information with partners.</p> <p>A comprehensive set of information about local communities/protected characteristics needs and outcomes is regularly updated and published and used to identify priorities for the local area</p>			
<b>Objective 2: INSPIRE – Celebrate and promote our diversity and the positive opportunity it brings</b>					
<b>2a. We will promote local events and activities that seek to reduce isolation, raise awareness, and encourage participation</b>					
1. Develop a communication and engagement plan to identify key events and activities that the Council will promote and support each year	Annual calendar to be agreed.	Residents and staff receive communications around awareness days and associated activities. Improved understanding and awareness. Diversity and inclusivity promoted in the workplace.	Approved version of the Awareness Days list.  Events plans co-created for agreed events.	Policy and Change Department. Equality Champions	<p><b>Achieved</b></p> <p>A key EDI events calendar was agreed for 2022. This will be refreshed at the EDI Board in January 2023.</p> <p>Awareness events and days have been marked by the Council, directorates and staff network groups throughout the year.</p> <p>The Council were a key partner in Crewe Pride in October 2022. This compliments a network of the 9 Pride events across Cheshire to be created, with a view to developing a series of themed events in 2023.</p>

					<p>When the 2023 events calendar is agreed, an associated communications plan will be developed.</p> <p>Work is already progressing for International Women's Day in March 2023, which is being led by the Women's Network.</p>
2. Support and promote community action and cooperation across our partnerships to improve cohesion	Ongoing	<p>There is an increase in the involvement of underrepresented groups.</p> <p>There are a range of innovative approaches to involving communities and arrangements are made to meet specific or individual needs.</p> <p>Vulnerable people/communities are participating including the hardest to reach in the community.</p> <p>There is evidence that mainstream engagement mechanisms are increasingly involving previously under-represented groups.</p> <p>Communities are encouraged or supported to influence or make decisions.</p>	Explore how the Census 2021 data can be used within the council to inform action and design – updated profiles and increased.	Communities team Business Intelligence team	<p><b><u>Partially achieved</u></b></p> <p>Equality data will be enhanced through the release of Census 2021 data. Plans are being established to provide reports and analysis once the multi-variate tables are released by ONS for the Cheshire East area and these will ensure that the content and style of reports and analysis enable an improved understanding of how the population has changed over time.</p> <p>In October 2022 the Council piloted a participatory democracy project, the People's Panel. Members of the Panel including vulnerable members of the community, people with a range of disabilities, people from different ethnic backgrounds and people of different ages and gender. This supported the aim of communities being encouraged to make decisions.</p>
3. Support our staff through Peer Networks and events	Ongoing	<p>Continued development of the Peer Networks and their role. Ensure that policies and strategies are co-created with the Peer Networks.</p>	Evidence that publications reflect our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion. To be audited within the annual equality report.	Policy and Change department.	<p><b><u>Achieved (and ongoing)</u></b></p> <p>In 2021 there were 3 staff peer networks, in 2022 this has increased to 7 peer networks, with over 100 members of staff regularly involved.</p> <p>Staff networks have been asked to support a range of initiatives, such as the development of the Heritage Centre in Crewe, the recruitment and retention group and the development of hybrid working models.</p>

<b>2b. We will proactively take action to ensure our workforce is diverse and representative of the communities we serve</b>					
1. Apply fair recruitment and selection procedures	Ongoing	Ensure that applicants can see their lived experiences amongst others in the workforce	Equality profiles of applicants and new starters	Workforce development Organisational development	<p><b><u>Partially achieved</u></b></p> <p>The Workforce Strategy is being implemented, which includes a key priority around "Inclusive Workforce" and actions to ensure that everyone has a voice.</p> <p>The Council is considering progressing Disability Confident accreditation and therefore an audit of recruitment and selection of candidates with disabilities is underway.</p>
2. Make reasonable adjustments to ensure the work environment and culture meets the needs of all our staff	To be in place for any return to office	<p>Register for the Sunflower lanyard recognition scheme:</p> <p>Staff with hidden disabilities will feel more comfortable at work</p> <p>All staff to be aware of what the scheme is and how to help</p> <p>Specialist training for customer facing staff</p> <p>Ensure that all staff have the correct equipment they need to enable them to do their jobs. Improvements have been made to the working environment. Reasonable Adjustments are provided in a timely fashion consistently across the organisation</p> <p>Differently abled network to review reasonable adjustments guidance to inform</p>		HR Differently Abled Network Equality Officer Workforce development Organisational development	<p><b><u>Partially achieved</u></b></p> <p>The Council has registered as a member of the Sunflower Lanyard recognition Scheme to support people with hidden disabilities. The package purchased comes with posters and training materials and is designed to support both staff and visitors in council premises. It will be in place initially in libraries and customer service centres, and a communications launch is planned for late 2022.</p> <p>The Differently Abled staff network group can advise and support staff who may need additional resources to work effectively. All staff are encouraged to speak with their managers.</p> <p>The Differently Abled Group are reviewing guidance for workplace adjustments.</p>

		policy development.			
3. Monitor and review employment practice and our policies and procedures that support them	Disability confident application to be submitted by 30/06/21  Every PDR cycle	Achieve Disability Confident Employer (level 1) status by 2023 and Level 2 by 2025  Ensure EDI is built into the PDR process to encourage staff to take responsibility for their EDI knowledge and training.	Application via link.	HR Differently Abled Network  Organisational development	<b><u>Partially achieved</u></b>  The Council is on track to achieve Disability Confident Level 1 status by 2023.  In 2022 an upgrade to learning lounge now provides managers with a dashboard, where they can see who in their teams have completed training. Managers can take ownership to encourage staff to complete the mandatory training and set this as an action on their Personal Development Review as required.  Managers and staff are to discuss and comment on their wellbeing during the PDR conversation to ensure support and action planning is embedded.  The mandatory courses are being reviewed and it is being considered to set these to annually completion, where staff will be sent reminders when they need to re-certify.
<b>Objective 3: INTEGRATE – Deliver and promote accessible services for all</b>					
<b>3a. We will ensure that we consider, communicate, and consult with all people regardless of their protected characteristics when developing or changing our services</b>					
1. Undertake Equality Impact Assessments across all development and change activities including services we buy and commission	Ongoing	Polices, strategies and decisions being shaped and informed by equality impact assessments.	Increased number of EIAs.	All staff – with support from Policy and Change department	<b><u>Partially achieved</u></b>  Equality Impact Assessments (EIA) are a regular part of decision-making and are published on the Councils website.  A new template for EIA completion and associated EIA guidance are being developed to ensure that they are enabling a more comprehensive analysis of impact to be undertaken.
2. Provide training and guidance to ensure equality impact assessments are fully understood	2022/23	Create support package for Members to provide advice and guidance on EDI matters to ensure that members have a greater understanding and can challenge inequality appropriately.	Training outcomes.	Member EDI Champion, supported by Democratic Services. Workforce Development. Policy and Change.	<b><u>Partially achieved</u></b>  Member training will be progressed alongside officer training. This will occur following the review of EIAs.  Contact has been made with the Consultation Institute to see if there is an option with the current membership fee for a free review of the documentation to ensure that it is complete. Following this initial contact, the institute have responded with a fee for the assessment, so the way forward must be agreed.  EDI Member training may also be required post-election – this will be scheduled in along with other relevant induction training later in 2023.



3. Publish all equality impact assessments to provide transparency, assurance and information on our decision making	Ongoing	<p>There is senior level commitment to using and understanding equality analysis/ impact assessment to inform planning and decision making.</p> <p>The organisation's assessments are accessible, robust, and meaningful. There is evidence that Members routinely take account of equality analysis/ impact assessment when making decisions.</p> <p>Decisions around budget cuts and savings have taken account of cumulative impact.</p> <p>The findings, recommendations and conclusions are shared effectively to inform decisions and planning.</p> <p>Mitigating actions are identified where appropriate</p>	Details to be included in Annual Equality Report.	Policy and Change department.	<p><b><u>Achieved (and ongoing)</u></b></p> <p>Equality Impact Assessments are published on the council's website. In 2022 to date, 15 new EIAs have been published on the website.</p>
<b>3b. We will ensure that all services we commission meet their obligations under the Equality Act</b>					
1. Engage and work with our local communities to co-produce and co design our local service offer and the design and delivery of major	June 2023	<p>The community and voluntary sector say that they are treated as equal partners by the Council.</p> <p>The organisation achieves considerable social value from its contracts</p>		Commissioning Team TOGETHER	<p><b><u>Partially achieved</u></b></p> <p>The TOGETHER principles will be published in the Consultation &amp; Engagement toolkit as the agreed approach to co-production. The Consultation and Engagement toolkit also guides staff on how to engage and work with our local communities to co-produce and co design our local service offer and the design and delivery of services.</p>

projects such as town centre regeneration schemes and improvements to local neighbourhoods					
2. Require our suppliers to provide adequate and timely equality monitoring information	Ongoing	Local procurement is positively influencing the local economy  There is evidence of providers meeting the organisations equality objectives.  Providers understand and can articulate a commitment to equality.	Contract Management data	Procurement	<b><u>Partially achieved</u></b>  The Councils Social Value Policy and Framework have been updated. The Social Value Webpages provide a catalogue of resources, and evidence of impact: <a href="https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/social-value-resources">Social value resources (cheshireeast.gov.uk)</a> From a monitoring perspective our key Social Value measures which include ongoing measures previously used within our annual SV survey, are now in the process of being embedded within our new contract management system (Atamis).  The Council are piloting the development of our Social Value Unit which will coach and support officers to embed Social Value across the whole commissioning cycle and focus on our local community needs/assets.
3. Ensure that any venue we use or event we promote does not discriminate based on an individual's protected characteristic					<b><u>Achieved</u></b>  The original issue was captured in the EDI Strategy as there had been experience of a Council team using a venue that was perceived to have discriminated against a person's protected characteristic. The Council ceased to use the venue and sought to prevent the issue from reoccurring.  In terms of the Connected Community Centres, which officers can book as venues, within the application form, organisations had to state that they had an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy in place. The grant agreement then specifies that their policy must be submitted with their signed grant agreement. We will then review these prior to grant payments being made.
<b>Objective 4: INFORM – Empower people to respectfully challenge discriminatory and poor behaviour</b>					
<b>4a We will take a zero-tolerance approach to discrimination, taking positive and immediate action where possible</b>					
1. Continue to reinforce and promote the Council's values and behaviours to promote a positive and inclusive workplace culture.		Improved quality and availability of EDI training for Learning Lounge. Ensure all protected characteristics are adequately covered by training available.  All staff to take	Reports on uptake to be produced and inform annual report.  Increase number of EDI related training opportunities.	Staff Networks Workforce development	<b><u>Partially achieved</u></b>  Staff can now upload their PDR objectives to learning lounge, including any agreed development needs.  An Equality, Diversity and Inclusion training plan has been drafted and is awaiting final approval.  Challenging conversations training has been commissioned for areas of the

		responsibility for their own learning to develop awareness and understanding of different peoples' lived experiences.			<p>council that requested it.</p> <p>The following data is available in relation to EDI training courses completed (those highlight in yellow are face to face delivered training sessions):</p> <p>Completions within the last 3 years are shown below:</p> <table><tr><td>Dignity at work</td><td>2621 completions</td></tr><tr><td>Equality in the workplace</td><td>2660 completions</td></tr><tr><td>Equality Act 2010</td><td>361 completions</td></tr><tr><td>Acceptable Behaviour and Language Including Unconscious Bias</td><td>12 seminars, 136 officers attended.</td></tr><tr><td>Helping Disabled Customers</td><td>203 completions</td></tr><tr><td>Supporting Carers in the Workplace Introduction</td><td>71 completions</td></tr><tr><td>Supporting Carers in the Workplace Line managers</td><td>9 completions</td></tr><tr><td>Transgender Training</td><td>71 completions</td></tr><tr><td>Unconscious bias</td><td>123 completions</td></tr><tr><td>Mental Health Awareness</td><td>13 seminars, 120 officers attended</td></tr><tr><td>Mental Health Awareness for managers</td><td>10 seminars, 74 attended.</td></tr><tr><td>Mental Health Awareness</td><td>393 completions</td></tr><tr><td>HIV Awareness</td><td>35 completions</td></tr><tr><td>Introduction to Bipolar</td><td>8 completions</td></tr><tr><td>Pre-retirement training</td><td>4 seminars, 63 officers attended</td></tr></table> <p>Also in 2022, a new training package has been developed around neuro-diversity for the Learning Lounge.</p>	Dignity at work	2621 completions	Equality in the workplace	2660 completions	Equality Act 2010	361 completions	Acceptable Behaviour and Language Including Unconscious Bias	12 seminars, 136 officers attended.	Helping Disabled Customers	203 completions	Supporting Carers in the Workplace Introduction	71 completions	Supporting Carers in the Workplace Line managers	9 completions	Transgender Training	71 completions	Unconscious bias	123 completions	Mental Health Awareness	13 seminars, 120 officers attended	Mental Health Awareness for managers	10 seminars, 74 attended.	Mental Health Awareness	393 completions	HIV Awareness	35 completions	Introduction to Bipolar	8 completions	Pre-retirement training	4 seminars, 63 officers attended
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2. Provide access to clear and robust HR policies and procedures to support officers and managers when challenging poor or unacceptable behaviour	Ongoing	<p>Policies to be reviewed regularly to ensure that they are up to date. Reviews to be conducted in collaboration with staff networks where relevant.</p> <p>Senior leaders in the organisation have stated their commitment to a diverse workforce and</p>	Training provided via Learning Lounge	HR	<p><b><u>Achieved (and ongoing)</u></b></p> <p>The following policies and procedures are currently under review, and will be launched in late 2022:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Dignity at Work Policy and Procedure</li><li>• Disciplinary Policy and Procedure</li><li>• Grievance Policy and Procedure</li></ul> <p>In addition, the Code of Conduct (Officers) is also currently under review and the Equality in Employment Policy is scheduled for review in early 2023.</p>																														

		have made clear what is expected from staff when delivering services to the community.			<p>The following mandatory e-Learning modules are available on the Learning Lounge to support the HR policies and procedures, and are updated in line with the policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dignity at Work (all staff)</li> <li>• Disciplinary Procedure (managers)</li> <li>• Equality in the Workplace (all staff)</li> <li>• Grievance Policy and Procedure (managers)</li> </ul> <p>There are HR workshops for manager in respect of the Discipline, Grievance and Dignity at Work procedures.</p> <p>In addition, there are modules on Learning Lounge for</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acceptable Behaviour and Language (including unconscious bias)</li> <li>• Challenging Conversations/Conflict</li> </ul> <p>The EDI staff network groups have been invited to attend manager share and support sessions before the end of the year to help the managers understand more about the groups and promote them to their teams. There has also been a session on Neurodiversity (April 2022) which was produced by members of the Differently Abled group and is currently being made into an e-Learning course.</p>
<b>4b. We will work in partnership to keep people safe and connected</b>					
1. Contribute and collaborate with partners and stakeholders to tackle hate crime and promote hate crime reporting				<p>CEC / Cheshire Constabulary</p> <p>SCEP – Strategic Group for Community Safety</p> <p>ANSA</p>	<p><b><u>Achieved (and ongoing)</u></b></p> <p>Cheshire Constabulary launched a website for victims of hate crime which includes an <a href="#">online reporting form to enable victims to report hate crime online</a>.</p> <p>Work has been undertaken to raise awareness of Hate Crime to minority communities across Cheshire East. This includes welcome packs provided at the hotel for Afghans, and staff on site to address any concerns and literature displayed at the location for advice and support.</p> <p>Advice and Information leaflets have also been produced for schools across Cheshire East.</p> <p>A multi-agency Gypsy and Traveller Operational Group has been established to support members of this community. In June 2022 a Pride of Romani Event was launched, raising awareness of Hate Crime, including talks at the event and information on how to report.</p> <p>Officers and staff have attended events and festivals to provide information and raise awareness on reporting of Hate Crime.</p>

					<p>Information and guidance for Hate Crime provided to those receiving support as part of the CE Ukrainian Support Scheme</p> <p>A Graffiti policy is in place to remove offensive remarks from Council property.</p>
2. Take targeted action to educate, inform and challenge the stereotypes faced by our marginalised communities (e.g., migrants, Gypsy, Roma, and Travellers)	By 2024 GRT Group to be launched in March 2022.	<p>The wider community will benefit from the knowledge from this group and the positive relationship with the council.</p> <p>To provide sustainable jobs and enhance skills within individuals whilst supporting our hard-to-reach communities.</p>	Evaluation of actions to be considered.	Communities team	<p><b><u>Partially achieved</u></b></p> <p>The Pride of Romany constituted group was launched on 24 June 2022, when a celebratory event was held in Nantwich. Cheshire East Council has also refreshed its Webpages to welcome and include members of the GR&amp;T Communities. A Pan Cheshire Framework to support GR&amp;T work is still in development.</p> <p>The work at the Afghan hotel has been nationally recognised as an example of good practice. This outcome was possible due to cross-departmental collaboration and working closely with the VCFSE sector. Targeted employment and life skills training gave more than 60 families temporarily housed in the hotel the best start towards their integration in the community. The learnings from this work will help shape future projects targeting hard to reach communities in Cheshire East.</p>
3. Promote and signpost to networks that provide advice and support to anyone impacted or experiencing discriminatory behaviour or action	Ongoing	Services are co-produced with service users wherever possible and service users can influence changes	Promotion through digital and non-digital channels.	<p>Communities team</p> <p>EDI Board</p>	<p><b><u>Achieved (and ongoing)</u></b></p> <p>We have a network of Connected Community Centres across the borough which provide a place for local people to connect and gather information. Surrounding the Connected Community Centres is an infrastructure of partnership agencies who convene on a regular basis and use local intelligence to identify gaps in service and work in collaboration to meet need identified. The Neighbourhood Partnerships are an essential communications channel to disseminate information to the heart of the community.</p>
<b>Objective 5: IMPACT – Support and deliver meaningful change</b>					
<b>5a. We will be open and transparent in publishing the progress of our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion objectives</b>					
1. Publish an annual report on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion at Cheshire East in the public domain	Annually	To have an oversight of Council performance in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion.	All EDI data	Policy and Change Service	<p><b><u>Achieved (and ongoing)</u></b></p> <p>An annual progress report in relation to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion is scheduled on the work programme for Corporate Policy Committee each year.</p>
2. Publish the Gender Pay	Annually	There is evidence that the organisation is		HR	<b><u>Achieved (and ongoing)</u></b>

Gap report in the public domain		actively working on reducing its Gender Pay Gap.			<p>The Gender Pay Gap report was published in line with the regulations: <a href="#">Gender Pay Gap Report (2021/2022)   Insight Cheshire East (arcgis.com)</a></p> <p>The Gender Pay Gap action plan is a regular agenda item at the Council EDI Board.</p>
3. Ensure that evaluations for each event are available for publication.				Research and Consultation	<p><b>Partially achieved</b></p> <p>Crewe Pride took place on 22 October 2022 and a survey has been drafted to be completed by those attending the event. The survey has captured direct feedback from the event and an evaluation of the event will be completed.</p>
<b>Objective 6 – Continuously improving equality, diversity, and inclusion (additional actions identified to embed the objectives of the EDI strategy)</b>					
1. Review and refresh EDI board	Dec 2021	<p>EDI board has a clear role in delivering the EDI Strategy.</p> <p>EDI Board representation to reflect its delivery role.</p> <p>EDI strategy implemented with proper buy in and commitment at all levels.</p>	<p>Demonstrated progress on delivering work plan priorities</p> <p>Increased attendance and participation at EDI board meetings</p>	EDI Officer and EDI Board chair	<p><b>Partially achieved</b></p> <p>The EDI Board meets quarterly and is chaired by the ED Corporate Services for 2 years.</p> <p>The EDI Board will be refreshed, and a new Chair will be in place from December 2023. The Terms of Reference for the Board require review.</p>
2. Review and refresh Directorate level EDI Boards	Dec 2021	Clear links achieved between directorates and EDI board.	Meetings happen quarterly and feeding back to EDI board	EDI Officer and EDI Board chair	<p><b>Achieved</b></p> <p>The EDI Board receives regular updates from directorates and EDI Board members attend directorate meetings.</p> <p>A new Corporate EDI Board was established in 2022.</p>
3. Ensure appropriate access to CLT for staff network group as required.	Ongoing	Members of the network groups can request to meet with CLT to discuss their experiences and ideas for improvement.	Attendance at meetings is representative of staff network membership	Staff network members	<p><b>Partially achieved</b></p> <p>A dedicated session for staff network groups and the Chief Executive is scheduled to take place in 2022/23.</p> <p>CLT members have attended Directorate and Council EDI Boards.</p>



*Working for a brighter future together*

## **Corporate Policy Committee**

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<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	1 December 2022
<b>Report Title:</b>	Financial Review Update 2022/23
<b>Report of:</b>	Alex Thompson: Director of Finance and Customer Services
<b>Report Reference No:</b>	CP/15/22-23
<b>Ward(s) Affected:</b>	Not applicable

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### **1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1. This report provides members with an updated overview of the Cheshire East Council forecast outturn for the financial year 2022/23.
- 1.2. Members are being asked to note the serious financial challenges being experienced by the Council due to national economic circumstances which are raising prices and local higher demand for services which are also increasingly complex.
- 1.3. These issues highlight the importance of ongoing activity to minimise the impact on services. Members are also asked to note the ongoing work of the Local Government Association and County Council's Network in raising awareness with Central Government of the risks to the financial stability of Local Authorities.
- 1.4. Reporting the financial forecast outturn at this stage, and in this format, supports the Council's vision to be an open Council as set out in the Corporate Plan 2021 to 2025. In particular, the priorities for an open and enabling organisation, ensure that there is transparency in all aspects of council decision making.

### **2. Executive Summary**

- 2.1. The Council aims to operate a financial cycle of planning, monitoring and reporting. This review is part of the monitoring cycle providing the forecast outturn position and any impacts on planning for next year's budget. The

issues raised in this report are also seriously impacting on the planning cycle of the Council.

- 2.2.** This report supports the Council priority of being an open and enabling organisation, ensuring that there is transparency in all aspects of council decision making.
- 2.3.** The Council set its 2022/23 annual budget in February 2022. The budget was balanced, as required, and included important planning assumptions about spending in the year. The budget is part of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2022 to 2026.
- 2.4.** The provisional financial outturn for 2021/22 was reported in July 2022 and recognised emerging pressure within the final quarter of the year up to 31 March 2022. This was particularly linked to rising inflation and complexity of demand for care. It was also acknowledged specific risks remained unmitigated in respect of the Council's Private Finance Initiative and High Needs within the Dedicated Schools Grant.
- 2.5.** National increasing inflation which was 0.4% in February 2021 and is now 11.1%, is having a significant impact on the cost of Council services as well as on the cost of living for local residents. The LGA estimates that local government is facing extra costs of £2.4bn in 2022/23, which rises to £3.4bn in 2023/24 and £4.5bn in 2024/25. Cheshire East is a large Council and the LGA figures would represent pressures of over £15m in 2022/23. Rising to c.£30m by 2024/25. The County Councils Network's most recent analysis of the costs of inflation warn that "any moves to cut their budgets next year would be 'worse than austerity' and result in 'devastating' reductions in local services – with local authorities offering just the bare minimum" ([CCN News 2022](#)).
- 2.6.** The findings of this local financial review present an urgent need to mitigate the ongoing financial pressures. The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy recognises that the Council has relatively low levels of reserves as funding is instead utilised to manage ongoing service demand. This means mitigation of spending pressures must come from a combination of activities, such as:
  - 2.6.1.** Additional use of grants and balances: Covid-19 grants to be fully utilised alongside appropriate application of Public Health Grants; integrated use of grants with Health Partners; drawing down from MTFS Reserve, General Reserves and specific service and company reserves where practical; flexible use of capital receipts is also under review, which can allow eligible one-off revenue transformation expenditure by services to be funded from the proceeds of asset sales.
  - 2.6.2.** Further efficiencies and income generation: Services are limiting all non-essential spending requirements; efficiencies will be sought beyond the current MTFS; project spending will be delayed where this is cost



effective; charging will be reviewed to ensure discretionary services are properly funded.

- 2.7. The report sets out details of the latest Financial Review of the Council's forecast financial performance for 2022/23:

**Annex 1: Financial Review Update 2022/23**

- **Financial Stability:** Provides information on the overall financial stability and resilience of the Council. It demonstrates how spending in 2022/23 is being funded, including the positions on overall service budgets, centrally held budgets, council tax and business rates. Further details are contained in the appendices.
- **Appendices:**
  - Appendix 1** Adults and Health Committee.
  - Appendix 2** Children and Families Committee.
  - Appendix 3** Corporate Policy Committee.
  - Appendix 4** Economy and Growth Committee.
  - Appendix 5** Environment and Communities Committee.
  - Appendix 6** Finance Sub-Committee.
  - Appendix 7** Highways and Transport Committee.
  - Appendix 8** Update to the Treasury Management Strategy.
  - Appendix 9** Update to the Investment Strategy.

**3. Recommendations**

Corporate Policy Committee is asked to:

- 3.1. Note the forecast adverse Net Revenue financial pressure of £8.7m against a revised budget of £328.4m (2.7%), and recognise that this presents marginal change to the position reported at Quarter One, reflecting the difficulties to mitigate the financial pressures faced by the Council.
- 3.2. Note the forecast Capital Spending of £179.6m against an approved MTFS budget £185.2m due to slippage carried forward from the previous year.
- 3.3. Note the significant level of activities outlined in each 'Action Plan' contained in Annex 1 (Appendices 1 to 7).
- 3.4. Note the contents of Annex 1 and each of the appendices, and note that any financial mitigation decisions requiring member approval will be presented to the appropriate Committee.
- 3.5. Recommend to Service Committees to:
  - 3.5.1. Note the financial update and forecast outturn relevant to their terms of reference.
  - 3.5.2. Note the overview of financial circumstances affecting Directorate budgets provided at 6.8 of this report.

- 3.5.3. Review the action plans which seek to improve the financial outturn across all Committees to mitigate the overall forecast overspend of the Council.

#### **4. Reasons for Recommendations**

- 4.1. The overall process for managing the Council's resources focuses on value for money, good governance and stewardship. The approach to these responsibilities is captured in the Medium-Term Financial Strategy.
- 4.2. The budget and policy framework sets out rules for managing the Council's financial affairs and contains the financial limits that apply in various parts of the Constitution. As part of sound financial management and to comply with the constitution any changes to the budgets agreed by Council in the MTFS require approval in-line with the financial limits within the Finance Procedure Rules.
- 4.3. This report provides strong links between the Council's statutory reporting requirements and the in-year monitoring processes for financial and non-financial management of resources.
- 4.4. In approving the Cheshire East Council Medium-Term Financial Strategy members of the Council had regard to the robustness of estimates and adequacy of reserves as reported by the s.151 Officer. The s.151 Officer's report highlighted the importance of each element of the MTFS and the requirement to achieve all the proposals within it. The recommendations of this report highlight the need for ongoing activity to manage the financial pressure being experienced by the Council.
- 4.5. Financial plans are predicated on robust estimates and supported by adequate reserves. The issues raised in this report present significant challenges to this assessment due to ongoing uncertainty about costs, achievement of actions and use of reserves. It is therefore important for ongoing effort to be put in to achievement of the Action Plans and associated financial targets.

#### **5. Other Options Considered**

- 5.1. None. This report is important to ensure members of the Committee are sighted on the financial pressure the Council is facing and the activity to date to try and mitigate this issue. Activity is required to ensure the Council balances its expenditure and income without serious impact on essential Council services.

#### **6. Background**

- 6.1. Managing performance is essential to the achievement of outcomes. This is especially important in evidencing the achievement of value for money across an organisation the size of Cheshire East Council. The Council is the third largest Local Authority in the Northwest of England, responsible for approximately 500 services, supporting over 398,000 local people. Gross

annual spending is over £700m, with a revised net revenue budget for 2022/23 of £328.4m.

- 6.2.** The management structure of the Council is organised into four directorates: Adults, Health and Integration; Children's Services; Place; and Corporate Services. The Council's reporting structure provides forecasts of a potential year-end outturn within each directorate during the year, as well as highlighting activity carried out in support of each outcome contained within the Corporate Plan.
- 6.3.** The political structure of the Council is organised into six committees, with a single sub-committee, all with financial responsibilities acutely aligned to the management structure. Performance against the 2022/23 Budget within each Committee, and the sub-committee, is outlined in Table 1 below.

**6.4. Table 1 – Revenue Outturn Forecast split by the Six Service Committees and the Finance Sub-Committee**

2022/23 (GROSS Revenue Budget £474.2m)	Revised Budget (NET) £m	Forecast Outturn £m	Forecast Variance £m	Change since First Review £m
<b>Service Committee</b>				
Adults and Health	120.9	129.8	8.9	(2.8)
Children and Families	74.5	78.5	4.0	0.5
Corporate Policy	39.7	40.1	0.4	(0.4)
Economy and Growth	23.6	23.8	0.2	(0.0)
Environment and Communities	44.4	46.1	1.7	(0.2)
Highways and Transport	13.8	14.3	0.5	-
<b>Sub-Committee</b>				
Finance Sub	(316.9)	(323.9)	(7.0)	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>8.7</b>	<b>8.7</b>	<b>(2.9)</b>

- 6.5.** The Council set a balanced net revenue budget of £327.7m at its meeting in February 2022. Current forecasts against the revised budget of £328.4m, shows a potential net expenditure of £337.1m. This position is despite significant and challenging mitigation work by staff. All staff were recently issued with information on spending controls, with ongoing communication planned on this topic.
- 6.6.** The in-year position is significantly mitigated through use of one-off balances and grants. This means underlying spending is proving extremely difficult to mitigate and is likely to continue at levels outside of the MTFS without significant action. The LGA forecast ongoing spending increases too, presenting a potentially more serious threat to the Council's finances.
- 6.7.** The LGA and CCN have ongoing campaigns to raise awareness of the difficulties facing Local Authority budgets. Information on these campaigns can be accessed at the following websites:

6.7.1. Local Government Association: [www.local.gov.uk](http://www.local.gov.uk)

6.7.2. County Councils Network: [www.countycouncilsnetwork.org.uk](http://www.countycouncilsnetwork.org.uk)

**6.8. Each of the Council's Directorates are facing specific financial challenges as outlined in the following paragraphs:**

6.8.1. **Adults, Health and Integration** is forecasting an overspend of £8.9m. It is driven by four factors, significant price increases for commissioned care, an increase in activity due to an increase in the number of people seeking, and eligible for social care, an increase in the complexity of need for individuals eligible for and receiving care and support and continuing NHS hospital pressures requiring support for discharge. All driven in part by covid scarring, but also reflective of the long-term demographic trend.

6.8.2. The Inflationary pressures affecting the whole of the economy have a bigger impact on adult social care than the economy in general; pay inflation in the sector is higher than average, energy utilisation in care settings is very significant and fuel costs affect the cost of delivering domiciliary care. It is not anticipated that these pressures will ease soon and there is no basis at present to assume that prices will fall in the medium-term. The department continues to receive a large number of requests to increase prices which it is currently refusing.

6.8.3. It should be noted that the Directorate has been tracking its 2022/23 MTFS savings activity, and by the plans and measures put in place when the budget was set, the Directorate has been successful in delivering the activity and planned expenditure reductions in most cases. However, these savings have been more than off-set by the significant cost pressures outlined above.

6.8.4. To address the forecast overspend we are working with NHS partners, the voluntary sector and providers to put in place a programme to drive down expenditure, by focusing on preventing people from being admitted to hospital, increasing our use of technology, working with the voluntary sector to delay the use of care provision, supporting unpaid carers to enable them to do more and providing extra funding to domiciliary care providers to avoid the use of expensive residential and nursing care. We are also starting an intensive programme of reviews to reduce existing packages of care where appropriate and where we believe that there are alternative options to care, such as using supermarkets to deliver shopping, and we are reviewing all outstanding debt that is not secured on property to ensure that we have robust collection arrangements in place. Whilst this is anticipated that these actions will have an impact in year, these actions will also reduce the growth pressure in future years.

6.8.5. The current forecast is an improvement from the first quarter of £2.8m. The beneficial financial impact of the work set out above has been factored into this forecast. The forecast assumes a best-case scenario;

that the estimates of impact are correct and delivered in full. However, there are a number of risks that should be noted. Whilst the trajectory for growth in activity appears to have stabilised, the trajectory for price increases has not, and may increase further, and there is no assessment of further market failure and potential costs. Also, we have not yet reached the period of “winter pressures” and there is no allowance in the forecast for extra unplanned activity, over that already set out in the Winter Plan.

- 6.8.6. The far bigger impact on the forecast is the use of a number of one-off opportunities available in-year, including the use of grants, one of which includes the Ukraine Grant which has been used to off-set the cost of the Communities Team, because most of their current work is supporting refugees and asylum seekers. In this context significant work is being undertaken to identify long-term changes in service models and service delivery to stabilise future demand and costs.
- 6.8.7. **Children and Families directorate** is responsible for delivering the council's statutory duties and responsibilities in respect of children in need of help, support and protection and ensuring they have access to a high-quality education and learning experience. These duties are spread across three directors for; Strong Start, Family Help and Integration, Children's Social Care and Education and Skills.
- 6.8.8. The directorate brings together the council's duties in relation to children identified and assessed to need help, support, protection, looked after by the council and young people with care experience (leaving care service). It includes a range of services targeted to support families and help to avoid the need for children to become 'looked after' and Youth Justice Services and adoption services. 27% of the overall children's budget is committed to meeting the costs of care for our Cared for Children linked to the cost of placements. The remaining balance of the budget is given to children's services is related services such as: youth services, children's centres, early help, child in need, child protection, leaving care, early years and youth justice.
- 6.8.9. The education budget represents the council's responsibilities for education and learning funded by the dedicated schools grant (DSG) and council's revenue budget. The council budget includes school admissions, place planning, home to school transport and school improvement.
- 6.8.10. Transport services make up 60% of the Education and Skills budget. 14% of the budget is given to support children with SEND such as short breaks and respite care. The remaining budget is for services such as attendance and education psychology. The service also supports inclusion and other groups of vulnerable children and the education of children looked after through the virtual school. In addition to the £74.5m council budget for the children's directorate the service also oversees the

£316m DSG budget of which £180m is given to academies and £65m is earmarked for council-maintained schools and the council for education services such as admissions, early years education and special educational needs. £71m used for the council and settings for education services such as admissions, early years education and special educational needs placements.

- 6.8.11. Despite growth allocated within the MTFS process, significant in year pressures are evident. These are primarily a result of unforeseen inflationary impacts and increase in demand and are centred in the main, on children's placements, post-Covid complexity of need and school transport budgets. Whilst in year mitigations and activity to avoid spend and reduce costs are in place, the forecast for the end of year is an increasing deficit position. All indications are demand, complexity and cost will continue to increase and therefore it is vital that the directorate and the service committee reviews its options to address the financial challenges for 2023/24 and beyond.
- 6.8.12. The children's directorate is committed to increasing the pace of implementing reforms and service improvements, to make financial savings by reducing demand for expensive, reactive services. We will consider savings proposals and decisions to refocus and realign non statutory services to both modernise and future proof our model and ensure that spend is delivering best outcomes for children and best value. This may include a review of commissioned services, a review of delivery models and buildings in line with the Family Hub model, a review of the leadership structure, a refreshed sufficiency strategy for children's placements with an ambitious programme to support children within their families where it is safe to do so along with the ongoing activity to avoid spend and reduce cost and support children live as close to home when they need care. Alongside this activity we will invest in capacity and innovative practice by drawing on the transformation fund to test out and pilot invest to save models. We will also draw on the transformation fund ensure that we are able to meet the challenges of the Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI) improvement plan and ringfenced grant for the Delivering Better Value (DBV) programme to address the growing demand in special educational needs services.
- 6.8.13. The key pressures facing the service of £4m relate to:
- Children's social care in terms of additional number of children in care and a significant increase in prices from providers.
  - Home to school transport – for a variety of reasons including additional SEND transport demand and contract price increases.
  - Educational Psychologists – additional permanent and agency staff to meet demand.



- 6.8.14. These have been offset by mitigating actions where possible to achieve the £4m forecast pressure.
- 6.8.15. **Corporate Services Directorate**, which includes the Housing Benefits (HB) Payments Centre, has a net budget of £39.7m. At the First Finance Review the forecast overspend was £0.8m, taking into account the estimate for the pay award. At mid-year, the overspend had reduced to £0.4m.
- 6.8.16. Pressures in the service are partially offset by underspends forecast to be achieved from additional or over-recovered income, through in-year vacancies and through ceasing non-essential spending. The overall underspend across the services is forecast at £1.7m which is being offset by a £1.2m overspend within the shared ICT Service Delivery service, and a £0.2m overspend within the Transactional Service Centre (TSC), hosted by Cheshire West and Chester.
- 6.8.17. The ICT shared service is forecasting an overspend of £2.4m of which CEC's share is £1.2m. The overspend is primarily due to insufficient commissioned project hours, agency costs, a reduction in schools income against budget and reduction in BAU from each council due to policy savings related to B4B programme (£0.8m) which may not be fully achieved due to in year pressures from other contract costs. Staffing cost are forecast to be underspent by £1.4m compared to budget but this is not sufficient to offset the loss of income and contract pressures.
- 6.8.18. The overspend in TSC is a result of a reduction in schools income against budget and temporary additional resources required to deal with the consequences of the implementation of Unit 4 ERP, including reducing the backlog of requests. Discussions are on-going about the future support model.
- 6.8.19. The additional cost of the nationally agreed pay award is £0.8m and is being mitigated by strict vacancy management, review of agency numbers and spend, which are particular issues in ICT and Legal Services, and through ceasing non-essential spend.
- 6.8.20. The HB Payments Centre assumes a balanced position. It should be noted, however, that this is a volatile budget which will be kept under regular review.
- 6.8.21. **Place Directorate** continues to experience impacts on its budgets from covid pressures totalling £3.4m. There is an additional £0.5m pressure for Place from pay inflation. £1.5m of savings have already been introduced by services in Place to mitigate these resulting in a current forecast of £2.4m pressure overall across the Place budget.
- 6.8.22. The main ongoing pressures within Place are increased costs of waste and recycling services, increased costs of maintenance for the environmental hub, shortfalls in Planning income, delays in

accommodation reviews, inflationary increases for energy, maintenance and business rates, shortfall in parking income due to changes in customer behaviour since the pandemic and increased costs for local bus operators.

- 6.8.23. Services are working on revised forecasts and we expect this position to improve further through stopping all non-essential spend, vacancy management, review of agency staff and capitalisation of officer time. Further savings ideas are being developed to help offset in-year and future years pressures.
- 6.9. General Reserve balances are risk assessed and it was highlighted in the MTFS that emerging risks such as inflation and particularly the DSG deficit, as having no alternative funding. To address the issue of emerging financial pressure Senior Officers at the Council have set up Action Plans, which will continue to be developed to identify activities required to bring spending back in line with the MTFS. Actions may be required in-year to provide financial stability for future years. Such decisions will be appropriately governed and communicated ensuring relevant consultation and impact assessments are addressed.
- 6.10. The emerging Action Plans reflect the Committee Structure to allow member oversight of the activities being carried out to manage in-year spending. Any appropriate decisions required from members will be brought to the Committee's attention via the Action Plans, to ensure appropriate context is provided.
- 6.11. There is a clear ambition for each Committee to achieve spending in-line with the approved MTFS for all years. However, in some cases, given the seriousness of the financial pressure being put on the Council, Committee members should consider options to exceed financial performance targets to retain an overall balanced position.
- 6.12. Whilst some inflation factors may be temporary, the Action Plans must also consider the medium-term resilience of mitigation activity. For example, the use of one-off balances, to mitigate in-year spend, may be effective in the short term, but would not be effective if spending is likely to recur in later years.
- 6.13. The Government announced its Autumn Statement on 17 November 2022. The statement has provided some further information to assist local authorities in their business and financial planning for the future. The statement will be analysed to understand the financial effects on the Council's MTFS. This will require more detailed local information being released from government, but the timing of this is not yet known
- 6.14. Headlines from the Autumn Statement in relation to Council funding include:
  - 6.14.1. No cuts to the funding allocations announced in Spending Review 2021.
  - 6.14.2. Additional grant funding for adult social care.



- 6.14.3. Delaying adult social care charging reforms.
- 6.14.4. Increasing referendum levels and Adult Social Care precept related to Council Tax.
- 6.14.5. Freezing the business rate multiplier but with compensation to Local authorities for the loss of income.
- 6.15. The development of the MTFS has been significantly delayed due to emerging pressures and uncertainty. Consultation on potential impacts of the financial pressures on the current MTFS will be circulated in due course to gather stakeholder views that can inform future decision making. This process will run concurrently with Member and Committee engagement leading up the budget Council meeting in February 2023.

## **7. Consultation and Engagement**

- 7.1. As part of the budget setting process the Pre-Budget Consultation provided an opportunity for interested parties to review and comment on the Council's Budget proposals. The budget proposals described in the consultation document were Council wide proposals and that consultation was invited on the broad budget proposals. Where the implications of individual proposals were much wider for individuals affected by each proposal, further full and proper consultation was undertaken with people who would potentially be affected by individual budget proposals.

## **8. Implications**

### **8.1. Legal**

- 8.1.1. The legal implications surrounding the process of setting the 2022 to 2026 Medium-Term Financial Strategy were dealt with in the reports relating to that process. The purpose of this paper is to provide a progress report for 2022/23.
- 8.1.2. Other implications arising directly from this report relate to the internal processes of approving supplementary estimates and virements referred to above which are governed by the Finance Procedure Rules.
- 8.1.3. Legal implications that arise when activities funded from the budgets that this report deals with are undertaken, but those implications will be dealt with in the individual reports to Members or Officer Decision Records that relate.

### **8.2. Finance**

- 8.2.1. The Council's financial resources are agreed by Council and aligned to the achievement of stated outcomes for local residents and communities. Monitoring and managing performance help to ensure that resources are used effectively, and that business planning and financial decision making are made in the right context.

- 8.2.2. Financial plans are predicated on robust estimates and supported by adequate reserves. The issues raised in this report present significant challenges to this assessment due to ongoing uncertainty about costs, achievement of actions and use of reserves. It is therefore important for ongoing effort to be put in to achievement of the Action Plans and associated financial targets.
- 8.2.3. Reserve levels are agreed, by Council, in February each year and are based on a risk assessment that considers the financial challenges facing the Council. If spending associated with in-year delivery of services is not contained within original forecasts for such activity it may be necessary to vire funds from reserves.
- 8.2.4. The unplanned use of financial reserves could require the Council to deliver a greater level of future savings to replenish reserve balances and / or revise the level of risks associated with the development of the Reserves Strategy in future.
- 8.2.5. As part of the process to produce this report, senior officers review expenditure and income across all services to support the development of mitigation plans that will return the outturn to a balanced position at year-end.
- 8.2.6. Forecasts contained within this review provide important information in the process of developing the Medium-Term Financial Strategy. Analysis of variances during the year will identify whether such performance is likely to continue, and this enables more robust estimates to be established.

### **8.3. Policy**

- 8.3.1. This report is a backward look at Council activities and predicts the year-end position.
- 8.3.2. The forecast outturn position, ongoing considerations for future years, and the impact on general reserves will be fed into the assumptions underpinning the 2023 to 2027 Medium-Term Financial Strategy.

### **8.4. Equality**

- 8.4.1. In setting the 2022/23 budget, an Equality Impact Assessment was prepared to show that proposals included positive and negative impacts in headline terms. Any equality implications that arise from activities funded by the budgets will be dealt within the individual reports to Members or Officer Decision Records to which they relate. These will be reviewed, as appropriate in the light of the mitigation actions referred to in this report.

### **8.5. Human Resources**

- 8.5.1. This report is a backward look at Council activities and states the forecast year-end position. Any HR implications that arise from activities

funded by the budgets that this report deals with will be dealt within the individual reports to Members or Officer Decision Records to which they relate.

**8.6. Risk Management**

- 8.6.1. Performance and risk management are part of the management processes of the Authority. Risks are captured at Strategic and Operational levels, both in terms of the risk of underperforming and risks to the Council in not delivering its objectives for its residents, businesses, partners and other stakeholders.
- 8.6.2. Financial risks are assessed and reported on a regular basis, and remedial action taken if and when required. Risks associated with the achievement of the 2021/22 budget and the level of general reserves were factored into the 2022/23 financial scenario, budget and reserves strategy.

**8.7. Rural Communities**

- 8.7.1. The report provides details of service provision across the borough.

**8.8. Children and Young People/Cared for Children**

- 8.8.1. The report provides details of service provision across the borough.

**8.9. Public Health**

- 8.9.1. Public health implications that arise from activities that this report deals with will be dealt with as separate reports to Members or Officer Decision Records as required.

**8.10. Climate Change**

- 8.10.1. Climate change implications that arise from activities that this report deals with will be dealt with as separate reports to Members or Officer Decision Records as required.

Access to Information	
Contact Officer:	<p>Alex Thompson</p> <p>Director of Finance and Customer Services (Section 151 Officer)</p> <p><a href="mailto:alex.thompson@cheshireeast.gov.uk">alex.thompson@cheshireeast.gov.uk</a></p> <p>01270 685876</p>
Appendices:	<p><b>Annex 1 including:</b></p> <p><b>Section 1</b> provides information on the overall financial stability and resilience of the Council. Further details are contained in the appendices.</p> <p><b>Appendix 1</b> Adults and Health Committee.</p> <p><b>Appendix 2</b> Children and Families Committee.</p> <p><b>Appendix 3</b> Corporate Policy Committee.</p> <p><b>Appendix 4</b> Economy and Growth Committee.</p> <p><b>Appendix 5</b> Environment and Communities Committee.</p> <p><b>Appendix 6</b> Finance Sub-Committee.</p> <p><b>Appendix 7</b> Highways and Transport Committee.</p> <p><b>Appendix 8</b> Update to the Treasury Management Strategy.</p> <p><b>Appendix 9</b> Update to the Investment Strategy.</p>
Background Papers:	<p>The following are links to key background documents:</p> <p><a href="#">Medium-Term Financial Strategy</a></p> <p><a href="#">First Financial Review, Item No.14</a></p> <p><a href="#">Financial Review 2022/23, Item No. 5</a></p>



# Financial Review Update 2022/23

December 2022

This report receives scrutiny and approval from Members of Cheshire East Council. As a public report, the Council welcomes feedback to the information contained here.

**Anyone wanting to comment is invited to contact the Council at:**

**[RandC@cheshireeast.gov.uk](mailto:RandC@cheshireeast.gov.uk)**

# Introduction

Cheshire East Council is the third largest Council in the Northwest of England, supporting over 398,000 local people with annual spending of over £470m.

Local government is going through a period of financial challenges, with a combination of the impact of increasing demand for services and rising costs due to inflation. There is also increasing uncertainty associated with income from business rates and government grants.

Demand for Council services is increasing, with more individuals and families needing support and services than ever before. This reflects an increase in population but also reflects changes in demographics and the national cost of living increases. This demand is resulting in forecast outturn of £337.1m against a net revenue budget of £328.4m, with the most significant impact within the rising complexity of needs in Adult Social Care.

When the 2022/23 budget was set, in February 2022, it was highlighted that the use of reserves was not sustainable in the medium term. Net spending therefore needs to be contained within the estimates of expenditure that form the budget. The forecasts at first review highlight pressures due to demand, inflation and pay negotiations. These will almost certainly affect the medium term finances of the Council. This situation must be addressed now and as part of the MTFS process for 2023 to 2027.

To support openness and transparency, and provide evidence of strong governance, the report has a main section, to provide background and context, and then nine supporting appendices with detailed information about allocation and management of public money during 2022/23:

The **Financial Stability** section provides information on the overall financial stability and resilience of the Council. It demonstrates how spending in 2022/23 is being funded, including the positions on overall service budgets, centrally held budgets, council tax and business rates. Further details are contained in the appendices.

- **Appendix 1** Adults and Health Committee.
- **Appendix 2** Children and Families Committee.
- **Appendix 3** Corporate Policy Committee.
- **Appendix 4** Economy and Growth Committee.
- **Appendix 5** Environment and Communities Committee.
- **Appendix 6** Finance Sub-Committee.
- **Appendix 7** Highways and Transport Committee.
- **Appendix 8** Update to the Treasury Management Strategy.
- **Appendix 9** Update to the Investment Strategy.

*Alex Thompson*

Director of Finance and Customer Services  
(Section 151 Officer)

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## 2022/23 Outturn Forecast - Financial Position

2022/23	Revised Budget	Forecast Outturn	Forecast Variance	For further information please see the following sections
(GROSS Revenue Budget £474.2m)	(NET) £m	£m	£m	
SERVICE DIRECTORATES				
Adults, Health and Integration	120.9	129.8	8.9	Appendix 1 Section 2
Children's Services	74.5	78.5	4.0	Appendix 2 Section 2
Place	81.8	84.2	2.4	Appendix 4, 5 & 7 Section 2
Corporate Services	39.7	40.1	0.4	Appendix 3 Section 2
CENTRAL BUDGETS				
Capital Financing	19.0	19.0	-	Appendix 6 Section 5
Transfer to/(from) Earmarked Reserves	(2.8)	(8.8)	(6.0)	Appendix 6 Section 6
Corporate Contributions / Central Budgets	(4.7)	(5.7)	(1.0)	Appendix 6 Section 2
<b>TOTAL NET EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>328.4</b>	<b>337.1</b>	<b>8.7</b>	
Business Rates Retention Scheme	(49.1)	(49.1)	-	Section 1 - Paragraphs 19-22
Specific Grants	(24.6)	(24.6)	-	Appendix 6 Section 3
Council Tax	(254.7)	(254.7)	-	Section 1 - Paragraphs 8-18
<b>Net Funding</b>	<b>(328.4)</b>	<b>(328.4)</b>	<b>-</b>	
<b>NET (SURPLUS) / DEFICIT</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>8.7</b>	<b>8.7</b>	

# Financial Stability

## Introduction

1. The Council has a track record of sound financial management. Nevertheless, in common with all UK local authorities the Council finds itself in a position where pressures on the revenue budget are intensifying as a result of rapid inflation, the legacy impact of the Coronavirus pandemic and increasing cost of living pressure on households. These issues have the effect of increasing the demand for services and increasing costs of services.
2. Complexity and market sustainability in Adults' and Children's Social Care remains the most significant financial pressure for the Council in the medium term. Rising inflation in fuel, utilities and wage levels are affecting costs across all services.
3. **Table 1** provides a service summary of financial performance. The current forecast is that services will be £15.7m over budget in the current year. The Action Plans provide further details and changes to service net budgets since the Medium-Term Financial Strategy are analysed in the **Appendices 1-7**.
4. Further items impacting on the level of the Council's balances are detailed in **Table 2** below on Central Budgets and Funding.

**Table 1 - Service Revenue Outturn Forecasts**

2022/23	Revised Budget	Forecast Outturn	Forecast Variance	FOR INFO COVID Costs Included in Totals
(GROSS Revenue Budget £474.2m)	(NET)			
	£m	£m	£m	£m
SERVICE DIRECTORATES				
Adult Social Care - Operations	117.5	126.1	8.6	4.9
Commissioning	3.4	3.7	0.3	-
Public Health	-	-	-	-
<b>Adults, Health and Integration</b>	<b>120.9</b>	<b>129.8</b>	<b>8.9</b>	<b>4.9</b>
Directorate	1.0	(0.4)	(1.4)	-
Children's Social Care	47.0	49.8	2.8	0.2
Strong Start, Family Help and Integration	7.9	7.0	(0.9)	-
Education & 14-19 Skills	18.6	22.1	3.5	0.2
<b>Children's Services</b>	<b>74.5</b>	<b>78.5</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>0.4</b>
Directorate	0.8	0.7	(0.1)	-
Environment & Neighbourhood Services	44.4	46.1	1.7	1.9
Growth & Enterprise	22.8	23.1	0.3	0.1
Highways & Infrastructure	13.8	14.3	0.5	1.4
<b>Place</b>	<b>81.8</b>	<b>84.2</b>	<b>2.4</b>	<b>3.4</b>
Directorate	1.4	1.3	(0.1)	-
Finance & Customer Services	12.1	12.3	0.2	-
Governance & Compliance Services	11.8	11.4	(0.4)	-
Communications	0.7	0.7	-	-
HR	2.4	2.2	(0.2)	-
ICT	9.4	10.4	1.0	-
Policy & Change	1.9	1.8	(0.1)	-
<b>Corporate Services</b>	<b>39.7</b>	<b>40.1</b>	<b>0.4</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>TOTAL SERVICES NET EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>316.9</b>	<b>332.6</b>	<b>15.7</b>	<b>8.7</b>

**Table 2 – Central Budgets and Funding Outturn Forecasts**

2022/23	Revised Budget	Forecast Outturn	Forecast Variance
(GROSS Revenue Budget £474.2m)	(NET)		
	£m	£m	£m
<b>CENTRAL BUDGETS</b>			
Capital Financing	19.0	19.0	-
Transfer to/(from) Earmarked Reserves	(2.8)	(8.8)	(6.0)
Corporate Contributions / Central Budgets	(4.7)	(5.7)	(1.0)
<b>Central Budgets</b>	<b>11.5</b>	<b>4.5</b>	<b>(7.0)</b>
Business Rates Retention Scheme	(49.1)	(49.1)	-
Specific Grants	(24.6)	(24.6)	-
Council Tax	(254.7)	(254.7)	-
<b>Net Funding</b>	<b>(328.4)</b>	<b>(328.4)</b>	<b>-</b>

**Outturn Impact**

- The financial impact of the outturn forecast could decrease balances by £8.7m. This is over 55% of the Council's General Reserves balance, so mitigating actions must be taken to reduce the pressure during the year. Any deficit at the end of the year will be drawn down from the Medium-Term Financial Strategy Earmarked Reserve in the first instance, but drawdowns from that reserve are already factored in to the MTFS to manage the effects of variations in spending and income in specific years.
- The Council will continue to manage and review the financial forecasts in response to emerging pressures and how this affects the Council's revenue budget.

**Collecting Local Taxes for Local Expenditure**

- Cheshire East Council collects Council Tax and Non Domestic Rates for use locally and nationally.

**Council Tax**

- Council tax is set locally and retained for spending locally. Council tax was set for 2022/23 at £1,626.24 for a Band D property. This is applied to the taxbase.
- The taxbase for Cheshire East reflects the equivalent number of domestic properties in Band D that the Council is able to collect council tax from (after adjustments for relevant discounts, exemptions and an element of non-collection). The taxbase for 2022/23 was agreed at 156,607.48 which, when multiplied by the Band D charge, means that the expected income for the year is £254.7m.
- In addition to this, Cheshire East Council collects council tax on behalf of the Cheshire Police and Crime Commissioner, the Cheshire Fire Authority and Parish Councils. **Table 3** shows these amounts separately, giving a total budgeted collectable amount of £313.8m.
- This figure is based on the assumption that the Council will collect at least 99% of the amount billed. The Council will always pursue 100% collection, however to allow for non-collection the amount billed will therefore exceed the budget.
- This figure may also vary during the year to take account of changes to Council Tax Support payments, the granting of discounts and exemptions, and changes in numbers and value of properties. The amount billed to date is £315.3m.

**Table 3 – Cheshire East Council collects Council Tax on behalf of other precepting authorities**

	£m
Cheshire East Council	254.7
Cheshire Police and Crime Commissioner	36.9
Cheshire Fire Authority	12.9
Town and Parish Councils	9.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>313.8</b>

13. **Table 4** shows collection rates within three years, and demonstrates that 99% collection is on target to be achieved within this period.

**Table 4 – 99% of Council Tax is collected in three years**

Financial Year	CEC Cumulative			
	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
	%	%	%	%
After 1 year	98.2	97.9	97.4	97.8
After 2 years	99.0	98.8	98.3	**
After 3 years	99.2	98.9	**	**

\*\*data not yet available

14. The council tax in-year collection rate for the period up to the end of September 2022 is 56.1%. This is a small decrease of 0.2% on the previous year, possibly indicating current cost of living pressures. Additionally, significant numbers of council tax staff have been supporting the government's energy

rebate payments which has impacted resource normally involved in collection.

15. Council tax support payments were budgeted at £18.4m for 2022/23 and at the end of September the total council tax support awarded was £18.9m.
16. During 2021/22 there was a consultation and review of the Council Tax Support scheme resulting in some amendments being made. The revised scheme was confirmed by full Council in December 2021.
17. Council tax discounts awarded are £28.6m which are comparable to the same period in 2021/22. A small increase is attributable to work related to raising awareness of the discounts available to residents.
18. Council tax exemptions awarded is £7.2m which although broadly in line with previous years shows a slight increase due to reasons shown at 17.

### **Non-Domestic Rates (NDR)**

19. NDR is collected from businesses in Cheshire East based on commercial rateable property values and a nationally set multiplier. The multiplier changes annually in line with inflation and takes account of the costs of small business rate relief.
20. The small business multiplier applied to businesses which qualify for the small business relief was set at 49.9p in 2022/23. The non-domestic multiplier was set at 51.2p in the pound for 2022/23.
21. **Table 5** demonstrates how collection continues to improve even after year end. The table shows how over 99% of non-domestic rates are collected within three years.

22. The business rates in-year collection rate for the period up to the end of September 2022 is 58.6%. This is a significant increase on last year and begins to revert collection rates back to pre pandemic figures. A return to standard collection processes and government support through additional reliefs has assisted the recovery in collection.

**Table 5 – Over 99% of Business Rates are collected within three years**

Financial Year	CEC Cumulative			
	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
	%	%	%	%
After 1 year	98.5	98.2	92.4	95.6
After 2 years	99.4	98.4	97.4	**
After 3 years	99.4	99.2	**	**

\*\*data not yet available

# Appendices to the Financial Review Update 2022/23

**December 2022**

# **Appendix 1 : Adults and Health Committee**

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# Appendix 1

## Adults and Health Committee

### 1. Changes to Revenue Budget 2022/23 since First Financial Review

	First review Net Budget £000	Additional Grant Funding £000	Restructuring & Realignments £000	Revised Net Budget £000
<b>Adults and Health</b>				
Adult Social Care Operations	117,515	-	-	117,515
Commissioning	3,419	-	(30)	3,389
Public Health	-	-	-	-
	120,934	-	(30)	120,904



## 2. Action Plan 2022/23

2.1 At mid-year the forecast outturn is £11.8m greater than budget, a change of £2.8m since the first review. The pay inflation estimate has been reduced due to the reversal of the additional 1.25% National Insurance increase, costs relating to care packages have increased and a number of one-off contributions, such as grants, are off-setting some of the pressures.

Adults and Health Committee	Exp £m	Inc £m	Net £m	MTFS Proposal	Value 2022/23 £m	MTFS Ref	RAG Rating	Comments	Variance from MTFS 2022/23 £m	Change from FR1 2022/23 £m
Adults & Health Committee				Pay Inflation	1.551	3&4 + New	Red (will not achieve)	Represents current estimate of the impact on Committee services in excess of the MTFS, from a nationally negotiated pay award.	1.414	-0.097
Adult Social Care Operations	148.4	-30.9	117.5	Continuing Healthcare Reviews	-1.000	7	Green (on track and should achieve)	Gross reductions in nursing home placements and complex care packages when tracking care packages from the start of the year. This is being achieved in part through identifying those people who have a primary health need and are therefore eligible for Continuing Healthcare Funding.	-1.361	-1.361
				Productivity and Efficiency in Adult Social Care	-0.500	30	Red (will not achieve)	Unable to achieve in 2022/23, due to current level of demand upon services. The development of the Integrated Care Partnership (ICP) and integration commissioning will enable staff	0.500	0.000

Adults and Health Committee	Exp £m	Inc £m	Net £m	MTFS Proposal	Value 2022/23 £m	MTFS Ref	RAG Rating	Comments	Variance from MTFS 2022/23 £m	Change from FR1 2022/23 £m
								to work differently. New ways of working and integrated posts will be adopted which will result in more efficient ways of working.		
				Investment in Adult Social Care	4.000	34	Red (will not achieve)	Increase to pressure on care base budget in excess of growth. The figure includes in-savings from vacancies carried in Care4ce.	16.629	7.327
				One-off contribution - Ukraine resettlement		NEW (linked to 34)		One-off contribution in 2022/23 to ASC from Ukraine resettlement support grant in recognition of new burdens on the service. Additional £500k has been allocated from the Ukraine grant to offset MTFS ref 36 in 2022/23 (later in this table).	-2.200	-2.200
				One-off contribution - Contain Outbreak Management Fund		NEW (linked to 34)		One-off contribution in 2022/23 to ASC from COMF against costs incurred through ongoing eligible measures.	-2.000	-2.000
				One-off contribution - discharge funding		NEW (linked to 34)		Estimated one-off contribution in 2022/23 to ASC from newly announced discharge funding against care costs. Conditions	-2.000	-2.000

Adults and Health Committee	Exp £m	Inc £m	Net £m	MTFS Proposal	Value 2022/23 £m	MTFS Ref	RAG Rating	Comments	Variance from MTFS 2022/23 £m	Change from FR1 2022/23 £m
								and value of allocation not yet confirmed, therefore an estimated figure.		
				Learning Disabilities Future Service Development and Review	-1.000	49	Green (on track and should achieve)	Gross reductions on Learning Disability (LD) packages when tracking care packages from the start of the year. On this measure it's expected that the saving will be met. However, demand and market pressure will result in an overall net increase to the cost of LD care. This is reflected in the variance on the "Investment in Care" line. This growth is resulting from providers demanding higher fees or threatening to end contracts.	-1.361	-1.361
				Direction of travel for the Communities Team to focus more on the Intervention and Prevention Agenda to make cost savings,	-0.500	36	Green (on track and should achieve)	The saving was based on reconfiguring the Communities Team to focus on low level prevention activity and mobilising the local community to support low level domiciliary care tasks. In 2022/23 the team has been focussed on delivering the Afghan and Ukraine support schemes. Reported as achieved	0.000	-0.500

Adults and Health Committee	Exp £m	Inc £m	Net £m	MTFS Proposal	Value 2022/23 £m	MTFS Ref	RAG Rating	Comments	Variance from MTFS 2022/23 £m	Change from FR1 2022/23 £m
				growth and future cost avoidance				as offset by allocation of Ukraine grant.		
				Mental Health Services Review	-0.500	37	Green (on track and should achieve)	Gross reductions on LD packages when tracking care packages from the start of the year. On this measure it's expected that the saving will be met. The team have been working with health colleagues to implement 50/50 approach to Section 117 cases.	-0.411	-0.411
				Day Care Review	-0.070	38	Green (on track and should achieve)		0.000	0.000
				Electronic Call Monitoring Reclamation	-0.030	39	Red (will not achieve)	Unable to deliver due to the fragility of the care at home market- this is on covid tracker.	0.030	0.000
				Market Sustainability and Fair Cost of Care - Grant Income	-0.979	40	Green (on track and should achieve)	The grant has been received.	0.000	0.000
				Market Sustainability and Fair Cost of Care - Expenditure	0.979	40	Green (on track and should achieve)	The market sustainability grant has been allocated for 6% of the fee uplifts to care at home providers.	0.000	0.000

Adults and Health Committee	Exp £m	Inc £m	Net £m	MTFS Proposal	Value 2022/23 £m	MTFS Ref	RAG Rating	Comments	Variance from MTFS 2022/23 £m	Change from FR1 2022/23 £m
				Staff Travel and related savings	-0.044	29	Green (on track and should achieve)	Savings achieved.	0.000	0.000
				Care Packages		NEW		High Risk uncertainty over total deliverable saving for 2022/23 - Savings in year from reviews of current packages. Includes: Review of care packages in terms of non personal care tasks, high cost packages, increased use of assistive technology, maximise voids, providers reviewing packages.	-0.400	0.000
				Care Costs		NEW		High Risk uncertainty over total deliverable saving for 2022/23 - Negotiating unit costs down in line with Fair Costs Of Care an commissioning of clusters/block packages.	-0.020	0.050
				Public Health (PH) Grants		NEW		Public Health grant to be allocated against additional costs incurred via the Handy person service commission. Aligns with the early intervention and prevention objectives for the public health grant. Further PH	-0.110	0.000

Adults and Health Committee	Exp £m	Inc £m	Net £m	MTFS Proposal	Value 2022/23 £m	MTFS Ref	RAG Rating	Comments	Variance from MTFS 2022/23 £m	Change from FR1 2022/23 £m
								eligible spend to be identified across wider services.		
Commissioning	12.6	-9.2	3.4	Reduce Base budget assigned to Community Grants	-0.100	9		Savings achieved.	0.000	0.000
				In Year pressures		New		Demand on childrens commissioning due to employment activity & increased demand on community equipment.	0.140	-0.252
Public Health	17.7	-17.7	0.0	Public Health		NEW		Review use of Public Heath grant across wider network of local authorities to test best practice.	0.000	0.000
<b>Total</b>	<b>178.7</b>	<b>-57.8</b>	<b>120.9</b>		<b>1.807</b>				<b>8.850</b>	<b>-2.805</b>

### 3. Corporate Grants Register

**Table 1 – Corporate Grants Register**

Grants 2022/23	Revised Forecast FR1  2022/23 £000	Latest Forecast  2022/23 £000	Change from FR1  2022/23 £000	Treatment of Grant   <i>Notes 2 - 5</i>
<b>ADULTS &amp; HEALTH</b>				
<b>Specific Use (Held within Services)</b>	54,245	54,032	(213)	
<b>General Purpose (Held Corporately)</b>				
Social Care Support Grant	11,341	11,341	0	
Independent Living Fund	861	861	0	
Local Reform & Community Voices	213	213	0	
Social Care in Prisons	71	71	0	
War Pension Scheme Disregard	56	56	0	
<b>TOTAL ADULTS &amp; HEALTH</b>	<b>66,787</b>	<b>66,574</b>	<b>(213)</b>	

**Notes**

1 The Dedicated Schools Grant, Pupil Premium Grant, Sixth Form Grant and Other School Specific Grant from the Education Funding Agency (EFA) figures are based on actual anticipated allocations. Changes are for in-year increases / decreases to allocations by the DfE and conversions to academy status.

2 SRE - Supplementary Revenue Estimate requested by relevant service.

3 ODR - Officer Decision Record to approve immediate budget change to relevant service.

4 Reserves - transfer to reserves at year end.

5 Balances - amount will be included as a variance to budget.

- 3.1 Cheshire East Council receives two main types of Government grants; specific use grants and general purpose grants. Specific use grants are held within the relevant service with a corresponding expenditure budget. Whereas general purpose grants are held in central budgets with a corresponding expenditure budget within the allocated service area.
- 3.2 Spending in relation to specific use grants must be in line with the purpose for which it is provided.

## 4. Debt Management

	Outstanding Debt £000	Over 6 months old £000
<b>Adults and Health Committee</b>		
Adults, Public Health and Communities	8,467	5,092

## 5. Capital Strategy

Adults and Health								CAPITAL					
CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2022/23 - 2025/26													
Scheme Description			Forecast Expenditure					Forecast Funding					
	Total Approved Budget	Prior Years	Forecast Budget 2022/23	Forecast Budget 2023/24	Forecast Budget 2024/25	Forecast Budget 2025/26	Total Forecast Budget 2022/26	Grants	External Contributions	Revenue Contributions	Capital Receipts	Prudential Borrowing	Total Funding
Committed Schemes													0
Adults Services													
Electronic Call Monitoring System	389	0	0	389	0	0	389			389			389
People Planner System	94	38	56	0	0	0	56	56					56
Replacement Care4CE Devices	93	65	28	0	0		28	28					28
Total Adults Services Schemes	576	103	84	389	0	0	473	84	0	389	0	0	473



## 6. Reserves Strategy

### Adults and Health Committee

Name of Reserve	Opening Balance 1st April 2022 £000	Forecast Movement in Reserves 2022/23 £000	Forecast Closing Balance 31st March 2023 £000	Notes
<b>Adult Social Care Operations</b>				
Adults Directorate	1,020	(450)	570	To support a number of widespread projects within the Adults and Health Directorate. Connected Community Strategy Developments activity has been delayed due to community team focussing on resettlement schemes. Transformation and Improvement of ASC and Care4ce New Model of Care anticipate phasing of appropriation will match the original business case.
DOL's Assessments	397	(397)	0	Reserve required due to delays in DOLs assessment processing. Anticipated to be fully utilised in 2022/23.
Public Health (LAC funding for 3 years/ Investment in Outcome 5 activities - Adults)	162	(162)	0	Reserve will be fully utilised by the end of 2022/23, matched off against LAC staff as per the original business case.
<b>Adults Social Care Commissioning</b>				
PFI Equalisation - Extra Care Housing	2,715	80	2,795	Surplus grant set aside to meet future payments on existing PFI contract which commenced in January 2009, and the anticipated gap at the end of the agreement.
NHB Community Grants Staffing	132	0	132	To support administrative staffing costs in relation to Central Government's New Homes Bonus guidance for community projects.
<b>Public Health</b>				
Public Health	3,220	(488)	2,732	Ring-fenced underspend to be invested in areas to improve performance against key targets. Including the creation of an innovation fund to support partners to deliver initiatives that tackle key health issues. Anticipated that the carry forward ringfenced grant will be spent across 2022/23 to 2025/26.
<b>ADULTS AND HEALTH TOTAL</b>	<b>7,646</b>	<b>(1,417)</b>	<b>6,229</b>	

# **Appendix 2 : Children and Families Committee**

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## Appendix 2

### Children and Families Committee

#### 1. Changes to Revenue Budget 2022/23 since First Financial Review

	First review Net Budget £000	Additional Grant Funding £000	Restructuring & Realignments £000	Revised Net Budget £000
<b>Children and Families</b>				
Directorate	1,006	-	-	1,006
Children's Social Care	46,651	-	372	47,023
Education & 14-19 Skills	18,532	-	9	18,541
Strong Start, Family Help and Integration (Previously Prevention & Early Help)	8,308	-	(372)	7,936
	74,497	-	9	74,506

## 2. Action Plan 2022/23

- 2.1 At mid-year the forecast outturn is £4.0m greater than budget, a change of £0.5m since the first review. The pay inflation estimate has been reduced due to the reversal of the additional 1.25% National Insurance increase. The main cause of the increased forecast relate to pressure in SEND growth for School Transport.

Children and Families Committee	Exp £m	Inc £m	Net £m	MTFS Proposal	Value 2022/23 £m	MTFS Ref	RAG Rating	Comments	Variance from MTFS 2022/23 £m	Change from FR1 2022/23 £m
C&F Committee				Pay Inflation	1.548	3&4 + New	Red (will not achieve)	Represents current estimate of the impact on Committee services in excess of the MTFS, from a nationally negotiated pay award.	1.271	-0.097
				Use of EMRs		New		Additional use of earmarked reserves.	-0.408	-0.200
				Transformation		New		Flexible use of Capital Receipts	-1.000	0.000
Directorate	1.3	-0.3	1.0	FR2 Results				Lower costs of staff and supplies.	-0.081	-0.081
Strong Start, Family Help and Integration	13.4	-5.5	7.9	A redesign of Early Help Services into a Locality model	-0.424	48	Green (on track and should achieve)	A significant amount of vacancies have been held in the service pending the restructure and they allow the saving to be delivered in 2022/23.	0.000	0.000
				Staff Travel and related savings	-0.062	29	Red (will not achieve)	At this stage the service is working to resume pre COVID-19 delivery levels and is not able to deliver savings from less travel or a reduced mileage rate. To be considered as part of wider recruitment and retention issue.	0.050	0.000

Children and Families Committee	Exp £m	Inc £m	Net £m	MTFS Proposal	Value 2022/23 £m	MTFS Ref	RAG Rating	Comments	Variance from MTFS 2022/23 £m	Change from FR1 2022/23 £m
				Development and Partnerships service		50	Amber (not on track but may still achieve)	Under discussion to confirm any required changes.	-0.193	-0.193
				Revenue costs for Crewe Youth Zone (CYZ)		43	Green (on track and should achieve)	Outcomes aligned within the Crewe youth zone together with the supporting families agenda will ensure £1.2m payment (£0.4m for three years) will be made available from the programme to part fund the Crewe Youth Zone.	0.000	0.000
				Restructure Early Help budget to fund Crewe Youth Zone		44	Green (on track and should achieve)	A restructure is scheduled for March 2023. A significant amount of vacancies have been held in the service pending the restructure and they allow the saving to be delivered in 2022/23.	0.000	0.000
				P&S use of Troubled families		New			-0.700	-0.400
				Use of COMF grant		New		Activity within Strong Start that may be funded from the ringfenced Contain Outbreak Management Fund - now within mid year figures.	0.000	0.013

Children and Families Committee	Exp £m	Inc £m	Net £m	MTFS Proposal	Value 2022/23 £m	MTFS Ref	RAG Rating	Comments	Variance from MTFS 2022/23 £m	Change from FR1 2022/23 £m
				In Year pressures		New		Difference from policy proposals and team plan related to other ongoing mitigation proposals.	-0.288	-0.208
Education and 14-19 Skills	61.3	-42.7	18.6	Establish a traded service for non-statutory elements of Attendance Service	-0.035	22	Green (on track and should achieve)	Income is being generated and using it to fund a single post - broadly net nil.	0.000	0.000
				Establish an Education Psychologist traded service to enable a proactive early support and intervention offer	-0.025	23	Green (on track and should achieve)	Income is being generated. Need to confirm position related to team capacity.	0.000	0.000
				Increase capacity to support Statutory SEND service	0.400	42	Amber (on track but may not achieve all)	Legal costs continue to highlight pressure in this area.	0.000	0.000

Children and Families Committee	Exp £m	Inc £m	Net £m	MTFS Proposal	Value 2022/23 £m	MTFS Ref	RAG Rating	Comments	Variance from MTFS 2022/23 £m	Change from FR1 2022/23 £m
				Increase capacity to support Statutory Education Psychology Service	0.125	47	Amber (on track but may not achieve all)	Significant transformation work taking place but will need £500,000 growth in 2023/24 as a minimum.	0.618	0.087
				School Transport	1.200	62	Red (will not achieve)	The Home to School Transport budget remains under significant pressure for a number of reasons. The forecast for 2022/23 has increased significantly following the start of the new academic year. The outcome of an independent review was reported to C&F Committee on 14 November 2022 which contained proposals for savings over the medium term and these will help to mitigate growth pressures.	2.835	1.298
				Staff Travel and related savings	-0.050	29	Red (will not achieve)	This is a challenge to deliver as the reduction in travel is too much and the mileage rate has not been changed. Low numbers of regular user allowances in this service.	0.098	0.000

Children and Families Committee	Exp £m	Inc £m	Net £m	MTFS Proposal	Value 2022/23 £m	MTFS Ref	RAG Rating	Comments	Variance from MTFS 2022/23 £m	Change from FR1 2022/23 £m
				School catering – implications on outcome of external catering review		New		The catering service has secured public health funding of £200k to improve the healthy meal choice for 2022/23.	-0.073	-0.073
				Use of Public Health funds		New		Activity within Education and Skills that may be funded from the ringfenced Public Health Grant. This is catering and now in the catering line above.	0.000	0.200
				Use of COMF grant		New		Activity within Education and Skills that may be funded from the ringfenced Contain Outbreak Management Fund - now within mid year figures.	0.000	0.110
				E&S Cell		New		Now merged into in year pressures.	0.000	0.030
				In Year pressures		New		Difference from policy proposals and team plan related to other ongoing mitigation proposals.	-0.486	-0.486
Children's Social Care	49.9	-2.9	47.0	Children's Social Care Transformation and OFSTED Response	-1.500	2	Green (on track and should achieve)	In light of improvement work needed at pace it would be helpful to extend the timescale for this funding. Balance held in earmarked reserves.	0.000	0.000



Children and Families Committee	Exp £m	Inc £m	Net £m	MTFS Proposal	Value 2022/23 £m	MTFS Ref	RAG Rating	Comments	Variance from MTFS 2022/23 £m	Change from FR1 2022/23 £m
				Investment in Cared for Children and Care Leavers and other pressures	4.000	41	Red (will not achieve)	This has been allocated to the placements budget pressure – with a full review of budgets pending. Regular review / deep dive into placements. Opportunities in the other budgets will be considered but they are under pressure.  Offset against on going mitigation proposals.	2.971	0.661
				Apply Resettlement funding to additional costs		New		The council has received a grant payment for each family and this needs to be allocated to respective services. An estimate is included here.	-0.682	-0.682
				Safeguarding Children – legacy staffing pressure	0.390	45	Green (on track and should achieve)	This was growth that has corrected a legacy issue.	0.000	0.000
				Growth in Children & Families Commissioning Contracts	0.180	46	Green (on track and should achieve)	This was growth that has corrected a legacy issue. The budget has been significantly reduced in earlier years so options for further reductions are limited. Review budgets for 2023/24.	-0.050	-0.050

Children and Families Committee	Exp £m	Inc £m	Net £m	MTFS Proposal	Value 2022/23 £m	MTFS Ref	RAG Rating	Comments	Variance from MTFS 2022/23 £m	Change from FR1 2022/23 £m
				Staff Travel and related savings	-0.261	29	Red (will not achieve)	<p>This will be a pressure on C&amp;F re requirement to travel. Impact on workforce to be considered and how savings can be delivered. Review for MTFS 2023/24.</p> <p>Part of the essential user allowance item will be delivered but unlikely that less mileage / lower mileage rate will be achieved.</p>	0.113	0.000
				Further Mitigations		New		<p>Forensic review of projected deficit budget lines to identify in-year mitigations.</p> <p>Acquire domestic property for Children's Homes. Review all high cost-low outcome placements. Now aligned with agency placements line.</p>	0.000	0.475
				Use of COMF grant		New		Activity within Childrens Social Care that may be funded from the ringfenced Contain Outbreak Management Fund - now within mid year figures.	0.000	0.044
<b>Total</b>	<b>125.9</b>	<b>-51.4</b>	<b>74.5</b>		<b>5.486</b>				<b>3.995</b>	<b>0.448</b>

# Corporate Grants Register

Table 1 – Corporate Grants Register

Grants 2022/23	Revised Forecast FR1 2022/23 £000	Latest Forecast 2022/23 £000	Change from FR1 2022/23 £000	Treatment of Grant  <i>Notes 2 - 5</i>
<b>CHILDREN &amp; FAMILIES</b>				
<b>Specific Use (Held within Services)<sup>1</sup></b>	165,406	166,408	1,002	
<b>General Purpose (Held Corporately)</b>				
Staying Put Implementation Grant	130	130	0	
Extended Rights to Free Transport (Home to School Transport)	250	250	0	
Extended Personal Adviser Duty Implementation	57	57	0	
Extension of the role of Virtual School Heads	61	61	0	
<b>TOTAL CHILDREN &amp; FAMILIES</b>	<b>165,904</b>	<b>166,906</b>	<b>1,002</b>	

## Notes

1 The Dedicated Schools Grant, Pupil Premium Grant, Sixth Form Grant and Other School Specific Grant from the Education Funding Agency (EFA) figures are based on actual anticipated allocations. Changes are for in-year increases / decreases to allocations by the DfE and conversions to academy status.

2 SRE - Supplementary Revenue Estimate requested by relevant service.

3 ODR - Officer Decision Record to approve immediate budget change to relevant service.

4 Reserves - transfer to reserves at year end.

5 Balances - amount will be included as a variance to budget.

3.1 Cheshire East Council receives two main types of Government grants; specific use grants and general purpose grants. Specific use grants are held within the relevant service with a corresponding expenditure budget. Whereas general purpose grants are held in central budgets with a corresponding expenditure budget within the allocated service area.

3.2 The increase in specific grants relates mainly to Asylum Seekers, Ukraine Resettlement Funding and the COVID-19 Recovery Premium grants reflecting the latest allocations.

3.3 Spending in relation to specific use grants must be in line with the purpose for which it is provided.

### 3. Debt Management

	Outstanding Debt £000	Over 6 months old £000
<b>Children and Families Committee</b>		
Children's Social Care (Incl. Directorate)	8	6
Education and 14-19 Skills	70	-
Prevention and Early Help	9	-
Schools	47	-

## 4. Capital Strategy

Children and Families													CAPITAL
CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2022/23-2025/26													
Scheme Description			Forecast Expenditure					Forecast Funding					
	Total Approved Budget	Prior Years	Forecast Budget 2022/23	Forecast Budget 2023/24	Forecast Budget 2024/25	Forecast Budget 2025/26	Total Forecast Budget 2022/26	Grants	External Contributions	Revenue Contributions	Capital Receipts	Prudential Borrowing	Total Funding
Committed Schemes in progress													
Childrens Social Care													
Foster Carers Capacity Scheme	634	348	0	286	0	0	286					286	286
Crewe Youth Zone	4,800	342	650	2,450	1,358	0	4,458	2,258				2,200	4,458
Strong Start, Family Help & Integration													
Ash Grove Nursery Expansion	230	225	5	0	0	0	5	5					5
Beechwood Nursery Expansion	868	836	33	0	0	0	33			33			33
Early Years Sufficiency Capital Fund	1,036	913	0	123	0	0	123	123					123
Education and 14-19 Skills													
Adelaide Academy	784	34	50	700	0	0	750	580				170	750
Congleton Planning Area	5,034	44	300	4,690	0	0	4,990	2,593	2,397				4,990
Devolved Formula Capital	2,179	350	954	300	290	285	1,829	1,829					1,829
Future Years Basic Need Allocation	4,192	11	2,652	1,529	0	0	4,180	4,180					4,180
Holmes Chapel Planning Area	3,625	770	750	2,105	0	0	2,855	2,480	375				2,855
Macclesfield Planning Area - secondary	4,084	1,106	100	2,400	478	0	2,978	2,978					2,978
Malbank High School	1,922	1,856	66	0	0	0	66	66					66
Monks Coppenhall Sen Expansion	127	2	125	0	0	0	125	25				100	125
Nantwich Planning Area (Primary)	7,080	104	400	4,600	1,976	0	6,976	3,787	3,189				6,976
Nantwich Planning Area (Secondary)	700	0	200	500	0	0	700	700					700
Park Lane Expansion	4,400	4,226	174	0	0	0	174	174					174
Provision of Sufficient School Places - SEND	6,006	16	2,490	3,500	0	0	5,990	500				5,490	5,990
Puss Bank SEN Expansion	532	509	23	0	0	0	23					23	23
Sandbach High School - Basic Need	1,704	1,702	2	0	0	0	2	2					2
Sandbach Boys School - Basic Need	1,776	1,773	3	0	0	0	3	3					3
Sandbach Planning Area (secondary)	38	0	38	0	0	0	38	38					38
School Condition Grant	4,356	42	1,595	2,761	0	0	4,356	4,301		55			4,356
Sen/High Needs Grant Allocation	3,866	0	46	3,820	0	0	3,866	3,866					3,866
Sen Placement Expn - Phase 2	38	0	38	0	0	0	38					38	38

## CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2022/23-2025/26

Scheme Description	Total Approved Budget	Prior Years	Forecast Expenditure				Total Forecast Budget 2022/26	Forecast Funding					Total Funding
			Forecast Budget 2022/23	Forecast Budget 2023/24	Forecast Budget 2024/25	Forecast Budget 2025/26		Grants	External Contributions	Revenue Contributions	Capital Receipts	Prudential Borrowing	
<b>Committed Schemes in progress</b>													
<b>Education and 14-19 Skills</b>													
Shavington Planning Area (1)	3,125	70	400	2,655	0	0	3,055	3,055					3,055
Special Provision Grant Allocation	908	46	863	0	0	0	863	857		6			863
Springfield Satellite Site (Dean Row)	4,120	91	2,030	2,000	0	0	4,030	3,230				800	4,030
To Expand 'In Borough' Sen Placement Capacity - Springfield Special School	149	91	58	0	0	0	58					58	58
Little Angels Satellite Sites	1,100	1,074	26	0	0	0	26	26					26
Wilmslow Basic Need Scheme	13,944	1,658	4,000	5,000	3,286	0	12,286	9,551	2,687			48	12,286
Wilmslow Primary Planning Area	626	1	0	625	0	0	625	125	500				625
													0
<b>Total Committed Schemes</b>	<b>83,984</b>	<b>18,240</b>	<b>18,071</b>	<b>40,042</b>	<b>7,388</b>	<b>285</b>	<b>65,786</b>	<b>47,330</b>	<b>9,149</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>9,213</b>	<b>65,786</b>
													0
													0
<b>New Schemes</b>													
<b>Childrens Social Care</b>													
Children's Home Sufficiency Scheme	2,100		1,000	1,100	0	0	2,100					2,100	2,100
<b>Education and 14-19 Skills</b>													
Congleton Planning Area (1)	2,200	0	0	1,100	1,100	0	2,200	900	1,300				2,200
Congleton Planning Area (2)	625	0	100	525	0	0	625	625					625
Congleton Planning Area (3)	7,500	0	0	500	800	6,200	7,500	4,300	3,200				7,500
Sandbach Planning Area	3,183	0	500	2,683	0	0	3,183	2,673	510				3,183
Handforth Planning Area	15,000	0	0	2,000	6,500	6,500	15,000	2,136	12,864				15,000
Haslington Planning Area (The Dingle PS Expansion)	1,385	0	100	900	385	0	1,385	1,385					1,385
Macclesfield Academy Resource Provision	100	0	100	0	0	0	100	100					100
Macclesfield Planning Area (1)	4,000	0	0	0	2,000	2,000	4,000		4,000				4,000
Macclesfield Planning Area (2)	4,000	0	100	3,400	500	0	4,000	4,000					4,000
Mobberley Primary School	900	0	50	850	0	0	900	600			300		900
Resource Provision - Wistaston PS	1,400	0	400	1,000	0	0	1,400	1,100				300	1,400
Shavington Planning Area (2)	8,000	0	200	800	4,000	3,000	8,000	5,640	2,360				8,000
<b>Total New Schemes</b>	<b>50,393</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2,550</b>	<b>14,858</b>	<b>15,285</b>	<b>17,700</b>	<b>50,393</b>	<b>23,459</b>	<b>24,234</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>2,400</b>	<b>50,393</b>
<b>Total Children and Families Schemes</b>	<b>134,377</b>	<b>18,240</b>	<b>20,621</b>	<b>54,900</b>	<b>22,673</b>	<b>17,985</b>	<b>116,179</b>	<b>70,789</b>	<b>33,383</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>11,613</b>	<b>116,179</b>

## 5. Reserves Strategy

### Children and Families Committee

Name of Reserve	Opening Balance 1st April 2022 £000	Forecast Movement in Reserves 2022/23 £000	Forecast Closing Balance 31st March 2023 £000	Notes
<b>Directorate</b>				
Childrens Directorate - Transformation Funding	1,079	(365)	714	Expectation of £200k for CSC Court and Care Planning Service Proposals plus £65k for CSC New Beginnings.
Childrens Directorate - C&F ED	422	(110)	312	£100k from this reserve will also be used to assist with in year mitigations. Estimated spend of £30k transport review, £50k Chess review and £30k catering review.
<b>Childrens Social Care</b>				
Domestic Abuse Partnership	112	(61)	51	To sustain preventative services to vulnerable people as a result of partnership funding. This is the current budgeted position, however updates will be provided on future reviews. Service will need to consider in year deficit as this would not be sustainable in 2023/24 based on current assumptions.
<b>Education and 14-19 Skills</b>				
Skills and Lifelong Learning	30	(30)	0	To support adult learning, training and improving skills for the workplace. Need to review likelihood of use in 2022/23.
School Organisation & Capital Service	16	(16)	0	Springfield lease of £28.5k per annum will be a pressure in 2022/23.
SSIF Nexus Programme	9	(9)	0	Reserve drawdown has now been actioned and allocated to School Improvement to continue to support schools with high disadvantaged learners - agreed with CWAC.
<b>Strong Start, Family Help and Integration</b>				
Troubled Fams Initiative	2,215	(566)	1,649	Crewe Youth Zone and ACT have been assigned funding from shared outcomes of the Supporting Families Programme.
Emotional Healthy Schools	71	(71)	0	Funding by partners to deliver service.
Public Sector Transformation – contribution to Early Youth Inclusion Fund	57	(57)	0	Intention to use reserve for in-year mitigation in 2022/23
Complex Dependencies	21	(21)	0	Intention to use reserve for in-year mitigation in 2022/23
<b>CHILDREN AND FAMILIES TOTAL</b>	<b>4,032</b>	<b>(1,306)</b>	<b>2,726</b>	

- 6.1 The Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) is ring-fenced funding received for: schools; high needs / special educational needs; and early years provision. In recent years there has been a pressure on the DSG high needs block where funding has not kept pace with the increasing numbers and cost of children with an education, health and care plan. This has created a deficit DSG reserve balance which is held in an unusable reserve. The DSG reserve deficit is forecast to be £45.6m at the end of the year. This is in line with the budget gap as determined the Council's DSG Management Plan that was approved by Children and Families Committee in September 2022 and set out the planned expenditure and income on high needs over the medium term.

**Table 3 – DSG Deficit**

	£m
DSG – Forecast in-year pressure	19.9
DSG – Deficit Balance B/F	25.7
<b>DSG Deficit Balance at 31 March 2023</b>	<b>45.6</b>



# **Appendix 3 : Corporate Policy Committee**

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### **Corporate Policy Committee Extracts**

**1. Changes to Revenue Budget 2022/23 since First Financial Review**

**2. Action Plan 2022/23**

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**4. Debt Management**

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# Appendix 3

## Corporate Policy Committee

### 1. Changes to Revenue Budget 2022/23 since First Financial Review

	First review Net Budget £000	Additional Grant Funding £000	Restructuring & Realignments £000	Revised Net Budget £000
<b>Corporate Policy</b>				
Directorate	1,845	-	(445)	1,400
Finance & Customer Services	11,940	-	176	12,116
Governance and Compliance Services	11,653	-	146	11,799
HR	2,397	-	26	2,423
ICT	9,348	-	95	9,443
Communications	653	-	20	673
Policy and Change	1,902	-	16	1,918
	39,738	-	34	39,772

## 2. Action Plan 2022/23 as reported to Corporate Policy

- 2.1 At mid-year the forecast outturn is £0.4m greater than budget, an improvement of £0.3m since the first review. The pay inflation estimate has been reduced due to the reversal of the additional 1.25% National Insurance increase. There have been further pressures due to agency costs in the Transaction Service Centre and lower income in Legal Services. However, these have been offset by lower spend across various budgets including additional income, and in-year vacancies.

Corporate Policy Committee	Exp £m	Inc £m	Net £m	MTFS Proposal	Value 2022/23 £m	MTFS Ref	RAG Rating	Comments	Variance from MTFS 2022/23 £m	Variance from MTFS 2022/23 £m
Corporate Policy Committee				Pay Inflation	1.315	3&4 + New	Red (will not achieve)	Represents current estimate of the impact on Committee services in excess of the MTFS, from a nationally negotiated pay award.	0.791	-0.081
Corporate Directorate	16.6	-2.7	13.9	Efficiency savings and Restructures within Corporate Services	-0.148	8	Amber (on track but may not achieve all)	Savings allocated pro-rata. Savings can probably be achieved through in-year vacancy management rather than permanently. Very few savings through restructures because of increased demand across the board.	0.000	0.000
				Mitigation of reduction in the Dedicated Schools Grant (ICT element)	0.098	15	Amber (not on track but may still achieve)		0.000	0.000
				Infrastructure Investment Programme	0.127	33	Amber (not on track but	Revenue consequences reviewed and confirmed.	0.000	0.000

Corporate Policy Committee	Exp £m	Inc £m	Net £m	MTFS Proposal	Value 2022/23 £m	MTFS Ref	RAG Rating	Comments	Variance from MTFS 2022/23 £m	Variance from MTFS 2022/23 £m
							may still achieve)			
				Improving Digital Customer Experience	0.110	1	Amber (not on track but may still achieve)	Revenue consequences reviewed and confirmed.	0.000	0.000
				Unified IT Communications	0.110	25	Amber (not on track but may still achieve)	Revenue consequences being reviewed and confirmed.	0.000	0.000
				IT Security and Compliance	0.097	26	Amber (not on track but may still achieve)	Revenue consequences being reviewed and confirmed.	0.000	0.000
				IT Procurements and Application Lifecycle Management	0.075	27	Amber (not on track but may still achieve)	Revenue consequences reviewed and confirmed.	0.000	0.000
				Information Assurance and Data Management Phase 3	0.040	28	Amber (not on track but may still achieve)	Revenue consequences reviewed and confirmed.	0.000	0.000
				Removal of temporary implementation budget and	-0.453	6	Green (on track and should achieve)	£105k of reduction relates to Transaction Service Centre additional capacity in 2021/22. See MTFS ref 16.	0.000	0.000

Corporate Policy Committee	Exp £m	Inc £m	Net £m	MTFS Proposal	Value 2022/23 £m	MTFS Ref	RAG Rating	Comments	Variance from MTFS 2022/23 £m	Variance from MTFS 2022/23 £m
				investment to run the new Financial System						
				Staff Travel and related savings	-0.026	29	Red (will not achieve)	£76k for whole of Corporate Services. Savings have been allocated across all services but has been rolled up into one line for this report. 30% reduced mileage element achieved however, element relating to adopting HMRC rate (£18k across Corporate Services) will not be achieved as no agreement has been reached with the unions. Shortfall being offset by mileage not yet returning to expected post COVID levels due to increasing cases early in 2022/23. Re-opening MARS scheme to offset savings shortfall.	0.000	0.000
				In Year pressure/mitigation		New		CEX and Exec Dir budgets underspend £89k, Communications lower income partially offset by lower supplies & services spend £9k over, HR vacancies earlier in the year £274k under, ICT Strategy	0.595	-0.152

Corporate Policy Committee	Exp £m	Inc £m	Net £m	MTFS Proposal	Value 2022/23 £m	MTFS Ref	RAG Rating	Comments	Variance from MTFS 2022/23 £m	Variance from MTFS 2022/23 £m
								underspend £221k offset by £1.2m overspend in ICT Shared Service primarily due to insufficient commissioned project hours and agency costs.		
				Transformation		New		Use flexible receipts to capitalise costs of transformation. Ongoing costs for Implementation work on B4B within ICT Shared Service - REFCUS utilised to support last year. 50% share of £35,000. Further opportunities for savings through digital transformation being scoped.	-0.017	0.000
				Efficiencies from reducing non-essential spend, printing, premises hire, and review of mobile devices		New		Corporate Services will identify in-year savings from reducing agenda printing costs, premises hire costs, reducing non-essential spend, and reviewing/reducing the use of mobile phone. Efficiencies estimated to be £50k.	-0.050	-0.050
Finance and Customer Services	60.1	-48.0	12.1	Improved Debt Recovery and correcting budgeted court costs income	0.337	5	Amber (not on track but may still achieve)	Position for 2022/23 is a budget increase to reflect reduced court costs and to fund debt off loading and single view. Potential for both to be slightly delayed.	0.000	0.000

Corporate Policy Committee	Exp £m	Inc £m	Net £m	MTFS Proposal	Value 2022/23 £m	MTFS Ref	RAG Rating	Comments	Variance from MTFS 2022/23 £m	Variance from MTFS 2022/23 £m
				targets to reflect actual levels						
				Transactional Service Centre additional funding	0.238	16	Red (will not achieve)	Based on latest figures from CWaC, expected overspend due to additional agency staff costs in Governance & Support Team, and further work being required to be undertaken on the system by the HR and Payroll team. Ongoing discussion about about mitigating these costs. It is hoped activity will improve the forecast later in the year.	0.253	0.141
				Vendor Management Phase 3	0.175	24	Amber (not on track but may still achieve)	Budget increase for 2022/23 to enable system rollout and change management piece. Budget reduced in 2023/24 to include only system costs. Could be a budget carry forward due to a delay in the system rollout.	0.000	0.000
				Brighter Futures Together Programme	-0.133	19	Amber (not on track but may still achieve)	Remaining savings dependant on enabling technologies and procedures. Savings may to be achieved in year through vacancy	0.000	0.000

Corporate Policy Committee	Exp £m	Inc £m	Net £m	MTFS Proposal	Value 2022/23 £m	MTFS Ref	RAG Rating	Comments	Variance from MTFS 2022/23 £m	Variance from MTFS 2022/23 £m
				Customer Experience				management but permanent savings potentially delayed until 2023/24.		
				Efficiency savings and Restructures within Corporate Services	-0.098	8	Amber (on track but may not achieve all)	Savings allocated pro-rata. Savings can probably be achieved through in-year vacancy management rather than permanently. Very few savings through restructures because of increased demand across the board.	0.000	0.000
				In Year pressure/mitigation		New		£30k pressure in Accountancy offset by underspend in Procurement due to delay to start of Atamis project £29k, and an underspend of £453k in Customer Services due to additional income, and in-year vacancies.	-0.452	-0.324
Governance and Compliance Services	15.5	-3.7	11.8	Efficiency savings and Restructures within Corporate Services	-0.078	8	Amber (on track but may not achieve all)	Savings allocated pro-rata. Savings can probably be achieved through in-year vacancy management rather than permanently. Very few savings through restructures because of increased demand across the board.	0.000	0.000



Corporate Policy Committee	Exp £m	Inc £m	Net £m	MTFS Proposal	Value 2022/23 £m	MTFS Ref	RAG Rating	Comments	Variance from MTFS 2022/23 £m	Variance from MTFS 2022/23 £m
				In Year pressure/mitigation		New		£191k pressure in Legal Services relating to lower income, and additional agency staff costs offset by an underspend of £607k in Democratic Services mainly from additional income in registrars, and Audit & Risk underspending by £186k mainly due to in-year vacancies.	-0.602	0.119
Policy & Change	2.9	-1.0	1.9	Mitigation of reduction in the Dedicated Schools Grant (Bus Intel)	0.009	15	Amber (not on track but may still achieve)		0.000	0.000
				Review of corporate subscriptions	-0.015	12	Green (on track and should achieve)	Existing budget does not fully cover subscriptions to CCN and LGA. Review subscriptions again and identify further reductions.	0.000	0.000
				Efficiency savings and Restructures within Corporate Services	-0.026	8	Amber (on track but may not achieve all)	Savings allocated pro-rata. Savings can probably be achieved through in-year vacancy management rather than permanently. Very few savings through restructures because of increased demand across the board.	0.000	0.000

Corporate Policy Committee	Exp £m	Inc £m	Net £m	MTFS Proposal	Value 2022/23 £m	MTFS Ref	RAG Rating	Comments	Variance from MTFS 2022/23 £m	Variance from MTFS 2022/23 £m
				In Year pressure/mitigation		New		£88k underspend due to in-year vacant posts in policy and change offset slightly by a £7k overspend in Business Change.	-0.081	0.010
<b>Total</b>	<b>95.1</b>	<b>-55.4</b>	<b>39.7</b>		<b>1.754</b>				<b>0.437</b>	<b>-0.337</b>

### 3. Corporate Grants Register

**Table 1 – Corporate Grants Register**

Grants 2022/23	Revised Forecast FR1 2022/23 £000	Latest Forecast 2022/23 £000	Change from FR1 2022/23 £000	Treatment of Grant  <i>Notes 2 - 5</i>
<b>CORPORATE POLICY</b>				
<b>Specific Use (Held within Services)</b>	69,720	69,727	8	
<b>General Purpose (Held Corporately)</b>				
Housing Benefit Administration Subsidy	736	736	0	
Council Tax Support Administration Subsidy	345	345	0	
NNDR Administration Allowance	587	587	0	
Revenue Support Grant	7	7	0	
New Homes Bonus	6,614	6,614	0	
Lower Tier Services Grant	360	360	0	
Services Grant	2,932	2,932	0	
Business Rates Reliefs Grant 2022/23	13,890	13,890	0	
<b>TOTAL CORPORATE POLICY</b>	<b>95,191</b>	<b>95,199</b>	<b>8</b>	

**Notes**

1 The Dedicated Schools Grant, Pupil Premium Grant, Sixth Form Grant and Other School Specific Grant from the Education Funding Agency (EFA) figures are based on actual anticipated allocations. Changes are for in-year increases/decreases to allocations by the DfE and conversions to academy status.

2 SRE - Supplementary Revenue Estimate requested by relevant service.

3 ODR - Officer Decision Record to approve immediate budget change to relevant service.

4 Reserves - transfer to reserves at year end.

5 Balances - amount will be included as a variance to budget.

- 3.1 Cheshire East Council receives two main types of Government grants; specific use grants and general purpose grants. Specific use grants are held within the relevant service with a corresponding expenditure budget. Whereas general purpose grants are held in central budgets with a corresponding expenditure budget within the allocated service area.
- 3.2 Spending in relation to specific use grants must be in line with the purpose for which it is provided.

## 4. Debt Management

	Outstanding Debt £000	Over 6 months old £000
<b>Corporate Policy Committee</b>		
Finance and Customer Services	76	40
Governance and Compliance	3	-
Human Resources	2	-
ICT	90	4

## 5. Capital Strategy

### Corporate Policy

### CAPITAL

#### CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2022/23 - 2025/26

Scheme Description	Total Approved Budget	Prior Years £000	Forecast Expenditure				Total Forecast Budget 2022/26 £000	Forecast Funding					Total Funding £000
			Forecast Budget 2022/23 £000	Forecast Budget 2023/24 £000	Forecast Budget 2024/25 £000	Forecast Budget 2025/26 £000		Grants £000	External Contributions £000	Revenue Contributions £000	Capital Receipts £000	Prudential Borrowing £000	
<b>Committed Schemes</b>													
<b>ICT Services</b>													
Care Act Phase 2	2,648	0	1,372	638	638	0	2,648					2,648	2,648
Core Financials	3,948	0	1,746	741	720	741	3,948		500		13	3,435	3,948
Digital Customer - Delivery Programme Phase 1	250	79	171	0	0	0	171					171	171
Digital Customer Enablement	2,874	33	967	1,400	474	0	2,841					2,841	2,841
ICT Device Replacement	120	75	45	0	0	0	45			45			45
Info' Assurance And Data Mgmt	5,324	0	2,234	1,591	1,500	0	5,324					5,324	5,324
Infrastructure Investment(IIP)	7,773	0	2,623	1,680	1,656	1,814	7,773					7,773	7,773
Vendor Management	1,006	730	276	0	0	0	276					276	276
Unified Communications Project	1,206	651	555	0	0	0	555					555	555
<b>Finance &amp; Customer Services</b>													
Strategic Capital Projects*	1,897	0	1,897	4,000	4,000	3,087	12,984					12,984	12,984
<b>Total Committed Schemes</b>	<b>27,047</b>	<b>1,568</b>	<b>11,886</b>	<b>10,050</b>	<b>8,988</b>	<b>5,642</b>	<b>36,567</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>36,008</b>	<b>36,567</b>
<b>New Schemes</b>													
<b>Information Communication Technology</b>													
Vendor Management - Phase 2	320	0	170	150	0	0	320					320	320
<b>Total New Schemes</b>	<b>320</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>320</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>320</b>	<b>320</b>
<b>Total Corporate Policy Schemes</b>	<b>27,367</b>	<b>1,568</b>	<b>12,056</b>	<b>10,200</b>	<b>8,988</b>	<b>5,642</b>	<b>36,887</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>36,328</b>	<b>36,887</b>

\*Note subject to council approval on 14 December 2022

## 6. Reserves Strategy

### Corporate Policy Committee

Name of Reserve	Opening Balance 1st April 2022 £000	Forecast Movement in Reserves 2022/23 £000	Forecast Closing Balance 31st March 2023 £000	Notes
<b>Directorate</b>				
Corporate Directorate	1,868	(403)	1,465	To support a number of widespread projects within the Corporate Directorate.
<b>Finance and Customer Services</b>				
Collection Fund Management	27,424	(15,609)	11,815	To manage cash flow implications as part of the Business Rates Retention Scheme. Includes liabilities that will not be paid until future years.
Financing Reserve - Corporate Capital Projects	7,832	1,500	9,332	
Financing Reserve - People Capital Projects	573	(150)	423	To provide for financing of capital schemes, other projects and initiatives.
Financing Reserve - Place Capital Projects	1,125	(250)	875	
MTFS Reserve	10,068	(2,533)	7,535	To support the financial strategy and risk management.
Section 151 Revenue Grants	28	(28)	0	Unspent specific use grant carried forward into 2022/23.
Section 151 Revenue Grants - Covid-19	5,989	(5,989)	0	Covid (Unringfenced) reserve carried forward into 2022/23.
<b>Governance and Compliance</b>				
Insurance Reserve - Cheshire County Fund	130	(187)	(57)	To settle insurance claims and manage excess costs.
Insurance Reserve - Cheshire East Fund	5,164	(1,244)	3,920	To settle insurance claims and manage excess costs.
Elections General	477	225	702	To provide funds for Election costs every 4 years.
Brexit Funding	13	0	13	
<b>Human Resources</b>				
HR (CARE4CE Review, Culture Change, Pay realignment, Learning Mgt System)	59	(59)	0	To fund HR expenditure in relation to the Care4CE review, culture change programme, pay realignment and the Learning Management System.
Pay Structure (M Grade Review)	584	(278)	306	To fund ongoing changes to pay structure.
<b>Policy and Change</b>				
Brighter Future Transformation Programme	1,780	41	1,821	To fund the Council's four year transformation programme and its five outcomes of Culture; Estates and ICT systems; Customer Experience, Commercial Approach and Governance.
<b>CORPORATE POLICY TOTAL</b>	<b>63,114</b>	<b>(24,964)</b>	<b>38,150</b>	

# **Appendix 4 : Economy and Growth Committee**

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### **Economy and Growth Committee Extracts**

**1. Changes to Revenue Budget 2022/23 since First Financial Review**

**2. Action Plan 2022/23**

**3. Corporate Grants Register**

**Table 1: Economy and Growth Committee Grants**

**4. Debt Management**

**5. Capital Strategy**

**6. Reserves Strategy**

## Appendix 4

### Economy and Growth Committee

#### 1. Changes to Revenue Budget 2022/23 since First Financial Review

	First review Net Budget £000	Additional Grant Funding £000	Restructuring & Realignments £000	Revised Net Budget £000
<b>Economy and Growth</b>				
Directorate	834	-	-	834
Growth & Enterprise	22,761	-	12	22,773
	23,595	-	12	23,607



## 2. Action Plan 2022/23

2.1 At mid-year the forecast outturn is £0.2m greater than budget, a slight improvement since the first review. The main reason for the decrease is that the pay inflation estimate has been reduced due to the reversal of the additional 1.25% National Insurance increase.

Economy and Growth Committee	Exp £m	Inc £m	Net £m	MTFS Proposal	Value 2022/23 £m	MTFS Ref	RAG Rating	Comments	Variance from MTFS 2022/23 £m	Change from FR1 2022/23 £m
E&G Committee				Pay Inflation	0.528	3&4 + New	Red (will not achieve)	Represents current estimate of the impact on Committee services in excess of the MTFS, from a nationally negotiated pay award.	0.122	-0.031
Directorate	2.4	-1.6	0.8	Staff Travel and related savings	-0.082	29	Amber (on track but may not achieve all)		0.000	0.000
				Place directorates mitigating actions				Savings on feasibility, travel and consultancy.	-0.042	0.000
				Transformation				Use flexible receipts to capitalise costs of transformation - Planning Deep Dive.	-0.074	0.000
Growth and Enterprise	32.3	-9.5	22.8	Neighbourhood Estate Review	-0.260	31	Red (will not achieve)	Delayed - Awaiting progress on the Leisure Review.	0.219	0.000

Economy and Growth Committee	Exp £m	Inc £m	Net £m	MTFS Proposal	Value 2022/23 £m	MTFS Ref	RAG Rating	Comments	Variance from MTFS 2022/23 £m	Change from FR1 2022/23 £m
				Estates Transformation - Office Accommodation	-0.100	32	Red (will not achieve)	Progress of the Estates Transformation. Cledford House is being advanced to enable property to be vacated and then disposal or alternative use sought.	0.100	0.000
				Transfer of Congleton Visitor Information Centre	-0.020	11	Green (on track and should achieve)	Previous agreement in place for transfer and phased saving over period.	0.000	0.000
				Asset / Service Transfer	-0.030	51	Amber (on track but may not achieve all)	Final agreement and conclusion of legals on property transfers.	0.030	0.000
				Tatton Park	-0.006	52	Green (on track and should achieve)	Already built into budget.	0.000	0.000
				Investment in Public Rights of Way	0.200	59	Green (on track and should achieve)	Recruitment process underway – however securing a suitable candidate has been difficult.	-0.044	0.000
				Utility Costs / Carbon	1.500	57	Green (on track and should achieve)		0.000	0.000

Economy and Growth Committee	Exp £m	Inc £m	Net £m	MTFS Proposal	Value 2022/23 £m	MTFS Ref	RAG Rating	Comments	Variance from MTFS 2022/23 £m	Change from FR1 2022/23 £m
				Estates Pressures		New		Reflects increases in maintenance, utility and business rates and a pressure on rental income within the Investment portfolio.	0.820	0.000
				Estates mitigating actions		New		Mitigating actions to offset pressures, largely vacancies and better income within Facilities Management.	-0.529	0.000
				Rural & Culture Pressures		New		Reduction in visitor numbers at Tatton Park of over 20% in addition to inflationary increases in energy, materials as well as increases across supplies and services and premises costs. There is also an ongoing shortfall in Public Path Order income due to Covid.	0.491	0.000
				Rural & Culture Mitigating Actions		New		Mitigating actions to offset pressures are largely vacancies across the service and a reserve release for Tatton Park.	-0.359	0.000
				Housing Mitigating Actions		New		Small Covid pressure £7k due to cleaning costs, offset by mitigating actions including vacancies and drawing down grant from balance sheet.	-0.384	0.003

Economy and Growth Committee	Exp £m	Inc £m	Net £m	MTFS Proposal	Value 2022/23 £m	MTFS Ref	RAG Rating	Comments	Variance from MTFS 2022/23 £m	Change from FR1 2022/23 £m
				Economic Development Mitigating Actions		New		Mitigating actions to offset pressures, largely vacancies.	-0.187	0.000
				Estates		New		Exceed disposals targets to fund transformation. Reduce operating hours / close under-utilised buildings. Review options with Municipal Partners.		0.000
				Workforce		New		Revise vacancy forecasts to reflect recruitment difficulties. Slow down recruitment where feasible / safe. Review Value For Money from LEP activity. Updated staffing forecasts reflecting current recruitment timescales have been reflected in lines above.		0.000
				Review of Statutory and Non Statutory Functions		New		Cross cutting item across Place - values to be determined.		0.000
				Restructuring Potential		New		Cross cutting item across Place - values to be determined.		0.000

Economy and Growth Committee	Exp £m	Inc £m	Net £m	MTFS Proposal	Value 2022/23 £m	MTFS Ref	RAG Rating	Comments	Variance from MTFS 2022/23 £m	Change from FR1 2022/23 £m
				Review Property Costs		New		Review of property costs in Childrens and Adults to establish alternative solutions to reduce costs - values to be determined.		0.000
<b>Total</b>	<b>34.7</b>	<b>-11.1</b>	<b>23.6</b>		<b>1.730</b>				<b>0.163</b>	<b>-0.028</b>

### 3. Corporate Grants Register

Table 1 – Corporate Grants Register

Grants 2022/23	Revised Forecast FR1 2022/23 £000	Latest Forecast 2022/23 £000	Change from FR1 2022/23 £000	Treatment of Grant  <i>Notes 2 - 5</i>
<b>ECONOMY &amp; GROWTH</b>				
Specific Use (Held within Services)	2,392	3,439	1,047	
General Purpose (Held Corporately)				
<b>TOTAL ECONOMY &amp; GROWTH</b>	<b>2,392</b>	<b>3,439</b>	<b>1,047</b>	

Notes

- 1 The Dedicated Schools Grant, Pupil Premium Grant, Sixth Form Grant and Other School Specific Grant from the Education Funding Agency (EFA) figures are based on actual anticipated allocations. Changes are for in-year increases / decreases to allocations by the DfE and conversions to academy status.
- 2 SRE - Supplementary Revenue Estimate requested by relevant service.
- 3 ODR - Officer Decision Record to approve immediate budget change to relevant service.
- 4 Reserves - transfer to reserves at year end.
- 5 Balances - amount will be included as a variance to budget.

3.3 Cheshire East Council receives two main types of Government grants; specific use grants and general purpose grants. Specific use grants are held within the relevant service with a corresponding expenditure budget. Whereas general purpose grants are held in central budgets with a corresponding expenditure budget within the allocated service area.

3.4 The increase in specific grants relates mainly to increases in the Rough Sleeping and Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP): Skills Bootcamp grant.

3.5 Spending in relation to specific use grants must be in line with the purpose for which it is provided.

## 4. Debt Management

	Outstanding Debt £000	Over 6 months old £000
<b>Economy and Growth Committee</b>		
Growth and Enterprise	479	202

## 5. Capital Strategy

### Economy and Growth

### CAPITAL

CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2022/23- 2025/26													
Scheme Description	Total Approved Budget	Prior Years £000	Forecast Expenditure				Total Forecast Budget 2022/26 £000	Forecast Funding					Total Funding £000
			Forecast Budget 2022/23 £000	Forecast Budget 2023/24 £000	Forecast Budget 2024/25 £000	Forecast Budget 2025/26 £000		Grants £000	External Contributions £000	Revenue Contributions £000	Capital Receipts £000	Prudential Borrowing £000	
<b>Committed Schemes</b>													
<b>Culture &amp; Tourism</b>													
Archive Option Development	396	293	103	-	-	-	103					103	103
Countryside Capital Projects	605	601	4	-	-	-	4	4					4
Countryside Vehicles	999	0	-	702	167	130	999					999	999
Public Rights of Way - CMM A6 MARR	100	2	5	93	-	-	98	98					98
Public Rights of Way - Flood Damage Investment	63	15	48	-	-	-	48					48	48
Public Rights of Way - Capital Works	860	770	91	-	-	-	91	91					91
Rural & Green Section 106 Schemes	50	16	34	-	-	-	34		34				34
Tatton Park Investment Phase 2	1,969	0	1,259	710	-	-	1,969					1,969	1,969
<b>Economic Development</b>													
Connecting Cheshire 2020	7,238	0	3,000	2,500	738	1,000	7,238	7,655				-417	7,238
Connecting Cheshire Phase 2	883	0	-	-	-	883	883		313			570	883
Connecting Cheshire	595	0	-	-	-	595	595		48			547	595
Crewe Town Centre Regeneration	32,019	11,940	3,474	14,573	-	2,031	20,078	665				19,413	20,078
Demolition of Crewe Library Site	2,765	13	305	1,077	1,370	-	2,752	1,229				1,523	2,752
Future High Street Funding - CEC Innovation Centre	1,169	58	517	594	-	-	1,111	1,111					1,111
Future High Street Funding - Christ Church Innovation Centre	1,934	71	504	1,359	-	-	1,863	1,863					1,863
Leighton Green	2,096	1,455	75	266	300	-	640					640	640
Macclesfield Town Centre	2,219	1,767	252	200	-	-	452					452	452
North Cheshire Garden Village*	64,707	5,491	900	13,994	30,621	13,702	59,216	21,950			21,233	16,034	59,216
Red Roofs Hole Farm Alderley Edge - Acquisition	15	12	3	-	-	-	3					3	3
Public Sector Decarbonisation Fund - Substation	120	60	60	-	-	-	60	60					60
Public Sector Decarbonisation Fund - Cledford	165	160	5	-	-	-	5	5					5
South Macclesfield Development Area	34,630	3,089	895	1,745	19,333	9,568	31,541	10,838	10,000		9,568	1,135	31,541

\*Note subject to council approval on 14 December 2022



## CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2022/23- 2025/26

Scheme Description	Total Approved Budget	Prior Years £000	Forecast Expenditure				Total Forecast Budget 2022/26 £000	Forecast Funding					Total Funding £000	
			Forecast Budget 2022/23 £000	Forecast Budget 2023/24 £000	Forecast Budget 2024/25 £000	Forecast Budget 2025/26 £000		Grants £000	External Contributions £000	Revenue Contributions £000	Capital Receipts £000	Prudential Borrowing £000		
Committed Schemes														
Estates														
Corporate Landlord - Operational	1,027	963	65	-	-	-	65						65	65
Farms Strategy	1,710	0	184	218	218	1,090	1,710						1,710	1,710
Malkins Bank Landfill Site	1,360	511	200	649	-	-	849						849	849
Public Sector Decarbonisation Fund - FM 1	1,855	1,759	96	-	-	-	96	96						96
Public Sector Decarbonisation Fund - FM 2	604	389	216	-	-	-	216	216						216
Premises Capital (FM)	14,663	0	5,032	3,662	3,500	2,469	14,663						14,663	14,663
Schools Capital Maintenance	2,582	0	1,767	815	-	-	2,582	2,291					291	2,582
Septic Tanks	636	250	387	-	-	-	387						387	387
Housing														
Astbury Marsh Caravan Park	247	143	104	-	-	-	104						104	104
Disabled Facilities Grant	10,871	0	3,845	2,342	2,342	2,342	10,871	9,943					928	10,871
Future High Street Funding - Chester Street	1,378	3	-	1,375	-	-	1,375	1,375						1,375
Future High Street Funding - Delamere Street	1,459	4	-	1,455	-	-	1,455	1,455						1,455
Green Homes Grants	3,890	769	3,121	-	-	-	3,121	1,452	1,669					3,121
Gypsy and Traveller Sites	3,701	1,246	1,237	1,218	-	-	2,455	700					1,755	2,455
Home Repairs for Vulnerable People	846	0	246	200	200	200	846						846	846
Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund	1,565	0	1,565	-	-	-	1,565	1,565						1,565
Sustainable Warmth - Home Upgrade Grant	3,289	4	3,285	-	-	-	3,285	3,285						3,285
Temporary Accommodation	958	300	658	-	-	-	658		318	340				658
Warm Homes Fund	239	173	66	-	-	-	66	66						66
Total Committed Schemes	208,477	32,326	33,606	49,747	58,788	34,010	176,151	68,012	12,381	340	30,801	64,617	176,151	
New Schemes														
Culture & Tourism														
Crewe Towns Fund - History Centre Public Realm	10	0	10	-	-	-	10	10						10
Crewe Towns Fund - Lyceum Powerhouse	260	0	260	-	-	-	260	260						260
New Archive Premises	10,250	0	-	4,100	5,699	451	10,250						10,250	10,250
Rural & Green Section 106 Schemes	24	0	24	-	-	-	24		24					24
Economic Development														
Connecting Cheshire Phase 3	8,000	0	500	1,500	2,000	4,000	8,000		8,000					8,000
Handforth Heat Network	13,710	0	-	9,910	2,000	1,800	13,710	5,420	4,890				3,400	13,710
Public Sector Decarbonisation Fund - FM 3	3,714	0	3,714	-	-	-	3,714	3,714						3,714
Crewe Towns Fund - Mill Street Corridor	140	3	137	-	-	-	137	137						137
Crewe Towns Fund	19,560	0	6,060	6,886	5,404	1,210	19,560	19,560						19,560
Housing														
Crewe Towns Fund - Warm and Health Homes	100	0	20	80	-	-	100	100						100
Total New Schemes	55,768	3	10,724	22,476	15,103	7,461	55,764	29,201	12,914	0	0	13,650	55,764	
Total Economy and Growth Schemes	264,244	32,329	44,330	72,223	73,891	41,471	231,915	97,213	25,295	340	30,801	78,267	231,915	

## 6. Reserves Strategy

### Economy and Growth Committee

Name of Reserve	Opening Balance 1st April 2022 £000	Forecast Movement in Reserves 2022/23 £000	Forecast Closing Balance 31st March 2023 £000	Notes
<b>Directorate</b>				
Place Directorate	1,684	(1,319)	365	To support a number of widespread projects within the Place Directorate. A significant number of these projects are expected to be fully utilised in year, with the remaining reserve to be fully used in 2023/24.
Investment (Sustainability)	680	(51)	629	To support investment that can increase longer term financial independence and stability of the Council. Forecasts based on timelines for individual projects making up the reserve.
<b>Growth and Enterprise</b>				
Legal Proceedings	285	(100)	185	To enable legal proceedings on land and property matters. Hard to gauge the pace of cases but this is the anticipated amount based on current costs.
Investment Portfolio	155	174	329	Total rent, fee costs and the amount the service are allowed to keep (£250k) all stay the same so anticipating a similar contribution to the reserve. Looked at the investment summary to determine 2022/23 MRP and interest costs. Reserve being built up to be used in the future if the site is vacated. Current lease extends beyond 2026.
Homelessness & Housing Options - Revenue Grants	130	(130)	0	To cover costs of purchase and refurbishment of properties to be used as temporary accommodation to house vulnerable families.
Tatton Park Trading Reserve	111	(111)	0	Service anticipating utilising some of the funds for furniture purchased for the Catering Facility at TPE Ltd costing £16k. Full drawdown of the reserve necessary to cover the adverse position for Tatton anticipated at the end of 2022/23
Royal Arcade Crewe	99	(99)	0	Original purpose was to fund vacant possession related costs for the Royal Arcade until demolition. The balance will now be used to pay for ongoing maintenance costs for Crewe Bus station. FM pressures will mean that the reserve will be fully utilised in 2022/23.
<b>ECONOMY AND GROWTH TOTAL</b>	<b>3,144</b>	<b>(1,636)</b>	<b>1,508</b>	

# **Appendix 5 : Environment and Communities Committee**

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### **Environment and Communities Committee Extracts**

- 1. Changes to Revenue Budget 2022/23 since First Financial Review**
- 2. Action Plan 2022/23**
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## Appendix 5

### Environment and Communities Committee

#### 1. Changes to Revenue Budget 2022/23 since First Financial Review

	First review Net Budget £000	Additional Grant Funding £000	Restructuring & Realignments £000	Revised Net Budget £000
<b>Environment and Communities</b>				
Environment & Neighbourhood Service	44,365	-	-	44,365
	44,365	-	-	44,365

## 2. Action Plan 2022/23

- 2.1 At mid-year the forecast outturn is £1.7m greater than budget, an improvement of £0.2m since the first review. The pay inflation estimate has been reduced due to the reversal of the additional 1.25% National Insurance increase. There are further pressures from increased waste tonnages as a legacy of Covid-19 and increased maintenance costs of Environmental Hub. These are offset by use of reserves and vacancy savings.

Environment and Communities Committee	Exp £m	Inc £m	Net £m	MTFS Proposal	Value 2022/23 £m	MTFS Ref	RAG Rating	Comments	Variance from MTFS 2022/23 £m	Change from FR1 2022/23 £m
Environment and Neighbourhood Services	54.8	-10.4	44.4	Pay Inflation	1.323	3&4 + New	Red (will not achieve)	Represents current estimate of the impact on Committee services in excess of the MTFS, from a nationally negotiated pay award.	0.303	-0.080
				Orbitas income and management fee	0.021	17	Green (on track and should achieve)		0.000	0.000
				Strategic Leisure Review	-0.250	18	Amber (on track but may not achieve all)	A strategic commissioning review of health and wellbeing services has been initiated. This will identify where need is greatest across the borough and map current provision against need. The financial impact in 2022/23 is mitigated by an equivalent contribution by Public Health to the leisure commissioning budget. This has not been agreed for future years. There remains a linked pressure in Facilities Management (Economy & Growth Committee)	0.000	0.000

Environment and Communities Committee	Exp £m	Inc £m	Net £m	MTFS Proposal	Value 2022/23 £m	MTFS Ref	RAG Rating	Comments	Variance from MTFS 2022/23 £m	Change from FR1 2022/23 £m
								which anticipated a reduction in the current leisure estate.		
				Review of governance of ASDVs and seeking increased opportunities for savings / commercial opportunities	-0.100	20	Red (will not achieve)	This proposal is for the Council to receive a share of the profits from commercial activity undertaken by ANSA or Orbitas. The Finance Sub-Committee, acting as shareholder to the Council's wholly owned companies, will determine the payment of a dividend in 2022/23 from the retained earnings to mitigate this pressure.	0.200	0.000
				CCTV migration to wireless networks	-0.085	10	Amber (on track but may not achieve all)	The delivery of this project and associated savings has been delayed by 12 months. The savings will be mitigated in 2022/23 via underspends elsewhere in Regulatory Services. The saving will be achieved from 2023/24.	0.086	0.000

Environment and Communities Committee	Exp £m	Inc £m	Net £m	MTFS Proposal	Value 2022/23 £m	MTFS Ref	RAG Rating	Comments	Variance from MTFS 2022/23 £m	Change from FR1 2022/23 £m
				Everybody Sport and Recreation Annual Management Fee	-0.042	21	Green (on track and should achieve)		0.000	0.000
				Regulatory Services and Environmental Health ICT procurement	-0.009	13	Amber (on track but may not achieve all)	The implementation of the new system has been delayed but the required savings will be mitigated via underspends in Regulatory Services.	0.000	0.000
				Waste Contract Inflation and Tonnage Growth	0.644	53	Green (on track and should achieve)		0.000	0.000
				Tree Risk Management	0.500	54	Green (on track and should achieve)		0.000	0.000
				Environment Strategy and Carbon Neutrality	0.020	56	Green (on track and should achieve)		0.000	0.000
				Investment in improving the customer experience in	0.500	58	Green (on track and should achieve)	It is likely that not all of the temporary budget will be spent in 2022/23 and so there will be a request to carry forward the residual into 2023/24 to complete the	0.000	0.000

Environment and Communities Committee	Exp £m	Inc £m	Net £m	MTFS Proposal	Value 2022/23 £m	MTFS Ref	RAG Rating	Comments	Variance from MTFS 2022/23 £m	Change from FR1 2022/23 £m
				Planning Services				implementation of the Planning Service Improvement Programme.		
				Increased costs for waste and recycling services provided by Ansa		New		Waste and recycling collection and disposal costs are higher due to increased waste tonnages, resulting in increased vehicles and crews, increased fuel, and increased disposal costs. Fuel inflation has also impacted significantly. This has been partly mitigated in 2022/23 from higher recycling income and HWRC contract benefits of £1.57m. Options to mitigate the increased costs in future years include changes to frequency of collections, charging for garden waste collections, and a reduction in the number of HWRCs.	0.613	0.156
				Use of Ansa reserve		New		Use of Ansa reserve to mitigate pressures.	-0.300	-0.300
				Environmental Hub maintenance		New		This reflects the increased costs of operating a modern facility to comply with statutory environmental permits. The shortfall has previously been funded by underspends in FM budgets.	0.446	0.140



Environment and Communities Committee	Exp £m	Inc £m	Net £m	MTFS Proposal	Value 2022/23 £m	MTFS Ref	RAG Rating	Comments	Variance from MTFS 2022/23 £m	Change from FR1 2022/23 £m
				Ansa / Orbitas Directors Renumeration		New		This saving from 2021/22 is not achievable as the Directors of Ansa and Orbitas continue to be remunerated.	0.040	0.000
				Markets business rates		New		Result of unoccupied market stalls.	0.032	0.000
				Orbitas inflation impact		New		in year pressure.	0.051	0.000
				Bereavement Income surplus		New			-0.134	0.000
				Environment - other various		New		Commissioner mitigations.	-0.151	0.000
				Planning and Building Control income		New		There are proposals under planning reform to increase planning fees by 25-35% that may mitigate this pressure and it is unclear when these increases will take effect. The proposal is subject to consultation and legislative change.	1.080	0.000
				Planning and Building Control Mitigations		New		Mitigating actions to cover covid pressures above, predominantly vacancy savings.	-0.149	-0.068
				Licensing income		New		There is a pressure on licensing income from taxi licensing. This reflects a reduction in the number of drivers following Covid.	0.029	0.000

Environment and Communities Committee	Exp £m	Inc £m	Net £m	MTFS Proposal	Value 2022/23 £m	MTFS Ref	RAG Rating	Comments	Variance from MTFS 2022/23 £m	Change from FR1 2022/23 £m
				Public burials		New		Increased numbers of public burials.	0.016	0.000
				Regulatory Services mitigating actions		New		Mitigating actions to cover covid pressures above. These include vacancy savings, reduced mileage and increased income. Grants and the balance of a provision have also been released.	-0.224	0.000
				Libraries income		New		There has been a change in use of libraries since Covid lockdowns that has resulted in a reduction in income particularly from Adults.	0.167	0.002
				Libraries Mitigating Actions		New		Mitigating actions to cover Covid pressures above, predominantly vacancies £150k predicted underspend.	-0.166	-0.002
				Dir /Leisure/ EP/ ASB&CEO		New		Mitigating actions to improve outturn position.	-0.045	0.000
				Local Plan Review		New				0.000

Environment and Communities Committee	Exp £m	Inc £m	Net £m	MTFS Proposal	Value 2022/23 £m	MTFS Ref	RAG Rating	Comments	Variance from MTFS 2022/23 £m	Change from FR1 2022/23 £m
				Workforce		New		Revise vacancy forecasts to reflect recruitment difficulties. Slow down recruitment where feasible / safe. Use specific reserves for exit costs (per MTFS). Updated staffing forecasts reflecting current recruitment timescales have been built into figures on lines above.		0.000
				Transformation		New		Use flexible receipts to capitalise costs of transformation - Planning Deep Dive.	-0.160	0.000
				Leisure		New		Reduce opening hours or close for under-utilised facilities.		0.000
				Other		New		Ensure s.106 process is efficient and effective.		0.000
				Review of Statutory and Non Statutory Functions		New		Cross cutting item across Place - values to be determined.		0.000
				Restructuring Potential		New		Cross cutting item across Place - values to be determined.		0.000
				Review Ansa Contract		New		Frequency and charges for bin collections - values to be determined.		0.000

Environment and Communities Committee	Exp £m	Inc £m	Net £m	MTFS Proposal	Value 2022/23 £m	MTFS Ref	RAG Rating	Comments	Variance from MTFS 2022/23 £m	Change from FR1 2022/23 £m
				Libraries and Leisure Centres		New		Reduction in number of libraries and / or relocation of libraries and other community services - values to be determined.		0.000
				Household Waste and Recycling Centres		New		Review number and locations - values to be determined.		0.000
				CCTV		New		Opportunities for additional income generation - values to be determined.		0.000
				Closed Cemeteries		New		Closed Cemeteries – TBC.		0.000
<b>Total</b>	<b>54.8</b>	<b>-10.4</b>	<b>44.4</b>		<b>2.522</b>				<b>1.734</b>	<b>-0.152</b>

### 3. Corporate Grants Register

Table 1 – Corporate Grants Register

Grants 2022/23	Revised Forecast FR1 2022/23 £000	Latest Forecast 2022/23 £000	Change from FR1 2022/23 £000	Treatment of Grant  <i>Notes 2 - 5</i>
<b>ENVIRONMENT &amp; COMMUNITIES</b>				
Specific Use (Held within Services)	387	387	0	
General Purpose (Held Corporately)				
Neighbourhood Planning Grant	10	10	0	
<b>TOTAL ENVIRONMENT &amp; COMMUNITIES</b>	<b>397</b>	<b>397</b>	<b>0</b>	

Notes

- 1 The Dedicated Schools Grant, Pupil Premium Grant, Sixth Form Grant and Other School Specific Grant from the Education Funding Agency (EFA) figures are based on actual anticipated allocations. Changes are for in-year increases / decreases to allocations by the DfE and conversions to academy status.
- 2 SRE - Supplementary Revenue Estimate requested by relevant service.
- 3 ODR - Officer Decision Record to approve immediate budget change to relevant service.
- 4 Reserves - transfer to reserves at year end.
- 5 Balances - amount will be included as a variance to budget.

3.1 Cheshire East Council receives two main types of Government grants; specific use grants and general purpose grants. Specific use grants are held within the relevant service with a corresponding expenditure budget. Whereas general purpose grants are held in central budgets with a

corresponding expenditure budget within the allocated service area.

3.2 Spending in relation to specific use grants must be in line with the purpose for which it is provided.

## 4. Debt Management

	Outstanding Debt £000	Over 6 months old £000
<b>Environment and Communities Committee</b>		
Environment and Neighbourhood Services	1,193	210

## 5. Capital Strategy

### Environment and Communities

### CAPITAL

CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2022/23-2025/26													
Scheme Description	Total Approved Budget	Prior Years £000	Forecast Expenditure				Total Forecast Budget 2022/26 £000	Forecast Funding					Total Funding £000
			Forecast Budget 2022/23 £000	Forecast Budget 2023/24 £000	Forecast Budget 2024/25 £000	Forecast Budget 2025/26 £000		Grants £000	External Contributions £000	Revenue Contributions £000	Capital Receipts £000	Prudential Borrowing £000	
<b>Committed Schemes</b>													
<b>Environment Services</b>													
Bereavement Service Data System	35	0	35	0	0	0	35			35			35
Browns Lane, Wilmslow Play Area	570	541	29	0	0	0	29		29				29
Congleton Household Waste Recycling Centre Development	50	20	15	15	0	0	30					30	30
Crewe Towns Fund - Pocket Parks	20	3	18	0	0	0	18	18					18
Energy Improvements at Cledford Lane	985	825	160	0	0	0	160					160	160
Future High Street Funding - Sustainable Energy Network	2,577	150	2,427	0	0	0	2,427					2,427	2,427
Green Investment Scheme (Solar Farm)	3,950	64	3,886	0	0	0	3,886					3,886	3,886
Household Bins Schemes	50		50	0	0	0	50					50	50
Litter and Recycling Bins	152		50	50	52	0	152					152	152
Little Lindow Open Space Improvements		7	62	0	0	0	62		62				62
Macclesfield Cenotaph Planting	1	1	1	0	0	0	1		1				1
Nantwich Cemetery Roadway Extension	75	60	15	0	0	0	15			15			15
Newtown Outdoor Pitch Improvements	51	39	12	0	0	0	12		12				12
Newtown Sports Facilities Improvements	99	81	18	0	0	0	18		18				18
Park Development Fund	450		150	150	150	0	450					450	450
Pastures Wood	51	28	23	0	0	0	23			23			23
Pheasant Walk Play Area Improvements	18	9	9	0	0	0	9		9				9
Queens Park Lake Planting	18	17	1	0	0	0	1		1				1
Queens Park Play Area Improvements	200	100	100	0	0	0	100		100				100
Rotherhead Drive Open Space and Play Area	141	111	30	0	0	0	30		30				30
Victoria Park Pitch Improvements	29	5	24	0	0	0	24		24				24
Victoria Park Improvements	80	7	73	0	0	0	73		73				73

CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2022/23-2025/26													
Scheme Description			Forecast Expenditure					Forecast Funding					
	Total Approved Budget	Prior Years £000	Forecast Budget 2022/23 £000	Forecast Budget 2023/24 £000	Forecast Budget 2024/25 £000	Forecast Budget 2025/26 £000	Total Forecast Budget 2022/26 £000	Grants £000	External Contributions £000	Revenue Contributions £000	Capital Receipts £000	Prudential Borrowing £000	Total Funding £000
Committed Schemes													
Neighbourhood Services													
Congleton Leisure Centre	12,225	6,272	5,953	0		0	5,953					5,953	5,953
Crewe Towns Fund - Cumberland Arena	80		80	0	0	0	80	80					80
Crewe Towns Fund - Valley Brook Green Corridor	100	2	98	0	0	0	98	98					98
Macclesfield Leisure Centre Improvements	3,865	3,398	467		0	0	467					467	467
Middlewich Leisure Centre	60	6	54	0	0	0	54					54	54
Nantwich Pool Improvements	2,250	1,923	327	0	0	0	327					327	327
Libraries - Next Generation - Self Service	52		52	0	0	0	52					52	52
Poynton Leisure Centre	4,606	391		2,000	2,215	0	4,215					4,215	4,215
Planning Services													
Replacement Planning & Building	410	320	90		0	0	90					90	90
Regulatory Services & Environmental Health ICT System	313	240	73	0	0	0	73			49		25	73
Replacement CCTV Cameras	205	0	205	0	0	0	205			205			205
New Schemes													
Environment Services													
Chelford Village Hall Open Space and Sport Improvements	164	0	164	0	0	0	164		164				164
Household Waste Recycling Centres	860	0	500	360	0	0	860					860	860
Carbon Offset Investment	1,000	0	125	125	250	500	1,000					1,000	1,000
Fleet Vehicle Electric Charging	585	0	164	164	141	116	585					585	585
Solar Energy Generation	14,180	0	300	13,880		0	14,180					14,180	14,180
Hield Grove Play Area	21	0	21			0	21		19			2	21
Barony Skate Park Refurbishment	100	0	100			0	100	100					100
Pitch Improvements - Alderley Edge Park and Chorley Hall Lane Playing Fields	25	0	25			0	25		25				25
Woodland South of Coppice Way, Handforth	89	0	89			0	89		89				89
Over Peover Amenity Improvements	10	0	10			0	10		10				10
Total Environment and Communities Schemes	50,802	14,617	16,087	16,744	2,808	616	36,254	296	668	327	0	34,964	36,254



## 6. Reserves Strategy

### Environment and Communities Committee

Name of Reserve	Opening Balance 1st April 2022 £000	Forecast Movement in Reserves 2022/23 £000	Forecast Closing Balance 31st March 2023 £000	Notes
<b>Environment and Neighbourhood Services</b>				
Strategic Planning	568	(287)	281	To meet costs associated with the Local Plan - site allocations, minerals and waste DPD.
Trees / Structures Risk Management	202	(52)	150	New reserve to respond to increases in risks relating to the environment, in particular the management of trees, structures and dealing with adverse weather events.
Spatial Planning - revenue grant	89	(47)	42	Funding IT costs over 4 years.
Neighbourhood Planning	82	(38)	44	To match income and expenditure.
Air Quality	36	0	36	Air Quality Management - DEFRA Action Plan. Relocating electric vehicle chargepoint in Congleton.
Street Cleansing	26	(26)	0	Committed expenditure on voluntary litter picking equipment and electric blowers, due to be fully utilised in 2022/23.
Custom Build & Brownfield Register	19	(19)	0	
Community Protection	17	(17)	0	
Licensing Enforcement	15	(15)	0	Three year reserve to fund a third party review and update of the Cheshire East Council Taxi Licensing Enforcement Policies.
Flood Water Management (Emergency Planning)	2	0	2	Plans to draw down the reserve in 2023/24 relating to Public Information Works.
<b>ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITIES TOTAL</b>	<b>1,056</b>	<b>(501)</b>	<b>555</b>	

# **Appendix 6 : Finance Sub-Committee**

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### **Finance Sub Committee Extracts**

**1. Changes to Revenue Budget 2022/23 since First Financial Review**

**2. Action Plan 2022/23**

**3. Corporate Grants Register**

**Table 1: Summary of Grants**

**Table 2: Finance Sub-Committee Grants**

**4. Debt Management**

**5. Capital Strategy**

**Table 1: Financial Parameters**

**Table 2: Capital Programme Summary**

**Table 3: Capital Programme Update**

**6. Reserves Strategy**

# Appendix 6

## Finance Sub-Committee

### 1. Changes to Revenue Budget 2022/23 since First Financial Review

	First review Net Budget £000	Additional Grant Funding £000	Restructuring & Realignments £000	Revised Net Budget £000
<b>Finance Sub-Committee Central Budgets</b>				
Capital Financing	18,943	-	57	19,000
Corporate Contributions / Central Budgets	(4,683)	-	(57)	(4,740)
Contribution to / from Reserves	(2,776)	-	(25)	(2,801)
	11,484	-	(25)	11,459
<b>Finance Sub-Committee - Central Budgets Funding</b>				
Business Rates Retention Scheme	(49,086)	-	-	(49,086)
Specific Grants	(24,624)	(13)	-	(24,637)
Council Tax	(254,682)	-	-	(254,682)
Sourced from Collection Fund	-	-	-	-
<b>TOTAL CENTRAL BUDGETS FUNDING</b>	<b>(328,392)</b>	<b>(13)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(328,405)</b>

## 2. Action Plan 2022/23

2.1 At mid-year the forecast outturn is £7.0m below budget, no change since the first review.

Finance Sub Committee	Exp £m	Inc £m	Net £m	MTFS Proposal	Value 2022/23 £m	MTFS Ref	RAG Rating	Comments	Variance from MTFS 2022/23 £m	Change from FR1 2022/23 £m
Central & Funding	16.5	-333.3	-316.9	Minimum Revenue Provision	5.000		Green (on track and should achieve)		0.000	0.000
				Central Pension adjustment	-2.500		Green (exceeding)	Additional pension income due to reduced payover.	-0.985	0.000
				Bad Debt Provision	0.200		Green (on track and should achieve)		0.000	0.000
				Use of Earmarked Reserves	0.030		Green (on track and should achieve)	Use of covid reserve.	-5.989	0.000
				Increased Council Tax Base 2.99% increase	-7.306		Green (on track and should achieve)		0.000	0.000
				Increased Council Tax Base – Taxbase changes and New Homes	-4.527		Green (on track and should achieve)		0.000	0.000

Finance Sub Committee	Exp £m	Inc £m	Net £m	MTFS Proposal	Value 2022/23 £m	MTFS Ref	RAG Rating	Comments	Variance from MTFS 2022/23 £m	Change from FR1 2022/23 £m
				Un-ringfenced grant changes	-4.797		Green (on track and should achieve)		0.000	0.000
<b>Total</b>	<b>16.5</b>	<b>-333.3</b>	<b>-316.9</b>		<b>-13.900</b>				<b>-6.974</b>	<b>0.000</b>

### 3. Corporate Grants Register

#### Government Grant Funding of Local Expenditure

- 3.1

Cheshire East Council receives two main types of Government grants; specific use grants and general purpose grants. The overall total of Government grant budgeted for in 2022/23 was £251.6m.
- 3.2

In 2022/23 Cheshire East Council's specific use grants held within the services was budgeted to be £227.6m based on Government announcements to February 2022.
- 3.3

The position at October Financial Review has seen an increase in specific use grants of £2.7m to £296.1m. The main factors influencing this revised increased position are as follows:

Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP): Skills Bootcamp

+£1.0m
- 3.4

Spending in relation to specific use grants must be in line with the purpose for which it is provided.
- 3.5

General purpose grants were budgeted to be £24.0m. Further in-year grant announcements have increased the amount received to £38.5m at Financial Review 1 (an increase of £14.5m). At October Financial Review this has remained the same with a small increase of £13,000 which relates to a new burden grant for Pavement Licensing.
- 3.6

**Table 1** provides a summary of the updated budget position for grants in 2022/23 by type and service.
- 3.7

Further details of general purpose grants are shown in **Table 2**, the Corporate Grants Register.

Table 1 - Summary of Grants

Grants 2022/23	Original Budget	Revised Forecast FR1	Latest Forecast	Change from FR1
	2022/23 £m	2022/23 £m	2022/23 £m	2022/23 £m
<b>SPECIFIC USE</b>				
<b>TOTAL SPECIFIC PURPOSE</b>	<b>227.6</b>	<b>293.5</b>	<b>296.1</b>	<b>2.7</b>
<b>GENERAL PURPOSE</b>				
Children and Families	0.0	0.5	0.5	0.0
Adults and Health	12.5	12.5	12.5	0.0
Economy and Growth	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Environment and Communities	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Highways and Transport	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Corporate Policy	11.5	25.5	25.5	0.0
<b>TOTAL GENERAL PURPOSE</b>	<b>24.0</b>	<b>38.5</b>	<b>38.5</b>	<b>0.0</b>
<b>TOTAL GRANT FUNDING</b>	<b>251.6</b>	<b>332.0</b>	<b>334.7</b>	<b>2.7</b>

Source: Cheshire East Finance

**Table 2 – Corporate Grants Register**

General Purpose Grants 2022/23 (Held Corporately)	Revised	Latest	Change	Treatment of Grant
	Forecast	Forecast	from	
	FR1	FR1	FR1	
	2022/23	2022/23	2022/23	Notes 2 - 5
	£000	£000	£000	
<b>CHILDREN &amp; FAMILIES</b>				
Staying Put Implementation Grant	130	130	0	
Extended Rights to Free Transport (Home to School Transport)	250	250	0	
Extended Personal Adviser Duty Implementation	57	57	0	
Extension of the role of Virtual School Heads	61	61	0	
<b>ADULTS &amp; HEALTH</b>				
Social Care Support Grant	11,341	11,341	0	
Independent Living Fund	861	861	0	
Local Reform & Community Voices	213	213	0	
Social Care in Prisons	71	71	0	
War Pension Scheme Disregard	56	56	0	
<b>ENVIRONMENT &amp; COMMUNITIES</b>				
Neighbourhood Planning Grant	10	10	0	
<b>HIGHWAYS &amp; TRANSPORT</b>				
Pavement Licensing - New Burdens	0	13	13	SRE
<b>CORPORATE POLICY</b>				
Housing Benefit Administration Subsidy	736	736	0	
Council Tax Support Administration Subsidy	345	345	0	
NNDR Administration Allowance	587	587	0	
Revenue Support Grant	7	7	0	
New Homes Bonus	6,614	6,614	0	
Lower Tier Services Grant	360	360	0	
Services Grant	2,932	2,932	0	
Business Rates Reliefs Compensation Grant 2022/23	13,890	13,890	0	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>38,521</b>	<b>38,534</b>	<b>13</b>	



## 4. Debt Management

- 4.1 Sundry debt includes all invoiced income due to the Council except for statutory taxes (Council Tax and Non-Domestic Rates). The balance of outstanding debt has increased by £0.8m since the end of June.
- 4.2 Annually, the Council raises invoices with a total value of over £90m. Around a quarter of the Council's overall sundry debt portfolio relates to charges for Adult Social Care, the remainder being spread across a range of functions including Highways, Property Services, Licensing and Building Control.
- 4.3 The Council's standard collection terms require payment within 28 days of the invoice date, however, services receive immediate credit in their accounts for income due. The Council uses a combination of methods to ensure prompt payment of invoices. Recovery action against unpaid invoices may result in the use of debt collectors, court action or the securing of debts against property.
- 4.4 The Revenue Recovery team (using their experience gained in collecting Council Tax and Non-Domestic Rates) engage with services to offer advice and assistance in all aspects of debt management, including facilitating access to debt collection/enforcement agent services (currently provided by Bristow & Sutor).
- 4.5 After allowing for debt still within the payment terms, the amount of outstanding service debt at the end of August 2022 was £11.4m.

- 4.6 The total amount of service debt over six months old is £6.3m; provision of £7.8m has been made to cover doubtful debt in the event that it needs to be written off.

### DEBT SUMMARY

	Outstanding Debt £000	Over 6 months old £000
<b>Adults and Health Committee</b>		
Adults, Public Health and Communities	8,467	5,092
<b>Children and Families Committee</b>		
Children's Social Care (Incl. Directorate)	8	6
Education and 14-19 Skills	70	-
Prevention and Early Help	9	-
Schools	47	-
<b>Highways and Transport Committee</b>		
Highways and Infrastructure	928	753
<b>Economy and Growth Committee</b>		
Growth and Enterprise	479	202
<b>Environment and Communities Committee</b>		
Environment and Neighbourhood Services	1,193	210
<b>Corporate Policy Committee</b>		
Finance and Customer Services	76	40
Governance and Compliance	3	-
Human Resources	2	-
ICT	90	4
	<b>11,372</b>	<b>6,307</b>

## 5. Capital Strategy

Table 1: Financial Parameters for 2021/22 to 2024/25

Parameter	Value (£m)			
	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
<b>Repayment of Borrowing</b>				
Minimum Revenue Provision*	15.3	18.6	21.8	23.3
External Loan Interest	5.6	5.4	5.4	5.4
Investment Income	(1.9)	(1.8)	(1.8)	(1.8)
Contributions from Services Revenue Budgets	(1.2)	(1.6)	(2.2)	(2.4)
Total Capital Financing Costs	17.8	20.6	23.2	24.5
Use of Financing EMR	1.2	(1.6)	(3.2)	(3.5)
Actual CFB in MTFS	19.0	19.0	20.0	21.0
Capital Receipts targets*	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Flexible use of Capital Receipts	0	0	0	0

\*Anticipated MRP based on achieving capital receipts targets

### Repayment of Borrowing

- 5.1 The use of prudential borrowing allows the Council to spread the cost of funding the asset over its useful economic life. Using prudential borrowing as a funding source increases the Council's capital financing requirement (CFR), and will create revenue costs through interest costs and minimum revenue provision.
- 5.2 Regulation 27 of the Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) (England) Regulations 2003, requires local authorities to charge to their revenue account for each financial year a minimum amount to finance the cost of capital expenditure. Commonly referred to as MRP (Minimum Revenue Provision). This ensures that the revenue cost of repaying debt is spread over the life of the asset, similar to depreciation.



- 5.3 The projection of the Council's Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) and external debt, based on the proposed capital budget and treasury management strategy is reported as part

of the MTFS report and Outturn report. This highlights the level to which the Council is internally borrowed (being the difference between the CFR and external debt), and the expected repayment profile of the external debt.

- 5.4 The nature and scale of the Council's capital programme means that it is a key factor in the Council's treasury management, including the need to borrow to fund capital works. The treasury management strategy for the Council is included in **Appendix 8** of this report.
- 5.5 The Council's current strategy is to use available cash balances, known as 'internal borrowing' and to borrow short term loans. As short term interest rates are currently much lower than long term rates this is likely to be more cost effective.

### **Contributions from Services**

- 5.6 All business cases supporting capital expenditure will include full analysis of the financial implications of the scheme alongside a clear indication of how the financial implications will be managed within the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).
- 5.7 When including any scheme in the Council's Capital Programme the Section 151 Officer will determine the appropriate impact on the Revenue Budget. This impact will require service budgets within the MTFS to fund either all, part or none of the net capital costs of the scheme.
- 5.8 In making a determination about funding capital schemes from revenue budgets the level of potential revenue savings or additional revenue income will be considered. If a capital scheme will increase revenue costs within the MTFS, either from the future costs of maintaining the asset or from the costs of financing the capital expenditure, then the approach

to funding such costs must be approved as part of the business planning process before the scheme can commence.

- 5.9 The Council's strategy is to use revenue contributions of £7.4m over the next four financial years to finance the Capital Programme to reduce the overall Capital Financing Budget. These contributions come from: £3.0m from the Investment Portfolio; £1.4m contribution from schools towards the schools transformation programme; £1.3m from Everybody Health and Leisure for the improvements to the Council's leisure facilities; £1.3m electric vehicle charging and the Green Investment schemes, £0.2m from Countryside Services for the vehicle replacement programme upgrade, £0.1m from the Azure Microsoft project and £0.1m from the Children's Home Sufficiency project.

### **Use of Financing Earmarked Reserve**

- 5.10 To allow a longer term approach to setting the Financial Parameters of the Capital Strategy the Council will maintain an earmarked reserve to minimise the financial impact of annual variations to the Capital Financing Budget.
- 5.11 The Council's Reserves Strategy determines the appropriate use of reserves and how they are set up and governed. In the first instance any variance to the Capital Finance Budget (CFB) within any financial year will provide a top-up or draw-down from the Financing Earmarked Reserve. In balancing the CFB over the period of the MTFS the Section 151 Officer may also recommend appropriate use of the Financing Earmarked Reserve over the period.
- 5.12 The Council's current strategy is to draw-down up to £7.1m from the Financing Earmarked Reserve for the period 2022/23 to 2025/26.

### Capital Programme – Review Position

- 5.13 Since the First Financial Review the Capital Programme has increased by £59.0m for the next four year period and future years.
- 5.14 As a result of a programme wide review of the capital programme to establish the ongoing impact of the rise of inflation on the programme, a number of Supplementary Capital Estimates have been requested so that the schemes can still be delivered within the expected timescales and will therefore reduce further costs arising if the schemes are delayed.
- 5.15 The schemes in the main are the large construction schemes that have felt the largest impact, namely the A500 Dualling, North Cheshire Garden Village, Northwest Crewe Package and a number of the road improvement schemes such as Managing and Maintaining the Highway. **Table 2** below shows a summary of the changes.

**Table 2: Summary Capital Programme**

	First Review Budget	SCEs/ Virements in Quarter	Budget Reductions	SCEs/ Virements	Revised Budget
	2022/26 £m	2022/26 £m	2022/26 £m	2022/26 £m	2022/26 £m
Adults, Health & Integration	0.5		0	0	0.5
Children and Families	116.1		0	-	116.1
Place Directorate	543.0	18.4	(0.1)	48.9	610.2
Corporate Directorate	44.2	(18.4)	0	11.0	36.8
	<b>703.3</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(0.1)</b>	<b>59.9</b>	<b>763.6</b>

- 5.16 The revised programme is funded from both direct income (grants, external contributions) and the Council's own resources (prudential borrowing, revenue contributions, capital reserve). A funding summary is shown in **Table 3**.
- 5.17 Prudential Indicators are shown at the end of this section.
- 5.18 Capital programme detail is shown in other service committee **Appendices 1-7, Section 5**.

Table 3: Capital Programme Update

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL CAPITAL PROGRAMME SUMMARY					
CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2022/23 - 2025/26					
	Forecast 2022/23 £000	Forecast 2023/24 £000	Forecast 2024/25 £000	Forecast 2025/26 £000	Total Forecast 2022-26 £000
<b>Committed Schemes - In</b>					
Adults, Health and Integration	84	389	0	0	473
Children and Families	17,421	37,593	6,030	285	61,329
Place	114,336	95,823	104,098	154,855	469,112
Corporate	10,919	8,650	8,514	5,642	33,725
<b>Total Committed Schemes -</b>	<b>142,760</b>	<b>142,455</b>	<b>118,642</b>	<b>160,782</b>	<b>564,639</b>
CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2022/23 - 2025/26					
	Actuals 2022/23 £000	Forecast 2023/24 £000	Forecast 2024/25 £000	Forecast 2025/26 £000	Total Forecast 2022-26 £000
<b>New Schemes</b>					
Adults, Health and Integration	0	0	0	0	0
Children's Services	3,200	17,308	16,643	17,700	54,851
Place	32,527	52,562	31,675	24,120	140,884
Corporate	1,137	1,550	474	0	3,161
<b>Total New Schemes</b>	<b>36,864</b>	<b>71,420</b>	<b>48,792</b>	<b>41,820</b>	<b>198,896</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>179,624</b>	<b>213,875</b>	<b>167,434</b>	<b>202,602</b>	<b>763,535</b>

# CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL CAPITAL PROGRAMME SUMMARY

## CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2022/23 - 2025/26

	Actuals 2022/23 £000	Forecast 2023/24 £000	Forecast 2024/25 £000	Forecast 2025/26 £000	Total Forecast 2022-26 £000
<b>Funding Requirement</b>					
<b>Indicative Funding</b>					
<b>Analysis:</b> (See note 1)					
Government Grants	94,670	117,787	76,953	65,869	355,279
External Contributions	18,641	21,609	32,541	50,014	122,805
Revenue Contributions	1,152	56	0	0	1,208
Capital Receipts	1,000	2,248	23,032	11,835	38,115
Prudential Borrowing (See note 2)	64,161	72,175	34,908	74,884	246,128
<b>Total</b>	<b>179,624</b>	<b>213,875</b>	<b>167,434</b>	<b>202,602</b>	<b>763,535</b>

### Note 1:

The funding requirement identified in the above table represents a balanced and affordable position, in the medium term. The Council will attempt to maximise external resources such as grants and external contributions in the first instance to fund the capital programme. Where the Council resources are required the preference will be to utilise capital receipts from asset disposals. The forecast for capital receipts over the next four years 2022-2026 assumes a prudent approach based on the work of the Asset Management team and their most recently updated Disposals Programme.

### Note 2:

Appropriate charges to the revenue budget will only commence in the year following the completion of the associated capital asset. This allows the Council to constantly review the most cost effective way of funding capital expenditure.

## Prudential Indicators revisions to: 2021/22 and 2022/23 – 2024/25, and future years

### Background

- 5.23 There is a requirement under the Local Government Act 2003 for local authorities to have regard to CIPFA's Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities (the "CIPFA Prudential Code") when setting and reviewing their Prudential Indicators.

### Estimates of Capital Expenditure

- 5.24 In 2022/23, the Council is planning capital expenditure of £179.6m as summarised below.

Capital Expenditure	2021/22 Actual £m	2022/23 Estimate £m	2023/24 Estimate £m	2024/25 Estimate £m	Future years £m
<b>Total</b>	84.5	179.6	213.9	167.4	202.6

Source: Cheshire East Finance

### Capital Financing

- 5.25 All capital expenditure must be financed either from external sources (government grants and other contributions). The Council's own resources (revenue reserves and capital receipts) or debt (borrowing, leasing and Private Finance Initiative). The planned financing of capital expenditure is as follows.

Capital Financing	2021/22 Actual £m	2022/23 Estimate £m	2023/24 Estimate £m	2024/25 Estimate £m	Future years £m
Capital receipts	2.6	1.0	2.2	23.3	11.8
Government Grants	37.9	94.7	117.8	77.0	65.9
External Contributions	4.0	18.6	21.6	32.5	50.0
Revenue Contributions	0.6	1.2	0.1	0.0	0.0
<b>Total Financing</b>	<b>45.1</b>	<b>115.5</b>	<b>141.7</b>	<b>132.8</b>	<b>127.7</b>
Prudential Borrowing	39.4	64.1	72.2	34.6	74.9
<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>39.4</b>	<b>64.1</b>	<b>72.2</b>	<b>34.6</b>	<b>74.9</b>
<b>Total Financing and Funding</b>	<b>84.5</b>	<b>179.6</b>	<b>213.9</b>	<b>167.4</b>	<b>202.6</b>

Source: Cheshire East Finance

### Replacement of debt finance

- 5.26 Debt is only a temporary source of finance, since loans and leases must be repaid, and this is therefore replaced over time by other financing, usually from revenue which is known as minimum revenue provision (MRP). Alternatively, proceeds from selling capital assets may be used to replace debt finance. Planned MRP repayments are as follows.

Replacement of debt finance	2021/22 Actual £m	2022/23 Estimate £m	2023/24 Estimate £m	2024/25 Estimate £m	Future Estimate £m
<b>Total</b>	<b>13.5</b>	<b>15.3</b>	<b>18.6</b>	<b>21.8</b>	<b>23.3</b>

Source: Cheshire East Finance

### Estimates of Capital Financing Requirement

- 5.27 The Council's cumulative outstanding amount of debt finance is measured by the capital financing requirement (CFR). This increases with new debt-financed capital expenditure and reduces with MRP repayments and capital receipts used to

replace debt. The CFR is expected to increase by £45m during 2022/23. Based on the above figures for expenditure and financing, the Council's estimated CFR is as follows.

Capital Financing Requirement	2021/22 Actual £m	2022/23 Estimate £m	2023/24 Estimate £m	2024/25 Estimate £m	Future Estimate £m
<b>Total</b>	<b>425</b>	<b>470</b>	<b>524</b>	<b>529</b>	<b>575</b>

Source: Cheshire East Finance

### Asset disposals

- 5.28 When a capital asset is no longer needed, it may be sold so that the proceeds, known as capital receipts, can be spent on new assets or to repay debt. Repayments of capital grants, loans and investments also generate capital receipts. The Council plans to receive £4.8m of capital receipts from asset sales in the coming financial years as follows.

Capital Receipts	2021/22 Actual £m	2022/23 Estimate £m	2023/24 Estimate £m	2024/25 Estimate £m	Future Estimate £m
Asset Sales	2.3	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Loans Repaid	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>2.6</b>	<b>1.2</b>	<b>1.2</b>	<b>1.2</b>	<b>1.2</b>

Source: Cheshire East Finance

### Gross Debt and the Capital Financing Requirement

- 5.29 The Council's main objectives when borrowing are to achieve a low but certain cost of finance while retaining flexibility should plans change in the future. These objectives are often conflicting and the Council therefore seeks to strike a balance between cheap short term loans (currently available at around 1.9%) and long term fixed rate loans where the future cost is known but higher (currently 2.8%– 3.20%).

- 5.30 Projected levels of the Council's total outstanding debt (which comprises borrowing, PFI liabilities, leases are shown below, compared with the capital financing requirement.

Gross Debt and the Capital Financing Requirement	2021/22 Actual £m	2022/23 Estimate £m	2023/24 Estimate £m	2024/25 Estimate £m	Future Estimate £m
Borrowing	181	77	77	77	77
Finance Leases	0	0	0	0	0
PFI Liabilities	23	19	18	17	17
<b>Total Debt</b>	<b>204</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>94</b>
<b>Capital Financing Req.</b>	<b>425</b>	<b>470</b>	<b>524</b>	<b>529</b>	<b>575</b>

Source: Cheshire East Finance

- 5.31 Statutory guidance is that debt should remain below the capital financing requirement, except in the short term. As can be seen from the above table, the Council expects to comply with this in the medium term.

### Liability Benchmark

- 5.32 To compare the Council's actual borrowing against an alternative strategy, a liability benchmark has been calculated showing the lowest risk level of borrowing. This assumes that cash and investment balances are kept to a minimum level of £20m at each year end. This benchmark is currently £142m and is forecast to rise to £409m over the next four years.

Borrowing and the Liability Benchmark	2021/22 Actual £m	2022/23 Estimate £m	2023/24 Estimate £m	2024/25 Estimate £m	Future Estimate £m
Outstanding Debt	181	77	77	77	77
<b>Liability Benchmark</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>254</b>	<b>340</b>	<b>356</b>	<b>409</b>

Source: Cheshire East Finance



5.33 The table shows that the Council expects to remain borrowed below its liability benchmark.

### Affordable borrowing limit

5.34 The Council is legally obliged to set an affordable borrowing limit (also termed the authorised limit for external debt) each year. In line with statutory guidance, a lower “operational boundary” is also set as a warning level should debt approach the limit.

	2021/22 limit £m	2022/23 limit £m	2023/24 limit £m	2024/25 limit £m	2025/26 limit £m
Authorised Limit for Borrowing	435	480	540	540	590
Authorised Limit for Other Long-Term Liabilities	23	19	18	17	17
<b>Authorised Limit for External Debt</b>	<b>458</b>	<b>499</b>	<b>558</b>	<b>557</b>	<b>607</b>
Operational Boundary for Borrowing	425	470	530	530	580
Operational Boundary for Other Long-Term Liabilities	23	19	18	17	17
<b>Operational Boundary for External Debt</b>	<b>448</b>	<b>489</b>	<b>548</b>	<b>547</b>	<b>597</b>

Source: Cheshire East Finance

### Investment Strategy

5.35 Treasury investments arise from receiving cash before it is paid out again. Investments made for service reasons or for pure financial gain are not generally considered to be part of treasury management.

5.36 The Council's policy on treasury investments is to prioritise security and liquidity over yield, that is to focus on minimising risk rather than maximising returns. Cash that is likely to be spent in the near term is invested securely, for example with money market funds, other local authorities or selected high quality banks, to minimise the risk of loss. Money that will be held for longer terms is invested more widely, including in shares and property, to balance the risk of loss against the risk of returns below inflation.

Treasury Management Investments	31/03/22 Actual £m	31/03/23 Estimate £m	31/03/24 Estimate £m	31/03/25 Estimate £m	31/03/26 Estimate £m
Short term	20	20	20	20	20
Long term	34	20	20	20	20
<b>Total Investments</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>40</b>

Source: Cheshire East Finance

5.37 Further details on treasury investments are in pages of the Treasury Management Strategy, **Appendix 8**.

5.38 Decisions on treasury management investment and borrowing are made daily and are therefore delegated to the Section 151 Officer and staff, who must act in line with the treasury management strategy approved by Council. Quarterly reports on treasury activity are reported to Cabinet as part of the Finance Update reports. The Audit and Governance Committee is responsible for scrutinising treasury management decisions.

5.39 Further details on investments for service purposes and commercial activities are in the Investment Strategy, **Appendix 9**.

5.40 Although capital expenditure is not charged directly to the revenue budget, interest payable on loans and MRP are charged to revenue, offset by an investment income receivable. The net annual charge is known as financing costs; this is compared to the net revenue stream i.e., the amount funded from Council Tax, business rates and general government grants.

Ratio of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream	2021/22 Actual	2022/23 Estimate	2023/24 Estimate	2024/25 Estimate	Future Estimate
Financing Costs (£m)	14.0	19.0	19.0	20.0	21.0
Proportion of net revenue stream %	<b>4.50</b>	<b>5.78</b>	<b>5.77</b>	<b>5.89</b>	<b>5.99</b>

Source: Cheshire East Finance

5.41 Further details on the revenue implications of capital expenditure are on paragraphs 108-129 of the 2022-26 Medium Term Financial Strategy (**Appendix C**).

5.42 Due to the very long term nature of capital expenditure and financing, the revenue budget implications of expenditure incurred in the next few years will extend for up to 50 years into the future. The Section 151 Officer is satisfied that the proposed capital programme is prudent, affordable and sustainable. The longer term revenue implications have been considered and built into the revenue budget forecasts post the period of the current Medium Term Financial Strategy.

## 6. Reserves Strategy

### Management of Council Reserves

- 6.2 The Council's Reserves Strategy states that the Council will maintain reserves to protect against risk and support investment.
- 6.3 The opening balance at 1 April 2022 in the Council's General Reserves was £12.6m, as published in the Council's Statement of Accounts for 2021/22.
- 6.4 During 2022/23, an additional £2.3m has been transferred into the General Reserves to provide further protection against emerging risks such as inflation and particularly the DSG deficit, which was highlighted in the MTFS as having no alternative funding.
- 6.5 The Council also maintains Earmarked Revenue Reserves for specific purposes. At 31 March 2022 balances on these reserves stood at £80.9m, excluding balances held by Schools.
- 6.6 Unspent schools budgets that have been delegated, as laid down in the Schools Standards Framework Act 1998, remain at the disposal of the school and are not available to the Council to use.
- 6.7 The Collection Fund Reserve includes the appropriation of £12.4m S31 grant, received from DLUHC. This increase is as a result of a timing difference, with the grant being received in 2021/22 to fund the deficit that will be released in 2022/23.
- 6.8 During 2022/23, an estimated £30.7m will be drawn down from earmarked reserves and applied to fund the service expenditure specifically provided for. Service outturn

forecasts take account of this expenditure and funding. The closing balance at 31 March 2023 is forecast at £50.2m.

- 6.9 At the end of 2018/19, a central contingency referred to as the MTFS (Medium Term Financial Strategy) Reserve was created to support in-year pressures against the revenue budget. Use of this Earmarked Reserve has been subject to approval of robust business cases.
- 6.10 At 31 March 2022, the opening balance on the MTFS reserve stood at £10.1m. In-year forecasts anticipate £2.5m of this reserve to be utilised in year, resulting in a closing balance at 31 March 2023 of £7.5m.
- 6.11 The review position presents a pressure of £8.7m (to within budget by 2.7%). Any variation to budget at year-end will be managed through the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy Earmarked Reserve in the first instance prior to using the General Reserve.

**Table 1 – Reserves Position**

	£m
General Reserve	14.9
Earmarked Reserves (excluding Schools)	50.2
<b>Total Reserves Balance at 31 March 2023</b>	<b>65.1</b>

- 6.12 Details of individual reserves are shown in the relevant Service Committee appendix and in summary in **Table 2**.

**Table 2 – Earmarked Reserves Summary**

Committee Reserves	Opening Balance 1st April 2022 £000	Forecast Movement in Reserves 2022/23 £000	Forecast Closing Balance 31st March 2023 £000
Adults and Health Committee	7,646	(1,417)	6,229
Children and Families Committee	4,032	(1,306)	2,726
Corporate Policy Committee	63,114	(24,964)	38,150
Economy and Growth Committee	3,144	(1,636)	1,508
Environment and Communities Committee	1,056	(501)	555
Highways and Transport Committee	1,936	(905)	1,031
<b>TOTAL EARMARKED RESERVES MOVEMENT</b>	<b>80,928</b>	<b>(30,729)</b>	<b>50,199</b>

*\*Excluding schools' balances*

- 6.13 The Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) is ring-fenced funding received for: schools; high needs / special educational needs; and early years provision. In recent years there has been a pressure on the DSG high needs block where funding has not kept pace with the increasing numbers and cost of children with an education, health and care plan. This has created a deficit DSG reserve balance which is held in an unusable reserve. The DSG reserve deficit is forecast to be £45.6m at the end of the year. This is in line with the budget gap as determined the Council's DSG Management Plan that was approved by Children and Families Committee in September 2022 and set out the planned expenditure and income on high needs over the medium term.

**Table 3 – DSG Deficit**

	£m
DSG – Forecast in-year pressure	19.9
DSG – Deficit Balance B/F	25.7
<b>DSG Deficit Balance at 31 March 2023</b>	<b>45.6</b>

# **Appendix 7 : Highways and Transport Committee**

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**1. Changes to Revenue Budget 2022/23 since First Financial Review**

**2. Action Plan 2022/23**

**3. Corporate Grants Register**

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**4. Debt Management**

**5. Capital Strategy**

**6. Reserves Strategy**

# Appendix 7

## Highways and Transport Committee

### 1. Changes to Revenue Budget 2022/23 since First Financial Review

	First review Net Budget £000	Additional Grant Funding £000	Restructuring & Realignments £000	Revised Net Budget £000
<b>Highways and Transport</b>				
Highways & Infrastructure	13,779	13	-	13,792
	13,779	13	-	13,792

Note the additional grant funding column includes the expenditure part of centrally held unringfenced grants.

## 2. Action Plan 2022/23

2.1 At mid-year the forecast outturn is £0.5m greater than budget, a slight decrease since the first review. The pay inflation estimate has been reduced due to the reversal of the additional 1.25% National Insurance increase.

Highways and Transport Committee	Exp £m	Inc £m	Net £m	MTFS Proposal	Value 2022/23 £m	MTFS Ref	RAG Rating	Comments	Variance from MTFS 2022/23 £m	Change from FR1 2022/23 £m
Highways and Infrastructure	23.7	-9.9	13.8	Pay Inflation	0.183	3&4 + New	Red (will not achieve)	Represents current estimate of the impact on Committee services in excess of the MTFS, from a nationally negotiated pay award.	0.042	-0.011
				ASDV Review (TSS)	-0.125	20	Red (will not achieve)	TSS transition has been completed, with teams brought in-house. Re-procurement of contract purchasing system is underway. Supplier engagement events as part of market refresh in autumn. Saving deferred pending new procurement system (DPS).	0.250	0.000
				Parking service – postponement of review of charges	0.504	60	Green (on track and should achieve)	Postponed following Committee resolution in September 2021.	0.000	0.000
				Carbon Reduction - Replacement of existing illuminated signs and bollards with LED units	0.030	55	Amber (on track but may not achieve all)	Roll out of replacement programme via highways contract on track to complete by March 23. Savings of energy costs will reduce due to increased prices. Draw down of reserves within highways.	0.000	0.000

Highways and Transport Committee	Exp £m	Inc £m	Net £m	MTFS Proposal	Value 2022/23 £m	MTFS Ref	RAG Rating	Comments	Variance from MTFS 2022/23 £m	Change from FR1 2022/23 £m
				Local Supported Buses	0.008	61	Green (on track and should achieve)	Monitoring of concessionary travel payments to operators. Savings on concessionary travel reimbursement.	0.000	0.000
				Reduction in parking revenue due to covid changes in customer behaviour		New		Permanent pressure due to reduced number of commuters, people parking all day and reduced sales of annual and quarterly permits.	1.320	0.000
				Parking Mitigating Actions		New		Additional costs of inflation and enhanced cleaning on MSCP offset by in year staffing vacancies and reduced spend on supplies and services and transport .	-0.110	0.000
				HS2		New		£150k underspend due to significant internal Council resource being utilised for the Main Petitioning work, this has now been submitted to Government - August 2022. £200k release from reserve.	-0.350	0.000
				Highways Covid pressure		New		Removal of Emergency Active Travel schemes.	0.061	0.000
				Highways Mitigating Actions		New		Release of Flooding and WMHI reserve.	-0.630	0.000



Highways and Transport Committee	Exp £m	Inc £m	Net £m	MTFS Proposal	Value 2022/23 £m	MTFS Ref	RAG Rating	Comments	Variance from MTFS 2022/23 £m	Change from FR1 2022/23 £m
				Highways		New		Reprofile or remove capital expenditure to improve revenue forecasting. Lobby DfT to recognise construction inflation.		0.000
				Workforce		New		Revise vacancy forecasts to reflect recruitment difficulties. Slow down recruitment where feasible / safe. Updated staffing forecasts take account of revised recruitment timescales, included in Mid Year forecasts above.		0.000
				Transformation		New		Use flexible receipts to capitalise costs of transformation - Highways redesign	-0.067	0.000
				Review of Statutory and Non Statutory Functions		New		Cross cutting item across Place - values to be determined.		0.000
				Restructuring Potential		New		Cross cutting item across Place - values to be determined.		0.000
				Highways		New		Review of top up fund - values to be determined.		0.000
<b>Total</b>	<b>23.7</b>	<b>-9.9</b>	<b>13.8</b>		<b>0.600</b>				<b>0.516</b>	<b>-0.011</b>

### 3. Corporate Grants Register

Table 1 – Corporate Grants Register

Grants 2022/23	Revised Forecast FR1 2022/23 £000	Latest Forecast 2022/23 £000	Change from FR1 2022/23 £000	Treatment of Grant  <i>Notes 2 - 5</i>
<b>HIGHWAYS &amp; TRANSPORT</b>				
<b>Specific Use (Held within Services)</b>	1,316	2,155	838	
<b>General Purpose (Held Corporately)</b>				
Pavement Licensing - New Burdens	0	13	13	SRE
<b>TOTAL HIGHWAYS &amp; TRANSPORT</b>	<b>1,316</b>	<b>2,168</b>	<b>851</b>	

#### Notes

1 The Dedicated Schools Grant, Pupil Premium Grant, Sixth Form Grant and Other School Specific Grant from the Education Funding Agency (EFA) figures are based on actual anticipated allocations. Changes are for in-year increases / decreases to allocations by the DfE and conversions to academy status.

2 SRE - Supplementary Revenue Estimate requested by relevant service.

3 ODR - Officer Decision Record to approve immediate budget change to relevant service.

4 Reserves - transfer to reserves at year end.

5 Balances - amount will be included as a variance to budget.

3.1 Cheshire East Council receives two main types of Government grants; specific use grants and general purpose grants. Specific use grants are held within the relevant service with a corresponding expenditure budget. Whereas general purpose grants are held in central budgets with a corresponding expenditure budget within the allocated service area.

3.2 The increase in specific grants relates mainly to bus services and On-Street Residential Chargepoint Schemes.

3.3 Spending in relation to specific use grants must be in line with the purpose for which it is provided.

# 4. Debt Management

	Outstanding Debt £000	Over 6 months old £000
Highways and Transport Committee		
Highways and Infrastructure	928	753

# 5.Capital Strategy

## Highways and Transport

## CAPITAL

CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2022/23- 2025/26													
Scheme Description	Total Approved Budget	Prior Years £000	Forecast Expenditure				Total Forecast Budget 2022/26 £000	Forecast Funding					Total Funding £000
			Forecast Budget 2022/23 £000	Forecast Budget 2023/24 £000	Forecast Budget 2024/25 £000	Forecast Budget 2025/26 £000		Grants £000	External Contributions £000	Revenue Contributions £000	Capital Receipts £000	Prudential Borrowing £000	
<b>Committed Schemes</b>													
<b>Highways and Infrastructure</b>													
A500 Dualling Scheme*	89,456	9,264	2,096	2,342	18,509	57,244	80,191	53,284	4,300			22,607	80,191
A50 / A54 Holmes Chapel	603	81	45	327	150	0	522		522				522
A51/A500 Corridor Nantwich	250	231	19	0	0	0	19					19	19
A532 Safer Road Scheme	1,223	260	584	379	0	0	963	864				99	963
A536 Safer Road Scheme	2,404	1,461	943	0	0	0	943	849				94	943
A537 Safer Road Scheme	2,733	745	1,988	0	0	0	1,988	1,745				243	1,988
A54 / A533 Leadsmithy Street, Middlewich	563	134	40	389	0	0	429		429				429
A556 Knutsford to Bowdon	504	361	93	50	0	0	143		143				143
A6 MARR CMM Disley	2,122	1,646	10	466	0	0	476		22			454	476
A6 MARR CMM Handforth	800	492	309	0	0	0	309	226	48			34	309
A6MARR Design Checks & TA	473	271	203	0	0	0	203	70	133				203
Air Quality Action Plan	368	221	147	0	0	0	147	147					147
Alderley Edge Bypass Scheme Implementation	60,611	60,317	294	0	0	0	294					294	294
Bridge Maintenance Minor Wks	16,672	14,570	2,102	0	0	0	2,102	1,704				398	2,102
Client Contract and Asset Mgmt	1,141	510	631	0	0	0	631	631					631
Congleton Link Road	88,443	69,970	3,047	5,913	3,895	5,619	18,473	316	15,169			2,989	18,473
Crewe Green Link Road	26,625	26,170	455	0	0	0	455		455				455
Crewe Green Roundabout	7,500	7,053	50	50	150	198	448		448				448
Crewe Rail Exchange	6,712	6,693	19	0	0	0	19	19					19
Flowerpot Phs 1 & Pinchpoint	10,037	1,271	1,228	2,932	1,174	3,433	8,766	2,304	726			5,736	8,766
Future High Streets Fund - Highways	6,169	480	1,914	1,594	1,804	377	5,689	5,486	203				5,689
Highway Maintenance Minor Works	11,219	0	11,219	0	0	0	11,219	10,685				534	11,219
Highway Pothole / Challenge Fund	11,371	7,925	3,446	0	0	0	3,446					3,446	3,446
Highway S106 Schemes	962	0	666	296	0	0	962	41	921				962
S106 Davenport Lane, Arclid	352	60	292	0	0	0	292	245	48				292
Infrastructure Scheme Development	250	0	175	75	0	0	250	250					250
Jack Mills Way Part 1 Claims	300	278	22	0	0	0	22		22				22
Local Access Transport Studies	600	83	517	0	0	0	517	517					517
Local Area Programme	6,566	5,546	1,021	0	0	0	1,021	1,021					1,021
Middlewich Eastern Bypass	92,493	16,176	7,783	10,113	13,817	44,604	76,317	46,778	13,341			16,198	76,317
Middlewich Rail Study	20	0	20	0	0	0	20	20					20
M6 Junction 19	29	23	6	0	0	0	6		6				6
North-West Crewe Package*	42,351	7,446	15,748	14,758	741	3,658	34,905	9,710	12,250		1,730	11,215	34,905
Old Mill Road / The Hill Junction	1,324	145	120	1,059	0	0	1,179		1,179				1,179

CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2022/23- 2025/26													
Scheme Description	Total Approved Budget	Prior Years £000	Forecast Expenditure				Total Forecast Budget 2022/26 £000	Forecast Funding					Total Funding £000
			Forecast Budget 2022/23 £000	Forecast Budget 2023/24 £000	Forecast Budget 2024/25 £000	Forecast Budget 2025/26 £000		Grants £000	External Contributions £000	Revenue Contributions £000	Capital Receipts £000	Prudential Borrowing £000	
<b>Committed Schemes</b>													
<b>Highways and Infrastructure</b>													
Part 1 Claims	113	34	79	0	0	0	79	79					79
Poynton Relief Road	52,657	29,670	16,202	46	1,355	5,385	22,987	8,335	6,200			8,453	22,987
Programme Management	1,011	784	227	0	0	0	227	227					227
Road Network & Linked Key Inf	83	78	5	0	0	0	5	5					5
Road Safety Schemes Minor Works	5,552	5,056	496	0	0	0	496	496					496
Sydney Road Bridge	10,501	10,103	50	50	100	198	398		398				398
Traffic Signal Maintenance	500	17	483	0	0	0	483	483					483
Traffic Signs and Bollards - LED Replacement	1,250	0	1,250	0	0	0	1,250					1,250	1,250
Winter Service Facility	999	479	130	130	130	130	520					520	520
							0						0
<b>Transport &amp; Parking</b>							0						0
Accessibility: Public Transp't	1,020	907	113	0	0	0	113	113					113
Active Travel Fund (Covid-19)	724	436	288	0	0	0	288	288					288
Active Travel (Cycle/Walking route) Investment	2,755	2,179	576	0	0	0	576	576					576
Broadway Meadow Car Park	48	0	48	0	0	0	48					48	48
Car Parking Improvements (including residents parking)	322	262	30	30	0	0	60					60	60
Digital Car Parking Solutions	140	93	47	0	0	0	47					47	47
National Cycle Network (NCN) Route 55 Middlewood Way in	569	0	569	0	0	0	569	569					569
Pay and Display Parking Meters	620	531	-	49	40	0	89					89	89
Sustainable Travel Access Prog	3,424	1,552	560	1312	0	0	1,872	1,325	309			238	1,872
Sustainable Modes of Travel to Schools Strategy (SMOTSS)	620	472	148	0	0	0	148	148					148
Town Studies	550	426	125	0	0	0	125	125					125
<b>HS2 Programme</b>													
Crewe HS2 Hub Project Development	12,700	7,661	2,510	1500	1029	0	5,039					5,039	5,039
<b>Total Committed Schemes - In Progress</b>	<b>589,403</b>	<b>300,618</b>	<b>81,185</b>	<b>43,860</b>	<b>42,894</b>	<b>120,846</b>	<b>288,784</b>	<b>149,681</b>	<b>57,271</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,730</b>	<b>80,103</b>	<b>288,784</b>
													0
<b>New Schemes</b>													0
<b>Highways and Infrastructure</b>													
Peacock Roundabout Junction	750	0	20	230	500	0	750		750				750
Integrated Block - LTP	7,925	0	-	2,003	2,003	2,003	6,009	6,009					6,009
Maintenance Block - LTP*	23,196	0	800	7,345	7,609	7,878	23,633	17,397				6,236	23,633
Incentive Fund - LTP	5,800	0	-	1,450	1,450	1,450	4,350	4,350					4,350
Managing and Maintaining Highways*	16,000	0	4,440	4,529	4,619	4,712	18,300					18,300	18,300
Pothole Fund Grant 2022/23	5,799	0	-	0	0	0	0						0
<b>Total New Schemes</b>	<b>59,470</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5,260</b>	<b>15,557</b>	<b>16,181</b>	<b>16,043</b>	<b>53,042</b>	<b>27,756</b>	<b>750</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>24,536</b>	<b>53,042</b>
<b>Total Capital Schemes</b>	<b>648,873</b>	<b>300,618</b>	<b>86,445</b>	<b>59,417</b>	<b>59,075</b>	<b>136,889</b>	<b>341,826</b>	<b>177,437</b>	<b>58,021</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,730</b>	<b>104,639</b>	<b>341,826</b>

\*Note subject to council approval on 14 December 2022

## 6. Reserves Strategy

### Highways and Transport Committee

Name of Reserve	Opening Balance 1st April 2022 £000	Forecast Movement in Reserves 2022/23 £000	Forecast Closing Balance 31st March 2023 £000	Notes
<b>Highways and Infrastructure</b>				
HS2	985	(200)	785	To support the Council's ongoing programme in relation to Government's HS2 investment across the borough and Transport for the North's Northern Powerhouse Rail Business Case. £200k to be released in 2022/23
Flood Recovery Works	400	(400)	0	To be released in 2022/23
Well Managed Highway Infrastructure Delay	230	(230)	0	To be released in 2022/23
Parking Pay and Display Machines / Parking Studies	178	(28)	150	To cover contract inflation for P&D machines and for new regulation from DfT on role of parking in decarbonising transport.
Highways Procurement Proj	104	(27)	77	To finance the development of the next Highway Service Contract. Depot mobilisation costs, split over 7 years from start of contract in 2018.
LEP-Local Transport Body	39	(20)	19	To fund the business case work for re-opening the Middlewich rail line. £20k is anticipated to be utilised in 2022/23, with the remaining £19k required in 2023/24.
<b>HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT TOTAL</b>	<b>1,936</b>	<b>(905)</b>	<b>1,031</b>	

## Appendix 8

# Treasury Management Strategy

## Treasury Management Report

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A. Economic & Interest Rate Forecast	- 116 -
B. Existing Investment & Debt Portfolio Position	- 118 -

## 1. Background

- 1.1 Treasury management is the management of the Authority's cash flows, borrowing and investments, and the associated risks. The Authority has borrowed and invested substantial sums of money and is therefore exposed to financial risks including the loss of invested funds and the revenue effect of changing interest rates. The successful identification, monitoring and control of financial risk are therefore central to the Authority's prudent financial management.
- 1.2 Treasury risk management at the Authority is conducted within the framework of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's Treasury Management Code of Practice 2021 Edition (the CIPFA Code). This replaces the 2017 edition but the reporting requirements under the newer code can be deferred until 2023/24 which the Authority has elected to do.
- 1.3 Investments held for service purposes or for commercial profit are considered in the Investment Report (see **Appendix 9**).

## 2. External Context

- 1.4 **Economic background:** Following Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February, global inflationary pressures have intensified sharply, leading to a sizeable deterioration in the outlook for world and UK growth.
- 1.5 The economic backdrop in the April-June quarter was characterised by higher oil, gas and commodity prices, fears of rising and persistent inflation and its damaging impact on consumers' cost of living, little indication of an imminent end to Russia-Ukraine hostilities and supply chain bottlenecks exacerbated by war in Ukraine and lockdowns in China. Added to this was tough rhetoric and action by central bankers globally on fighting inflation through higher interest rates and quantitative tightening even as financial conditions became increasingly difficult for consumers, more so for those whose wages have not kept pace with inflation.
- 1.6 In the UK inflation remained elevated. Ofgem, the energy regulator, increased the energy price cap by 54% in April, equivalent to around £700 for a household with average energy consumption (the cap had already increased 12% back in October 2021). A further increase of around £1,580 will apply from October although Government assistance will mitigate some of this increase. August data showed CPI edging higher to 9.9% while the core CPI rate, which removes energy, fuel and food was 6.3%. RPI rose to 12.3%.
- 1.7 The labour market continued to show signs of tightness as employers struggled to fill vacancies with workers with skill sets matching their requirements. The unemployment rate 3m/year for July fell to 3.6% and is now below pre-pandemic levels. Pay growth was 5.5%



for total pay (including bonuses) and 5.2% for regular pay; however, adjusted for inflation, growth in total pay fell by 2.6%, whilst regular pay fell 2.8%.

- 1.8 Unsurprisingly, with disposable income squeezed and another energy cap increase due in October, consumer confidence plummeted to the level last seen during the 2008/09 financial crisis. Quarterly GDP growth was -0.1% in the April - June quarter and the Bank of England now expects a further decline in Q3 2022.
- 1.9 Having increased interest rates by 0.25% in April, the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee on the 15th of June 2022 increased the official Bank Rate by 0.25% to 1.25%. In line with expectations rates were increased by a further 0.50% to 1.75% in August with further increases likely and largely already priced in by the markets.
- 1.10 **Financial Markets:** Heightened uncertainty characterised financial market sentiment and bond yields were similarly volatile but with a general upward trend as concern over higher inflation and higher interest rates dominated.
- 1.11 Over the first quarter of 2022 the 5-year UK benchmark gilt yield rose from 1.41% to 1.89%, the 10-year gilt yield rose from 1.61% to 2.35% and the 20-year yield from 1.82% to 2.60% although these have since fallen back slightly in the last few weeks in expectation of rates reducing after 2023 after taking into account the economic outlook.

- 1.12 **Credit Review:** Having completed its full review of its credit advice on unsecured deposits at UK and non-UK banks, in May Arlingclose extended the maximum duration limit for five UK banks, four Canadian banks and four German banks to six months. The maximum duration for unsecured deposits with other UK and non-UK banks on Arlingclose's recommended list is 100 days.
- 1.13 Arlingclose continued to monitor and assess credit default swap levels for signs of credit stress but made no changes to the counterparty list or recommended durations. Nevertheless, increased market volatility is expected to remain a feature, at least in the near term and, as ever, the institutions and durations on the Authority's counterparty list recommended by Arlingclose remains under constant review.
- 1.14 An outlook for the remainder of 2022/23 and interest rate forecast provided by Arlingclose is attached at **Annex A**.

### 3. Local Context

- 1.15 As at 31 August 2022 the Authority has borrowings of £243m and investments of £96m. This is set out in further detail at **Annex B**. Forecast changes in these sums are shown in the balance sheet analysis in **Table 1** below.

**Table 1: Balance Sheet Summary and Forecast**

	31/03/22 Estimate £m	31/03/23 Estimate £m	31/03/24 Estimate £m	31/03/25 Estimate £m
General Fund CFR	425	470	524	530
Less: Other long term liabilities *	(22)	(19)	(18)	(17)
<b>Loans CFR</b>	<b>403</b>	<b>451</b>	<b>506</b>	<b>513</b>
Less: External borrowing **	(181)	(77)	(77)	(77)
<b>Internal (over) borrowing</b>	<b>222</b>	<b>374</b>	<b>429</b>	<b>436</b>
Less: Usable reserves	(165)	(137)	(111)	(103)
Less: Working capital	(116)	(80)	(75)	(73)
<b>Investments (or New borrowing)</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>(157)</b>	<b>(243)</b>	<b>(260)</b>

\* finance leases and PFI liabilities that form part of the Authority's debt

\*\* shows only loans to which the Authority is committed and excludes optional refinancing

1.16 The underlying need to borrow for capital purposes is measured by the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR), while usable reserves and working capital are the underlying resources available for investment. The Authority's current strategy is to maintain borrowing and investments below their underlying levels, sometimes known as internal borrowing.

1.17 CIPFA's Prudential Code for Capital Finance recommends that the Authority's total debt should be lower than its highest forecast CFR over the next three

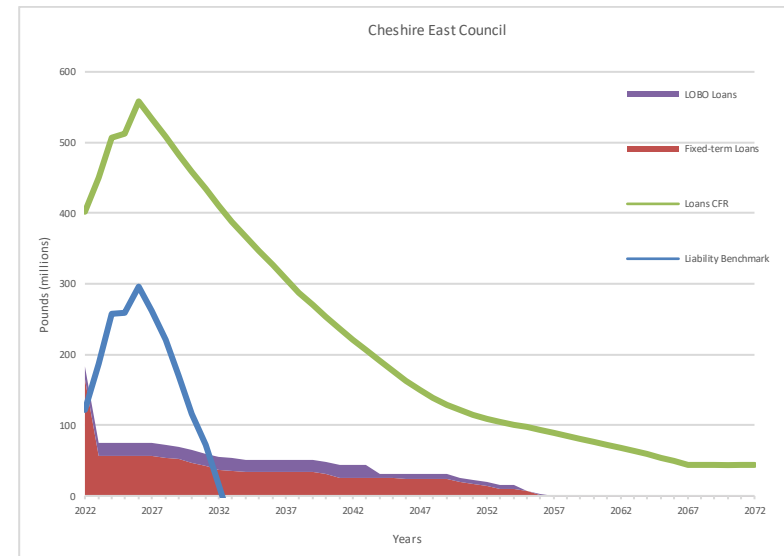
years. **Table 1** shows that the Authority expects to comply with this recommendation during 2022/23.

1.18 **Liability Benchmark:** To compare the Council's actual borrowing against an alternative strategy, a liability benchmark has been calculated showing the lowest risk level of borrowing. This assumes the same forecasts as **Table 1** above, but that cash and investment balances are kept to a minimum level of £20m at each year-end to maintain a core strategic investment.

**Table 2: Liability Benchmark**

	31/03/22 Estimate £m	31/03/23 Estimate £m	31/03/24 Estimate £m	31/03/25 Estimate £m
Loans CFR	403	451	506	513
Less: Usable reserves	(165)	(137)	(111)	(103)
Less: Working capital	(116)	(80)	(75)	(73)
Plus: Minimum investments	20	20	20	20
<b>Liability Benchmark</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>254</b>	<b>340</b>	<b>357</b>

1.19 Following on from the medium-term forecasts in **Table 2** above the long-term liability benchmark assumes minimum revenue provision on new capital expenditure based on a 25 year asset life and income, expenditure and reserves all increasing by inflation of 2.5% a year. This is shown in **Chart 1**.

**Chart 1: Liability Benchmark Chart**

## 4. Borrowing Strategy

- 1.20 The Authority currently holds loans of £223m, an increase of £42m since 31 March 2022. However, this will increase to a higher level, currently forecast as £260m at 31 March 2023.
- 1.21 At the moment, cash shortfalls are being met by temporary borrowing from other Local Authorities which is considerably cheaper than other sources of borrowing. As rates are still low and the liquidity of short term markets at year end is often tighter, many new borrowings from September onwards are for maturity dates extending into 2023/24. The cost (including fees) to 31 August 2022 is around 0.93% although new borrowings are now at higher rates following recent base rate increases and anticipation of future increases. Due to the increasing levels of temporary borrowing, consideration is being given to some longer term fixed rate loans which, although more expensive, provide surety of future interest costs and protects against sudden unexpected future rate increases which could have adverse effects on the Councils budget. A full list of current temporary borrowings is shown below in **Table 3**.

**Table 3 – Current Temporary Borrowing**

Lender	Start	Maturity	Rate %	£m
Evergreen Fund (CW LEP)	Call Account		1.56	2.9
Newham	15/08/22	15/09/22	1.14	5.0
Renfrewshire Council	25/04/22	26/09/22	0.85	5.0
Neath Port Talbot CBC	27/06/22	27/09/22	1.21	5.0
West Midlands CA	31/03/22	30/09/22	0.70	5.0
Torbay	31/03/22	30/09/22	0.90	5.0
West Berkshire	30/06/22	30/09/22	1.20	5.0
Middlesbrough	01/07/22	03/10/22	1.35	5.0
Northern Ireland Housing Executive	13/05/22	14/11/22	1.09	10.0
Carmarthenshire CC	27/05/22	28/11/22	1.09	5.0
Preston	01/07/22	09/01/23	1.10	5.0
West Yorkshire CA	14/07/22	16/01/23	1.20	5.0
Spelthorne	18/07/22	18/01/23	1.72	5.0
West Midlands CA	21/04/22	23/01/23	0.75	5.0
West Midlands CA	22/07/22	23/01/23	1.10	5.0
Wigan	22/07/22	23/01/23	1.44	5.0
Basildon	28/07/22	30/01/23	1.15	5.0
Northumberland	09/08/22	09/02/23	1.50	5.0

Lender	Start	Maturity	Rate %	£m
Greater Manchester CA	29/07/22	10/02/23	1.74	10.0
South Derbyshire	16/05/22	16/02/23	1.10	3.0
Tewkesbury	24/08/22	24/02/23	1.76	2.0
East Sussex	24/08/22	24/02/23	1.77	5.0
Sheffield City	14/07/22	14/04/23	1.30	5.0
Local Gov't Assoc.	26/07/22	26/04/23	1.70	1.5
Local Gov't Assoc.	26/07/22	26/04/23	1.70	1.5
West Yorkshire CA	04/08/22	04/05/23	1.25	5.0
West Yorkshire Fire & Rescue	23/08/22	23/05/23	1.80	5.0
West Yorkshire Police	24/08/22	24/05/23	1.70	5.0
Northern Ireland Housing Executive	29/07/22	28/07/23	1.88	10.0
<b>TOTAL</b>				<b>145.9</b>

- 1.22 **LOBO's:** The Authority holds £17m of LOBO (Lender's Option Borrower's Option) loans where the lender has the option to propose an increase in the interest rate at set dates, following which the Authority has the option to either accept the new rate or to repay the loan at no additional cost. All of these LOBOS have options during 2022/23, and although the Authority understands that lenders are unlikely to exercise their options in the current low interest rate environment, there remains an element of refinancing risk. The Authority will take the

option to repay LOBO loans at no cost if it has the opportunity to do so.

## 5. Investment Strategy

- 1.23 The Authority holds invested funds, representing income received in advance of expenditure plus balances and reserves held. Due to the overriding need for short term borrowing, other than £20m invested strategically in managed funds, the investments are generally short term for liquidity purposes. However, receipt of Government funding for energy grants and other schemes in advance of expenditure has, at times, led to higher balances than expected. The level at 31 August 2022 is £96m.
- 1.24 The CIPFA Code requires the Authority to invest its funds prudently, and to have regard to the security and liquidity of its investments before seeking the highest rate of return, or yield. The Authority's objective when investing money is to strike an appropriate balance between risk and return, minimising the risk of incurring losses from defaults and the risk of receiving unsuitably low investment income.
- 1.25 The maximum amount that can be invested with any one organisation is set in the Treasury Management Strategy Report. The maximum amount and duration of investments with any institution depends on the organisations credit rating, the type of investment and for banks and building societies, the security of the investment. Generally, credit rated banks and building

societies have been set at a maximum value of £6m for unsecured investments and £12m for secured investments. Any limits also apply to the banking group that each bank belongs to. Limits for each Money Market fund have been set at a maximum value of £12m per fund. All potential counterparties are kept under continual review by our treasury advisors and advisory lower limits than those contained in the strategy are applied.

- 1.26 Treasury Management income to 31 August 2022 is £625,000 which is higher than the budgeted £371,000. Borrowing costs are also higher than budgeted at £547,000 compared to budget of £485,000. This is caused by increasing interest rates. When combined with an increasing borrowing requirement this suggests that net interest cost will be £123,000 higher than budgeted for 2022/23.
- The average daily investment balance including managed funds up to 31 August 2022 is £60.2m
  - The average annualized interest rate received on in-house investments up to 31 August 2022 is 1.12%
  - The average annualized interest rate received on the externally managed funds up to 31 August 2022 is 6.90%
- 1.27 The Authority's total average interest rate on all investments in 2022/23 is 2.47%. The returns continue to exceed our own performance target of 2.25% (Base

Rate + 0.50%). Previous comparator rates using LIBID are no longer produced. These have been replaced by the Sterling OverNight Index Average (SONIA).

**Table 4 – Interest Rate Comparison**

Comparator	Average Rate to 31/08/2022
Cheshire East	2.47%
SONIA 7 Day Rate	1.13%
Base Rate	1.75%
Target Rate	2.25%

- 1.28 As the Authority holds a large amount of reserves and working capital, £20m of this has been placed in strategic investments in order to benefit from higher income returns whilst spreading risk across different asset classes.
- 1.29 The investments are in five different funds which are all designed to give an annual income return between 4% and 5% but which have different underlying levels of volatility. By spreading investments across different types of funds, the intention is to dampen any large fluctuations in the underlying value of the investments.

Table 5 –Strategic Investments

Fund Manager	Asset Class	Invested £m	Current Value £m
CCLA	Property	7.5	9.3
Aegon	Multi Asset	5.0	4.5
Fidelity	Equity - Global	4.0	4.0
Schroders	Equity - UK	2.5	2.2
M & G	Bonds	1.0	0.9
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>20.0</b>	<b>20.9</b>

- 1.30 The value of these investments does vary. The effects of high inflation, reduced GDP and supply chain issues on financial markets and values of underlying assets has been considerable. Most funds, although recovered from direct Covid related issues, have fallen in value in recent months, the exception being the Property fund which continues to increase in value due to the nature of the properties in which it is invested. All funds continue to deliver high levels of income return.

Chart 2 – Current Investments by Counterparty Type

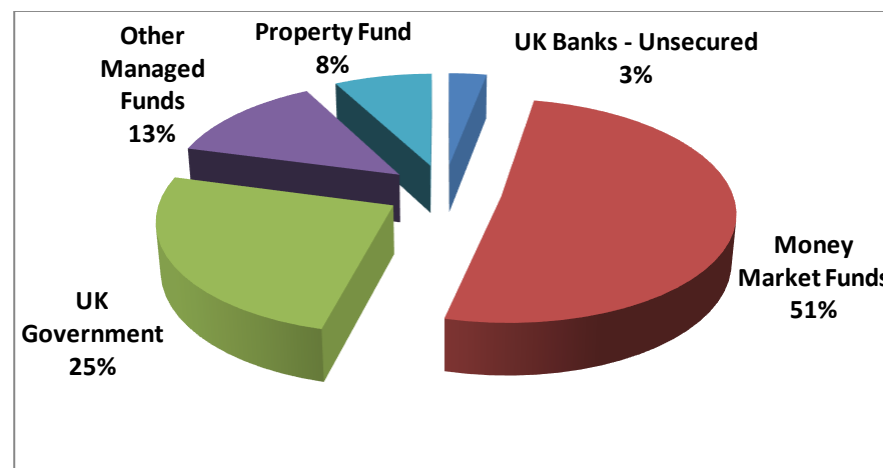


Table 6 – Types of Investments and Current Interest Rates

Instant Access Accounts	Average Rate %	£m
Money Market Funds	1.66	48.8
UK Banks	0.60	2.9

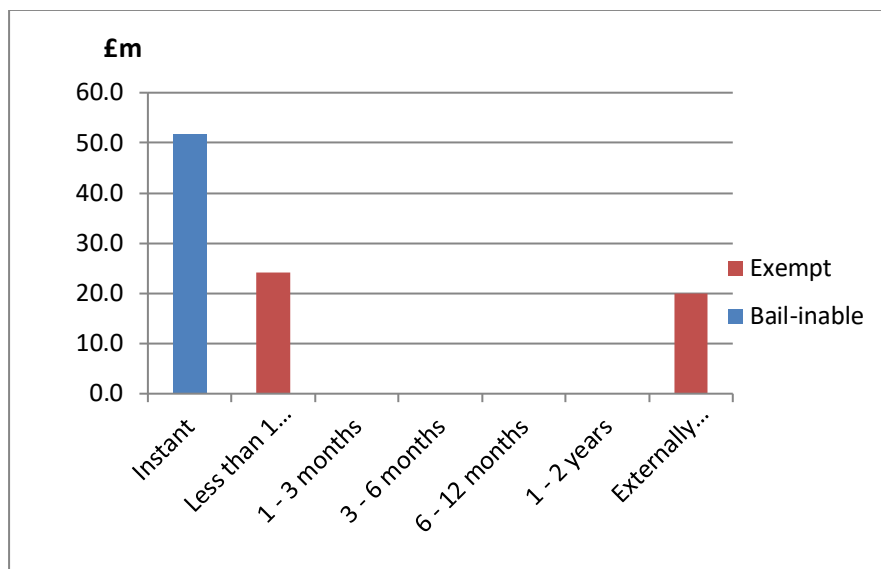
Fixed Term Investments	Average Rate %	£m
UK Government	1.71	24.2

Externally Managed Funds	£m
Total – see table 5	20.0

Summary of Current Investments	£m
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>95.9</b>

**Chart 3 – Maturity Profile of Investments**



Note: Bail-inable means that in the event of default the counterparty may be required to use part of the investments as their own capital in which case the Council would not get back as much as they invested. This would apply with most bank and Building Society investments.

## 6. Treasury Management Indicators

1.31 The Authority measures and manages its exposures to treasury management risks using the following indicators.

1.32 **Interest Rate Exposures:** This indicator is set to control the Authority's exposure to interest rate risk. The upper limit on the one-year revenue impact of a 1% rise in interest rates is:

Interest Rate Risk Indicator	Limit
Upper limit on one-year revenue impact of a 1% <u>rise</u> in interest rates	£462,500
Likely revenue impact in 2022/23 of a 1% <u>rise</u> in interest rates	£425,000

1.33 The impact of a change in interest rates is calculated on the assumption that maturing loans and investments will be replaced at current rates. The Council is expected to remain a net borrower in 2022/23 so a fall in rates would lead to savings rather than incurring additional cost so a limit of £0 was set. Rates have already changed by more than 1% and likely to change further so full revenue impact of changing rates is likely to be higher – estimated at £548,000.

1.34 **Maturity Structure of Borrowing:** This indicator is set to control the Authority's exposure to refinancing risk. Lower limits have been set at 0%. The upper limits on



the maturity structure of borrowing and the actual maturity profiles as at 31 August 2022 are:

Refinancing rate risk indicator	Upper Limit	Actual
Under 12 months	70%	58%
12 months and within 24 months	35%	15%
24 months and within 5 years	35%	0%
5 years and within 10 years	75%	8%
10 years and within 20 years	100%	7%
20 years and above	100%	12%

1.35 Time periods start on the first day of each financial year. The maturity date of borrowing is the earliest date on which the lender can demand repayment. The upper limit for loans maturing in under 12 months is relatively high as short term funding is currently

considerably cheaper than alternatives and allows for LOBO loans which, although unlikely, have the potential to be repaid early. This will be kept under review as it does increase the risk of higher financing costs in the future.

1.36 **Principal Sums Invested for Periods Longer than 364 days:** The purpose of this indicator is to control the Authority’s exposure to the risk of incurring losses by seeking early repayment of its investments. The limits on the total principal sum invested to final maturities beyond the period end will be:

Price Risk Indicator	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Limit on principal invested beyond year end	£25m	£15m	£10m
Actual amounts committed beyond year end	£0m	£0m	£0m

## Annex A: Economic & Interest Rate Outlook for Remainder of 2022/23

	Current	Sep-22	Dec-22	Mar-23	Jun-23	Sep-23	Dec-23	Mar-24	Jun-24	Sep-24	Dec-24	Mar-25	Jun-25
<b>Official Bank Rate</b>													
<b>Upside risk</b>	0.00	0.50	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75
<b>Arlingclose Central Case</b>	1.25	1.75	2.25	2.25	2.25	2.25	2.25	2.25	2.25	2.00	2.00	1.75	1.75
<b>Downside risk</b>	0.00	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.25	-0.50	-0.50	-0.75	-0.75	-0.75

High inflation is dampening global economic growth, raising the chances of regional recessions as policymakers accelerate monetary tightening to reduce the risk of persistently higher long-term inflation expectations.

The invasion of Ukraine exacerbated global inflation trends, particularly around food and energy. The rise in energy and fuel prices has been a significant factor behind the UK CPI moving to over 9% and forecast to be over 10% during 2022.

High sustained inflation is likely to lead to zero or negative GDP growth for Q2 2022 onwards in the UK due to negative real household disposable income growth. Fiscal intervention will mitigate some of the financial pain, but will not totally alleviate it. Data suggests that households are curtailing spending in response. Built up savings and more robust wage growth will only partly offset the impact.

The labour market is tight and nominal wage growth is running above pre-Covid levels. Higher wage growth will be a

contributory factor to sustained above target inflation this year, although real wage growth is unlikely for most workers. Weaker economic activity should eventually lead to lower demand for labour and reduce wage pressure.

The Bank of England previously signalled that moderate monetary tightening alongside the sharp fall in real incomes would pull inflation back to target in the medium term. Inflation has, however, exceeded the Bank's expectations. Alongside the tight labour market and fiscal intervention, further rises in Bank Rate are likely.

The MPC minutes indicated that larger upward moves in in Bank Rate, more forceful action, are a possibility if high inflation persists. Markets have priced in a much steeper path for Bank Rate in response, but Arlingclose believe the MPC will be more cautious, albeit at a higher level than previously expected.

Bond yields have risen significantly to accommodate tighter

global monetary policy despite increasing recession concerns. The US remains the main driver of global yields; aggressive policy in the US increases the inflation risk for other countries and may be a contributory factor to unnecessary tight policy elsewhere.

With markets seemingly ignoring the downside risks to

growth, further upside movement in bond yields cannot be ruled out, at least until US inflation starts to cool.

## Annex B: Existing Investment & Debt Portfolio Position

	31/08/22 Actual Portfolio £m	31/08/22 Average Rate for the year %
<b>External Borrowing:</b>		
PWLB – Fixed Rate	60	4.53%
Local Authorities	143	1.22%
LOBO Loans	17	4.63%
Other	3	1.02%
<b>Total External Borrowing</b>	<b>223</b>	<b>2.59%</b>
<b>Other Long Term Liabilities:</b>		
PFI	20	-
Finance Leases	0	-
<b>Total Gross External Debt</b>	<b>243</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Investments:</b>		
<i>Managed in-house</i>		
Short-term investments:		
Instant Access	52	1.60%
Fixed Term	24	1.71%
<i>Managed externally</i>		
Property Fund	7.5	2.42%
Multi Asset Fund	5	7.00%
Equity - Global	4	8.62%
Equity - UK	2.5	6.68%
Bonds	1	3.20%
<b>Total Investments</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>2.99%</b>
<b>Net Debt</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>-</b>

# Appendix 9

## Investment Strategy

### 1. Purpose

- 1.1 The Investment Strategy is part of a suite of related documents, and focuses predominantly on matters not covered by Capital Strategy and Treasury Management Strategy.
- 1.2 The Authority invests its money for three broad purposes:
  - because it has surplus cash as a result of its day-to-day activities, for example when income is received in advance of expenditure (known as **treasury management investments**),
  - to support local public services by lending to or buying shares in other organisations (**service investments**), and
  - to earn investment income (known as **commercial investments** where this is the main purpose).
- 1.3 Often there may be a crossover with investments within the Authority. Whilst a return may be a by-product of an investment this is rarely the overriding reason for making or retaining an investment. It will be linked to other long term strategic or regeneration factors.
- 1.4 The investment strategy meets the requirements of the statutory guidance issued by MHCLG in February 2018 and reflects subsequent changes in government and CIPFA

thinking on investments. It focuses on the second and third of the investment categories.

### 2. Treasury Management Investments

- 1.5 The Authority typically receives its income in cash (e.g., from taxes and grants) before it pays for its expenditure in cash (e.g., through payroll and invoices). It also holds reserves for future expenditure and collects local taxes on behalf of central government. These activities, plus the timing of borrowing decisions, lead to a cash surplus which is invested in accordance with guidance from the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy. The balance of treasury management investments fluctuates in the course of normal activity.
- 1.6 Full details of the Authority's policies and plans for 2022/23 within treasury management investments are covered via the Treasury Management Strategy (**Appendix 8**).

### 3. Service Investments: Loans

- 1.7 Current loan balances are shown in the table below. Upper limits on the outstanding loans to each category of borrower were set through the MTFS process:

**Table 1: Loans for service purposes in £'000**

Category of borrower	31/03/22 Actual	As at 30/09/22			2022/23
		Balance owing	Loss allowance	Net figure in accounts	Balance owing
Subsidiaries	0	0	0	0	0
Suppliers	23	24	1	23	24
Local businesses	6,043	6,276	70	6,206	6,276
Local charities	515	392	51	341	392
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6,581</b>	<b>6,692</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>6,570</b>	<b>6,692</b>

- 1.8 Loans have been provided to Everybody Health & Leisure Trust (Everybody) for the purpose of investing in new equipment, with the aim of increasing the usage of leisure centres and improving the health of residents.
- 1.9 In March 2013, Astra Zeneca announced it was relocating its R&D function from Alderley Park to Cambridge. In order to retain the expertise in the region and to stimulate local economic growth the Council has invested in Alderley Park Holdings Ltd by way of equity investment and loans. The loan was an integral component of the 10% equity stake and therefore needs to be viewed in conjunction with the equity investment.
- 1.10 In addition, the Council has committed to investing £5m (and lent £4.74m as at 30 June 2022) in the Greater Manchester & Cheshire Life Science Fund, a venture capital fund investing in a range of life science businesses. Partners in

the Fund include the Greater Manchester Combined Authority, Cheshire & Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership and Alderley Park Holdings Ltd. The Fund has a regional focus and seeks to target companies looking to re-locate a material part of their business within the Greater Manchester and Cheshire and Warrington areas, which includes Alderley Park where the Fund is based.

- 1.11 The nature of the loans is that they do not attract an interest rate and returns are dependent upon the success of individual investments made by the Fund. The GM Life Science Fund is “revalued” on an annual basis based upon the net asset valuation of the Fund and this can lead to short term fluctuations in the notional returns of this loan category. It should be noted that whilst the investment in the Life Science Fund is high risk it is also long-term in nature, so year-by-year fluctuations are to be expected but gains or losses will only crystallize when funds are extracted. The Authority has decided against committing new funds to a follow up fund for the time being.
- 1.12 Only the Everybody loans are interest bearing and are reflected in the “Local Charities” category. These are accrued at a rate of Bank of England base rate plus 4%.
- 1.13 The loss allowance figure does not necessarily reflect our anticipation or expectation that loans will need to be written down. Instead, the allowance represents a prudent accounting treatment required by CIPFA guidance. The figures for loans in the Authority’s statement of accounts are shown net of this loss allowance. However, the Authority makes every reasonable effort to collect the full sum lent and has appropriate credit control arrangements in place to recover overdue repayments.

## 4. Service Investments: Shares

- 1.14 The Authority has invested in Alderley Park Holdings Limited in order to maintain and stimulate the key strategic industry of life sciences within the Borough. Cheshire East is a 10% shareholder in Alderley Park, and has invested in the development of the site along with Bruntwood (51% shareholder) and Manchester Science Partnerships (39% shareholder).
- 1.15 This should be seen as a long-term strategic investment. There have been no dividend returns and any changes in % returns have been based upon the movement in value of our share of the underlying assets which will fluctuate as the site continues its transition from a single user to a multiuser campus.
- 1.16 There remains a long term pipeline of investment and refurbishment activity on Alderley Park. The current valuation is based upon the 2022 year end position which had seen a fall in value; reflecting a revaluation and the timing of vacant units, and the not insignificant impact of COVID-19, which the site seems to have weathered. The valuation is still greater than the purchase price and the underlying assets at Alderley Park remain strong.
- 1.17 A gain or loss to the Council's Revenue and Capital Receipts accounts would only crystallise in the event of divesting our equity stake.
- 1.18 The Council also has shares in its subsidiary, wholly owned service delivery companies. However, they are of nominal

value, and consequently are not considered material in the context of this Investment Strategy.

**Table 2: Shares held for service purposes in £'000**

Category of company	31/03/22 actual	As at 30/09/2022			2022/23
		Amounts invested	Gains or losses	Value in accounts	Approved Limit (cost of investment)
Local Businesses	2,610	1,070	1,540	2,610	10,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,610</b>	<b>1,070</b>	<b>1,540</b>	<b>2,610</b>	<b>10,000</b>

## 5. Commercial Investments: Property

- 1.19 For the purpose of this paper, it should be noted that MHCLG defines property to be an investment if it is held primarily or partially to generate a profit. In order to comply with this the Authority is having to include several assets in **Table 3** that might otherwise be excluded as they are not being held to primarily generate a yield or return.
- 1.20 Central government continues to express concern over the level of commercial investments held by Local Authorities and the risk that this presents to residents in the event that an Authority becomes over exposed.
- 1.21 The government has effectively regulated against the purchase of commercial assets primarily for generating yield. Whilst this limits the Authority's ability to invest in commercial property for investment purposes, they have

recognised that regeneration is a necessary factor which could result in legitimate purchases of such property. Careful attention will need to ensure that yield is an incidental factor in any future decision to invest in a commercial property investment.

- 1.22 The most significant commercial investment acquired by the Authority is land and buildings on the North and East side of Weston Road in Crewe purchased in April 2019. This accounts for 81% of the net book value in the accounts at 31 March 2022.
- 1.23 For the purpose of this report, we have revisited the historic purchase costs of the assets included in the categories below. For those that were inherited by Cheshire East Council we have used the valuation at 2009/10. This is to allow for a simple and crude calculation of yield.
- 1.24 The value of properties is updated annually. The most recent valuation is from March 2022 and reflect the second year of COVID-19. In the year to March 2021, we noted that the value of retail property held up whilst that of industrial units and enterprise centres was valued downwards. The year to March 2022 saw retail values continue to grow and the other categories have made modest gains. All categories are still valued at more than purchase cost. There has been a reclassification in the year and an office property has been added to the listing as it was deemed appropriate to classify it as an investment asset. This resulted in £533,000 being added to the valuation. \* Note that no gain has been deemed to have arisen in the last two years with the gain on the purchase cost occurring in prior years.

**Table 3: Property held for investment purposes in £'000**

Property	Actual	31/03/22 actual		30/09/22 actual		2022/23 Approval Limit
	Purchase cost	Gains or (losses) in-year	Value in accounts (includes gains/ (losses) to date	Gains or (losses)	Value in accounts	
Industrial Units	1,492	11	1,740	0	1,740	
Enterprise Centres	245	20	340	0	340	
Retail	23,300	371	25,975	0	25,975	
Office	240	* -	533	0	533	
<b>Total</b>	<b>25,277</b>	<b>402</b>	<b>28,588</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>28,588</b>	<b>100,000</b>

## 6. Commercial Investments: Loans

- 1.25 In considering commercial investment opportunities, the Council will adopt a prudent approach, with two underlying objectives:
- **Security** – protecting the capital sum invested from loss
  - **Liquidity** – ensuring the funds invested are available when needed
- 1.26 The Council has entered into a £10m loan agreement with Cheshire & Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership linked to developments within the Business Rates Enterprise Zone. The intention is to stimulate economic development and achieve payback from retained business rates.



- 1.27 The first loans in respect of Alderley Park Glasshouse and Blocks 22-24 were made in December 2020. Together they totalled £8m. One of the loans was subsequently repaid early in the new financial year. Interest is accruing on the remaining loan.

**Table 4: Commercial Loans in £'000**

Category of borrower	31/03/22 Actual	As at 30/09/22			2021/22
		Balance owing	Loss allowance	Net figure in accounts	Approved Limit
Partner Organisations	7,903	4,127	183	3,944	20,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>7,903</b>	<b>4,127</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>3,944</b>	<b>20,000</b>

## 7. Loan Commitments and Financial Guarantees

- 1.28 As Accountable Body for the Cheshire & Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership, the Council acts as Entrusted Entity to a £20m European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) supported Urban Development Fund which is about to commence. The Council, as contracting party, provides guarantees in respect of the amounts provided through ERDF.
- 1.29 The fund is designed to provide loan finance to specific projects across Cheshire and will not generate a return for the Authority. As such the balances are not included in the investment tables above. The workings of the fund are

subject to detailed scrutiny and are managed by a firm of experienced fund managers with a strong track record of providing loans that minimise the risk of default. The Council, as contracting party, will provide guarantees in respect of the amounts provided through ERDF though this will be offset by the professional indemnity insurance held by the fund manager.

## 8. Proportionality

- 1.30 The Authority is only partially dependent on profit generating investment activity to achieve a balanced revenue budget, in respect of Place services. Within the Authority the proportion is consistently below 2.5% and is deemed immaterial. Such is the low proportion that it represents, should it fail to achieve the expected net return, the Authority's contingency plans for continuing to provide these services include effective budget management and tight cost control.

## 9. Borrowing in Advance of Need

- 1.31 Government guidance is that local authorities must not borrow more than or in advance of their needs purely in order to profit from the investment of the extra sums borrowed. The Authority follows this guidance.
- 1.32 As referred to above in **Section 6**, this has been strengthened by the government effectively banning investment in property primarily for yield.

## 10. Capacity, Skills and Culture

- 1.33 The Finance Sub-Committee comprised of members, supported by officers and where necessary, external advisors, provides oversight of the Investment Strategy and acts on recommendations from officers that consider opportunities to enhance the Revenue & Capital Budgets of the Council through strategic investments, whether that involves using capital/cash resources or borrowing and lending powers.

## 11. Investment Indicators

- 1.34 The Authority has set the following quantitative indicators to allow elected members and the public to assess the Authority's total risk exposure as a result of its investment decisions.
- 1.35 **Total risk exposure:** The first indicator shows the Authority's total exposure to potential investment losses. This includes amounts the Authority is contractually committed to lend but have yet to be drawn down and guarantees the Authority has issued over third party loans.

**Table 5: Total investment exposure in £'000**

Total investment exposure	31/03/21 Actual	31/03/22 Actual	31/03/23 Forecast
Treasury management investments	44,150	54,300	40,000
Service investments: Loans	6,360	6,733	6,844
Service investments: Shares	3,410	2,610	2,610
Commercial investments: Property	28,186	28,588	28,588
Commercial Investments: Loans	8,000	8,271	4,127
<b>TOTAL INVESTMENTS</b>	<b>90,106</b>	<b>100,502</b>	<b>82,169</b>
Commitments to lend	2,439	2,418	2,418
<b>TOTAL EXPOSURE</b>	<b>92,545</b>	<b>102,920</b>	<b>84,587</b>

- 1.36 **How investments are funded:** Currently the majority of the Authority's investments are funded by usable reserves and income received in advance of expenditure.
- 1.37 **Table 6** shows the limited investments funded through prudential borrowing.

**Table 6: Investments funded by borrowing in £'000**

Investments funded by borrowing	31/03/21 Actual	31/03/22 Actual	31/03/23 Forecast
Commercial investments: Property	22,211	21,517	20,810
Commercial Investments: Loans	8,000	8,000	4,000
<b>TOTAL FUNDED BY BORROWING</b>	<b>30,211</b>	<b>29,517</b>	<b>24,810</b>

- 1.38 **Rate of return received:** In part, this indicator shows for Treasury Management and Commercial Property investments, the investment income received less the associated costs, including the cost of borrowing where appropriate, as a proportion of the sum initially invested. Note that due to the complex local government accounting framework, not all recorded gains and losses affect the revenue account in the year they are incurred.
- 1.39 The return for the Service Investments: Loans is not a true return but is instead based largely on the % fluctuation in the underlying value of the new assets within the Life Science fund. As such they do not reflect actual cashflows. If Life Science was excluded the 2021/22 actual figure was 1.13% - in itself this is skewed by a non interest bearing loan.
- 1.40 Historically we have shown the % movement in the carrying value of our shareholding in Alderley Park Holdings Limited as a return within the category Service Investments: Shares. However, this is not a real return or cashflow. Typically, a

return on a share would be based upon the dividend yield and there have been no dividends paid. Therefore, this is now being shown as Nil.

- 1.41 The major assets included within Commercial Investments: Properties, representing over 90% of the value, are two commercial retail properties in Crewe. Whilst we will see fluctuations year-on-year given the pressures on 'bricks and mortar retail', the Council will only experience an impact on its Revenue Account if a site becomes vacant for a prolonged period.
- 1.42 From the perspective of the Council one of the tenants affected is a home improvements retailer and the second is a national supermarket retailer. Both of these have thus far weathered the local economic effects of the previous two years.
- 1.43 Much of the investment returns for Commercial Investments relates to rent on these two assets. Rental income on both has held up during the year. Overall returns are affected by the fact that returns for one of the sites is reduced by the costs required to repay borrowing costs. Additionally, there are isolated instances where some of the other smaller sites are seeing the levels of vacancy rise. These are under review.
- 1.44 The Commercial investments: Loans are at the expected level of return given the rates in place when they were established.

**Table 7: Investment rate of return (net of all costs)**

<b>Investments net rate of return</b>	<b>2020/21 Actual</b>	<b>2021/22 Actual</b>	<b>2022/23 Forecast</b>
Treasury management investments	1.62%	2.13%	2.47%
Service investments: Loans	8.46%	-3.00%	-6.19%
Service investments: Shares	*NIL	*NIL	*NIL
Commercial investments: Property	2.78%	2.95%	2.92%
Commercial investments: Loans	3.20%	3.20%	3.16%



*Working for a brighter future together*

## **Corporate Policy Committee**

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<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	1 December 2022
<b>Report Title:</b>	Performance Report – Quarter 2 2022/23
<b>Report of:</b>	Jane Burns, Executive Director Corporate Services
<b>Report Reference No:</b>	CP/26/22-23
<b>Ward(s) Affected:</b>	All

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### **1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with an oversight of organisational performance for the second quarter of 2022/23 against the priorities in the Council's Corporate Plan 2021-25.
- 1.2. This report supports the responsibility of the Corporate Policy Committee to have a co-ordinating role across all other committees and to exercise a corporate oversight of outcomes, performance, budget monitoring and risk management.
- 1.3. Appendix 1 provides further detail of performance and progress against priorities for the period 1 July 2022 – 30 September 2022.

### **2. Executive Summary**

- 2.1 This report gives an update on performance against the priorities in the Council's Corporate Plan. It describes performance in Quarter 2 (July – September 2022) against the objectives within the Corporate Plan 2022/23.
- 2.2 The period of Quarter 2 to date has been a turbulent period of uncertainty in terms of policy direction, continued changes in national government and a further new Prime Minister, whilst the impact of increases to the cost of living worsen. Both Adults and Children's services continue to see demand challenges arising not just from volume, but also from increased complexity of presenting cases. There are increasing pressures from hospital settings, and these are anticipated to worsen we move into winter. There are increased risks due to a fragile care market and budget pressures, particularly in relation

to SEND and adult social care. Increases to costs and supply of materials challenges are also starting to impact on projects and initiatives across the Council. This is partly due to the ongoing situation in Ukraine. Within Cheshire East Council, as being experienced nationally, there are continued workforce challenges. Delivery of the Corporate Plan to date has been within the most challenging of circumstances, at the same time of progressing delivery, the Council has also been responding to the coronavirus pandemic, supporting refugees and, more recently, responding to a range of impacts from increases in costs of living. These areas cumulatively provide the most sustained and difficult challenging context to delivery of public services and achievement of our corporate plan by 2025. Therefore, the performance monitoring and oversight of our Corporate Plan is more important and supports early identification of areas where mitigations are required.

- 2.3** At the end of Quarter 2 Cheshire East Council is continuing to make steady progress against the Corporate Plan, despite the ongoing challenges it is facing.
- 2.4** At the end of 2021/22, it was stated that the performance management framework will continue to be developed during 2022/23. This has resulted in a basket of key performance measures from across the Council being developed, and national benchmarking data added to the report. National benchmarks are included in the report where they are available. Whilst benchmarks are useful to provide a comparison, these are often only published annually therefore some may reflect activity that has subsequently been affected due to the pandemic.
- 2.5** The Committee is scheduled to receive the Quarter 3 report for 2022/23 in March 2023.

### **3. Recommendations**

- 3.1.** That the Committee note performance against Q2 of 2022/23 of delivery of the Corporate Plan.
- 3.2.** That the Committee consider any additional data and intelligence that could and should be included in future performance reports.

### **4. Reasons for Recommendations**

- 4.1.** The Corporate Policy Committee is responsible for reviewing and scrutinising performance against the strategic aims and objectives in the Council's Corporate Plan 2021-25.
- 4.2.** The performance management framework continues to be developed and seeks to provide a robust, customer focussed view of performance. Member input into this development is valued to ensure that the performance management reports are of value.

- 4.3. Performance management is a tool to allow oversight of the Councils key activities and to enable transparency and understanding around where the Council is performing well, and what are the areas of challenge and improvement.

## 5. Other Options Considered

- 5.1. Not applicable.

## 6. Background

- 6.1. The Council's Corporate Plan 2021-25 outlines 20 priorities for the Council, 6 aligned with the "Open" aim, to be an open and enabling organisation, 8 priorities are aligned to the "Fair" aim, a Council which enables and cares about people and 6 priorities are aligned to the "Green" aim, a thriving and sustainable place. The 20 priorities are as follows:

### An open and enabling organisation

- Ensure that there is transparency in all aspects of council decision making
- Listen, learn and respond to our residents, promoting opportunities for a two-way conversation
- Support a sustainable financial future for the council, through service development, improvement and transformation
- Look at opportunities to bring more income into the borough
- Support and develop our workforce to be confident, motivated, innovative, resilient and empowered
- Promote and develop the services of the council through regular communication and engagement with all residents

### A council which empowers and cares about people

- Work together with residents and partners to support people and communities to be strong and resilient
- Reduce health inequalities across the borough
- Protect and support our communities and safeguard children, adults at risk and families from abuse, neglect and exploitation
- Be the best Corporate Parents to our children in care
- Support all children to have the best start in life
- Increase opportunities for all children and young adults with additional needs
- Ensure all children have a high quality, enjoyable education that enables them to achieve their full potential
- Reduce the reliance on long term care by improving services closer to home and providing more extra care facilities, including dementia services

### A thriving and sustainable place

- A great place for people to live, work and visit
- Welcoming, safe and clean neighbourhoods
- Reduce impact on the environment
- A transport network that is safe and promotes active travel
- Thriving urban and rural economies with opportunities for all
- Be a carbon neutral council by 2025

- 6.2 This report reviews performance against the priorities in the Corporate Plan and continues to focus upon the "One Council" approach to performance management. This includes a balance of quantitative and qualitative data. The Q2 performance report is at Appendix A. This details progress made against the Corporate Plan during Q1 of 2022/23.
- 6.3 Cheshire East Council delivers around 500 services to around 398,800 residents. There are 2,860 full time equivalent staff in Quarter 2 (with over 3,500 actual staff) and just over 3,000 staff in Cheshire East maintained schools. This is an overall reduction of 54.5 FTE staff since quarter 1.
- 6.4 Service Committees receive performance information on a regular basis, specific to the subject of the committee. This performance report offers a strategic view of progress against the corporate plan and should complement



the more detailed performance, service specific dashboards that are considered at service Committees.

### **Open – An open and enabling organisation**

<b>Priorities</b>
<b>Ensure that there is transparency in all aspects of council decision making</b>
<b>Listen, learn and respond to our residents, promoting opportunities for a two-way conversation</b>
<b>Support a sustainable financial future for the council, through service development, improvement and transformation</b>
<b>Look at opportunities to bring more income into the borough</b>
<b>Support and develop our workforce to be confident, motivated and empowered</b>
<b>Promote and develop the services of the council through regular communication and engagement with all residents</b>

**6.5** In terms of member activity, there has continued to be significant activity during quarter 2. Historically, member meetings have declined during quarter 2, and particularly the month of August, has been a period of recess. However, that has not been the case during quarter 2 of 22/23 and there has been a significant level of member activity and a service committee meeting held in August (Environment and Community). During Quarter 2, there were 14 service committee meetings held and a Full Council meeting in July 2022. The committees approved 10 key strategies and plans over the quarter. In addition to the service committees, there were 30 chair and vice chair briefings, 16 committee briefings and 23 panels and working groups.

**6.6** There has been evidence of improved governance over quarter 2. This is evident in relation to improvement activity in response to the joint targeted area inspection (JTAI), alternative service delivery vehicle governance arrangements, LPA modernisation and agreement of the Terms of Reference and membership in relation to the Integrated Care System. Activity has also progressed in relation to the Annual Governance statement and preparation for the statement of accounts.

**6.7** There are continuing and growing challenges in relation to the workforce. Performance challenges are evident and are reflective of national trends in relation to the nature of the post covid workforce, recruitment and retention, staff turnover, the use of agency staff and increasing numbers of vacancies. At the end of quarter 2, staffing levels continue to show a decreasing trend. This trend has continued from 21/22 into the current year. At the end of Quarter 2 there are 2,860 full time equivalent staff and the Council have a vacancy rate of 9.11% (just over 260 FTE posts). During quarter 2 the numbers of agency staff working for the Council has increased by 50, to 297, and staff turnover has increased from 4.9% in quarter 1 to 6.6% in quarter 2.



There has, however, been an increase in the number of new Apprentices, more than double the number of the previous quarter have started at the Council, with 41 starting between July and September 2022. Workforce challenges continue to be mitigated through implementation of the agreed Workforce Strategy and the ongoing work of the officer Recruitment and Retention group.

- 6.8** The Council have continued to show action against our priority to be more open and transparent, sharing challenging communications in the public domain in relation to the joint targeted area inspection, the Best4Business Lessons Learnt report, and the ongoing review of the planning service.
- 6.9** Key communications activities have also been delivered in relation to a new Communications Strategy for residents, town centre vitality plans and HS2. The outcome of the public consultation on the new Communications Strategy for residents will be reported separately to Corporate Policy Committee. In quarter 2 the Council began consultation on plans to revitalise the centres of 9 towns across the Borough. Following on from the Crewe town centre regeneration delivery framework for growth and the Macclesfield town centre strategic regeneration framework, the council is now developing town centre plans for the Cheshire East towns of Alsager, Congleton, Handforth, Knutsford, Middlewich, Nantwich, Poynton, Sandbach and Wilmslow. The council is working with each of the nine towns to help to establish an agreed set of priority actions for each town centre. Any actions would be taken forward as and when opportunities arise, and resources allow. The consultation closed in quarter 3 (November 2022). In August, the Council submitted a petition against Phase 2B of the hybrid bill for HS2. This is around how Phase 2b is delivered and mitigated against to get the best possible outcomes for Cheshire East residents. These areas of work are referenced here in relation to the “Open” priority but obviously delivery against these key work areas lie within other areas of the Corporate plan, particularly the “Green” priority.
- 6.10** During quarter 2 there was also significant communications and engagement activity in relation to Crewe’s bid to become the home of the Great British Railways headquarters. The local #HeartOfRail campaign included a publicity campaign with videography and the hosting of a ministerial visit. However, early in quarter 3 the government announced that it was not going to progress the Transport Bill during the current Parliamentary session and delaying the planned 2024 relocation date for Railway headquarters. This was a piece of fast and abortive work and reflects some of the pressures experienced by the whole organisation. More recently, rapid action has had to be taken further to the announcement of “investment zones” and rapid work has once again had to be undertaken.

- 6.11** Partnerships remain under improvement, with the Cheshire and Warrington sub-regional Leaders' Board, the Cheshire East Leaders Board, agreement to implement a new Town and Parish Councils network and new governance arrangements agreed in relation to Integrated Health and Social Care. A key partnership success in quarter 2 has been in relation to the Cheshire and Warrington Sustainable and Inclusive Growth Commission. The Sustainable and Inclusive Growth commission was set up in Nov 2020 and has been working on four themes: Inclusive Economy, Sustainable Transport, Sustainable Land Use and Net Zero. The commission has developed an evidence base for the current position across Cheshire and Warrington, a vision and a set of recommended actions to achieve the vision.
- 6.12** A draft consultation and engagement toolkit has been completed. A regular engagement network between Cheshire East Council and Town and Parish Councils has been agreed and will be introduced during, Quarter 3 in November 2022.
- 6.13** The financial picture for the Council is challenging at quarter 2, and full details are provided in the separate Financial Review report.

## Fair – a Council which empowers and cares about people

Priorities
Work together with residents and partners to support people and communities to be strong and resilient
Reduce health inequalities across the borough
Protect and support our communities and safeguard children, adults at risk and families from abuse, neglect and exploitation
Be the best Corporate parents to our children in care
Support all children to have the best start in life
Increase opportunities for all children and young adults with additional needs
Ensure all children have a high quality, enjoyable education that enables them to achieve their full potential
Reduce the reliance on long term care by improving services closer to home and providing more extra care facilities, including dementia service

- 6.14** In relation to Adults, Health and Integration, performance in quarter 2 continues to deliver against key targets. There has been success in implementing some key corporate plan priorities, including working with key partners to keep people well, including novel approaches to social prescribing and the use of green spaces. Public health statutory services including sexual health, substance misuse services and 0-19 services have been reviewed and supported accordingly to ensure they are meeting the changes in activity required.
- 6.15** In addition to response to rising demand and complexity, and in line with statutory responsibilities across social care, communities and public health, flexible service responses have been developed and continue to deliver innovative approaches to the challenges of covid and covid scarring, mounting hospital pressures and rapidly changing external pressures. These include stabilising the provider market, developing the Live Well for Longer Strategy (approved in quarter 2) and redesigning the Communities team to support emergent challenges such as the Afghan and Ukraine schemes and food poverty.
- 6.16** In relation to Adults, Health and Integration, significant future challenges are foreseen for quarter 3, there is no immediate indications that the rising demand trajectory for services will reduce, and past evidence indicates that, given the known cost of living pressures on residents, it is more likely that demand will increase further and at a faster pace. In this context a number of risks need to be carefully managed, including the impact on staff, greater complexity of individuals requiring services, widening inequalities and the consequential impacts on the performance and costs of commissioned services.
- 6.17** Childrens social care assessments completed within 45 days continue to be a focus for improvement as any delays can be an indicator of families not receiving timely intervention and support. Timeliness however needs to be balanced to ensure that assessments receive sufficient management oversight

and are of high quality. 70% of completed assessments in quarter 2 were completed within 50 days.

- 6.18** In quarter 2, there were 20% of children with a second or subsequent child protection plan in a rolling twelve-month period. This is a slight increase on 16% reported in quarter 1. It is important to understand the reasons for repeat plans to reflect on whether there are different presenting reasons or whether previous plans had not resulted in sustainable changes being evidenced in a family. Regular auditing activity enables reflective learning which can influence practice. Although a small increase as an authority we still compare favourably with the England average and our statistical neighbours.
- 6.19** The percentages of schools which are judged good or outstanding has improved since Q1 (primary now at 94% and secondary at 90%). This positive change reflects the detailed work undertaken with schools to ensure that the quality of education judgement is robust, and schools have the strong evidence that the curriculum is well embedded and shows effective progression.
- 6.20** It is important to note that the number of children missing from education at the end of September is always higher. Reasons for this include schools and the local authority are not always advised when individuals move away from the local authority during the summer break or families choose the private schooling rather than state education when entering primary or secondary school. There are a range of national data sharing agreements that enable the local authority team to investigate where individuals who were expected to start at a school have presented and the number will be much reduced by October half term and triangulated with the Autumn School Census data.
- 6.21** Although timeliness of EHCP completion continues to be a challenge, due to increased demand on services, the average number of weeks a plan is taking is showing a positive trend by reducing from 24.3 to 23.5 weeks. A key element in many plans is observing the individual in a classroom setting to enable the most effective interventions to be put in place, enabling this can be delayed during holiday periods, and the school summer holiday period was over quarter 2. The numbers of plans that are significantly overdue (i.e., ongoing for 24 weeks or more) is also steadily reducing month on month with only 13 outstanding at the end of September. Once these have all been addressed, it is envisaged that a bigger impact on reducing the average time frame will be evidenced. The average number of plans being issued per month has increased from 60 in quarter 1 to 80 in quarter 2.
- 6.22** Cheshire East overall numbers and rates of yr. 12-13 young people NEET continues to be significantly lower than the national picture evidencing that positive outcomes continue to be achieved for the vast majority of young people in the borough. Although the % is extremely positive at the end of quarter 2 this will fluctuate throughout quarter 3 as young people change decisions with regards to 6th form and college courses and quarter 3 outturn will likely be slightly higher.

- 6.23** Training was provided for elected members in July 2022 to improve their understanding of the needs of cared for children and care leavers to enable them to be a good corporate parent. This is delivered annually.
- 6.24** In July 2022, the council's Adults and Health Committee agreed to launch a trial smoking cessation incentive scheme to support pregnant women and others in their household to quit smoking. Smoking is the leading cause of preventable illness and premature death in England, with about half of all lifelong smokers dying prematurely, losing on average around 10 years of life.
- 6.25** Cheshire East Council has led the development of the Social Value Award (quality mark) across Cheshire and Merseyside. 58 organisations have achieved the award to date (including the council), an increase of 12 on the previous reporting period.
- 6.26** Cheshire East Council agreed to support individuals brought to the UK under the Afghan Relocation and Assistance Policy (ARAP) and the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS). Wrap around support was provided by Cheshire East Council and partner agencies for 390 individuals from 12 August 2021 to 30 August 2022. 5 families were resettled into permanent accommodation in Cheshire East.
- 6.27** Since 18 March 2022, Cheshire East Council have also supported Ukrainian refugees under the Homes for Ukraine scheme. The council have undertaken safeguarding checks on 302 sponsors and made over 500 'thank you' payments, with 550 Ukrainians arriving in Cheshire East and all receiving welcome payments, along with over 150 school/ early years placements offered. 35 Ukrainians have arrived in quarter 2.
- 6.28** The co-produced Live Well for Longer plan was received by the Adults and Health Committee in September 2022, which includes addressing loneliness and isolation.
- 6.29** Cheshire East Council was successful in its bid for up to £1 million of the government's Family Hubs Transformation Fund to join up services locally, improve the connections between families, professionals, services, and providers, and put relationships at the heart of family help. Family hubs will support children and young people from birth until they reach the age of 19 (or up to 25 for young people with special educational needs and disabilities). The council has until March 2024 to implement the new way of working.
- 6.30** A new technology enabled care service aiming to help keep people safe and independent in their own homes commenced in July 2022. The new service will enable residents to access support from a greater range of technology such as Alexa, tablets and digital lifeline devices. This service includes support for early discharge from hospital through a free four-week offer for patients.

**Green – A thriving and sustainable place**

Priorities
A great place for people to live, work and visit
Welcoming, safe and clean neighbourhoods
Reduce impact on the environment
A transport network that is safe and promotes active travel
Thriving urban and rural economies with opportunities for all
Be a carbon neutral council by 2025

**6.31** There are 6 priorities under the “Green” aim for a thriving and sustainable place.

**6.32** The first priority is in relation to well designed, affordable and safe homes. In Quarter 2 140 new affordable homes have been delivered against an annual target of 355. This totals 274 affordable homes have now been delivered to date, and performance against this target is on track.

**6.33** There have been 279,897 visitors in libraries during Q2, an increase of 53,015 compared to quarter 1. This indicates continuing increased access compared to last year, where the average quarterly visitor number was 171,144.

**6.34** There have been 620,625 visitors to leisure centres in 2, an increase of 37,164 compared to quarter 1. This has also significantly increased compared to the average quarterly figure of 520,553 during 2021/22. The redevelopment of Congleton Leisure Centre has continued with re-opening due in 2023. The Learn to swim scheme has grown in quarter 2, and now has 9,700 swimmers in weekly sessions.

**6.35** Planning continues to be a challenge during Quarter 2 of 2022/23. Planning application performance against statutory performance measures (including agreed extensions to time) is above target for major applications (95%) but below (83%) for minors. However, a backlog of planning applications remains with staff retention and recruitment difficulties across all aspects of the Planning service including Building Control. The number of applications in hand has reduced slightly but the majority of applications are still taking 4-6 months to determine. The service are determining around 100 planning applications every week.

**6.36** A total of £63,900 was saved of detriment for residents from rogue trading and scams interventions during quarter 2, a slight decrease of £13,350 compared to quarter 1.

**6.37** In September 2022, the following strategies were approved by the Highways and Transport Committee: Speed Management, Vehicle Restraint Systems: Installation, Inspection and Maintenance Strategy and the Skid Resistance Strategy.



- 6.38** A Rural Action Plan was approved by the Economy and Growth Committee in September 2022. This provides a rural focus on the authority's existing strategies and plans. Priorities addressed in the plan include digital connectivity, access, housing, visitor economy and support for rural based businesses.
- 6.39** In August 2022, two bids for Levelling Up funding were submitted in relation to the Crewe strategic regeneration programme. An expression of interest for an Investment Zone was delivered against a challenging deadline.
- 6.40** In September 2022, the Government launched a new Rural England Prosperity Fund. To access the fund, an addendum to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund Investment Plan has to be submitted by 30 November 2022. It is expected that first payments are expected to local authorities in April 2023. Cheshire East Council is eligible to receive funding of £827,000
- 6.41** Progress against the net zero targets for the Council (by 2025) and for the Borough (by 2045) has been made. 11% of carbon has been reduced from the baseline and 30% of carbon has been inset. Overall, the Council is at 41% progress against the net zero by 2025 target. Performance measures are under development in relation to the commitment to a net zero Cheshire East borough by 2045. Although there continues to be progress towards the net zero target, there are increased risks in relation to delivery of the net zero ambition by 2025. These risks are associated with the fleet and decarbonisation of heat projects, largely because of global electric vehicle costs and supply problems. Additionally, increased ventilation of buildings due to covid is raising the council's gas use above the base line. The programme is working to reduce risk and supply, and is also developing alternative options, if required, to support achievement of the 2025 target.

## **Conclusion**

- 6.42** In conclusion, Cheshire East Council continues to progress implementation of the Corporate Plan during Q2 2022/2023, progress has been made in all three areas towards achieving our vision of an Open, Fair and Green Cheshire East. The risks that were identified at quarter 1 have not yet materialised and progress has continued, despite the challenging context in which the Council is operating. The cumulative impact of emerging risks will continue to be monitored closely during quarter 3.

## **7 Consultation and Engagement**

Not applicable.

## **8 Implications**

### **Legal**

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

### **Finance**

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. Financial implications arising from performance requirements are detailed within the separate financial review report aligned with the Medium-Term Financial Strategy.

### **Policy**

The report demonstrates progress against the achievement of the Cheshire East Council Corporate Plan 2021-25.

### **Equality**

The range of Council activities covered in the Corporate Plan aims to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty and the obligations under the Equality Act 2010.

### **Human Resources**

An officer working group is in operation to review recruitment, retention, reward and recognition to address current staffing challenges.

### **Risk Management**

Performance and risk are intrinsically linked. Where risks are identified, performance data can evidence the likelihood of the risk and can also show if a risk materialises. The performance report identifies areas where performance is strong and areas for development and improvement. This supports the risk management process by providing the opportunity to review progress and identify areas for improvement and any necessary mitigating actions.

### **Rural Communities**

The Corporate Plan aims to support greater inclusion for rural communities. Implementation of the Corporate Plan will support improved access for rural communities. In September 2022 a Rural Action Plan has been approved by the Economy and Growth Committee, which provides a rural focus on the Council's strategies and plans. Priorities addressed in the plan include digital connectivity, access, housing, visitor economy and support for rural based businesses.



## Children and Young People/Cared for Children

Performance management of the priorities relating to children and young people and cared for children, ensure that there is a focus on children receiving the best start in life and that we deliver on our commitments to children and young people in Cheshire East.

## Public Health

This report supports our Public Health priorities utilising the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and Tartan rug to ensure that we work with partners to address issues of poor housing, poverty, employment and education across urban and rural communities.

## Climate Change

Performance against the Corporate Plan contributes to several of the strategic goals set out in the Council's Environment Strategy, including:

- Cheshire East Council will be carbon neutral by 2025
- Reduce waste
- Improve Air Quality
- Ensure that new development is sustainable
- Protect and enhance our natural environment

Access to Information	
Contact Officer:	Sarah Bullock, Director of Policy and Change <a href="mailto:Sarah.bullock@cheshireeast.gov.uk">Sarah.bullock@cheshireeast.gov.uk</a>
Appendices:	<b>Appendix 1</b> – Q2 Performance report 2022/23
Background Papers:	Q1 Performance Report 2022/23 <a href="#">Decision report template (cheshireeast.gov.uk)</a>

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*Cheshire East Council*

# Corporate Plan 2021-2025

**Performance Report – Quarter 2 2022/23**



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Open

Fair

Green

# An open and enabling organisation

By 2025 we want: Performance 2022/2023 – Quarter 2 Update	
Priority: Ensure that there is transparency in all aspects of council decision making	
<p>The council to be seen as being a fair open and transparent organisation and able to demonstrate it.</p> <p>Key actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement a new committee system</li> <li>• Demonstrate commitment to open data</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• During quarter 2, there were 14 service committee meetings and one meeting of Full Council. 10 key strategies and plans were agreed by Members during the quarter.</li> <li>• 86% of Freedom of Information Act requests were completed within statutory timescales during quarter 2. This is a decrease against the quarter 1 figure of 93% and was a temporary dip which reflects challenges over the summer with resource and capacity.</li> </ul>
<p>To increase local democracy.</p> <p>Key actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working with town and parish councils</li> <li>• Virtual meetings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A regular engagement network between Cheshire East Council and Town and Parish Councils will be introduced. The Chief Officer of Cheshire Association of Local Councils has agreed to Chair the new engagement network. The first of these 6 weekly network sessions will take place in November 2022.</li> <li>• The revised approach to Consultation and Engagement is under development and will report findings to Corporate Policy Committee in December 2022.</li> </ul>
<p>Our communities will be well informed about things they can do to prepare for emergencies.</p> <p>Key actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhanced emergency preparedness in communities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Joint Emergencies Planning Service (JEPS) continues to provide essential advice and support.</li> <li>• Cheshire East Council develop flexible plans through a process called Integrated Emergency Management, which enables all responding organisations to deal effectively with a major or serious incident at any time of day or night, 365 days a year.</li> </ul>

<p>The council is seen by residents as responsive.</p> <p>Key actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultation on key plans and strategies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultation on the cost of living was launched at the end of quarter 2, in September 2022. This consultation was part of the participatory democracy project, the Cheshire East People's Panel. The outcome of this will be reported in quarter 3.</li> </ul>
<p>Customer services to offer support and guidance and be accessible to people who need them.</p> <p>Key actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review where and how technology can assist and enable</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In Q2 2022/2023 there were 184,705 online transactions.</li> <li>• There are now 120,012 digital accounts. This is an increase of 16,691 since the end of 21/22. The total number of accounts was 103,321 at year end.</li> </ul>
<p>Receive the Ministry of Defence's (MoD) Employer Recognition Scheme Gold Award.</p> <p>Key actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Award of silver standard prior to award of gold standard</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A new Armed Forces staff network is being established and is planned to be operational by Quarter 3. This will support progress towards the MoD Gold Standard award.</li> </ul>
<p>A financially sustainable council which has increased levels of reserves.</p> <p>Key actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a 4-year MTFS</li> <li>• Develop a sustainable reserves strategy</li> <li>• Successful delivery of savings programme</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council will be audited by Mazars LLP and each of the wholly owned subsidiaries of the Group will be separately audited by Grant Thornton UK LLP. Any findings will be reported to the relevant board or Committee and the Audit and Governance committee and reported on the website of each part of the Group.</li> </ul>

<p>Our Alternative Service Delivery Vehicles (ASDV) delivering for our residents and generating a profit (with shareholder dividend) from commercial activities, reducing financial pressures on the council.</p> <p>Key actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete programme of reviews of ASDVs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Finance Sub-Committee has agreed proposals for immediate changes to the Council's current arrangements for reporting and risk management of the wholly owned companies.</li> </ul>
<p>A committed and motivated workforce. Cheshire East Council seen as an employer of choice.</p> <p>Key actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Undertake staff surveys and act on the results</li> <li>• Implement Best4Business Unit 4 ERP system</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Pulse Survey on workforce culture was undertaken in April 2022 to provide a baseline for 2022/23. 76% of respondents reported that they enjoyed their job and 76% describe their wellbeing as good (there were a total of 1,679 responses, 47% of employees).</li> <li>• New apprentice standards continue to be introduced across Cheshire East Council and schools. Three school staff are now completing the Teacher apprentice standard. Onboarding apprentices is taking 6-8 weeks, due to changes the ESFA have made to funding rules. Maths and English qualifications are required to be evidenced in order to study degree level qualifications under an apprenticeship. Three apprentices have had to defer for a year, to undertake maths and/or English qualifications prior to commencing their apprenticeships.</li> </ul>
<p>A workforce that can work remotely and flexibly using the latest technology.</p> <p>Key actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear guidance and support to staff and managers.</li> <li>• Accelerate roll-out of mobile working</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guidance on remote working is available on the Council's Centranet (intranet). Answers to Frequently Asked Questions are also regularly updated and held on Centranet. Proposals for the Future Workplace post Covid are expected to be brought forward in December 2022.</li> </ul>

Residents and staff to be aware of the council and the services we provide.

Key actions:

- Review communications plans and style

- During quarter 2, public consultation was live in relation to the new Communications Strategy for residents. The outcomes of this consultation will be reported to Corporate Policy Committee in December 2022.

Resident satisfaction with the council to be in line with similar councils.

Key actions:

- Undertake regular communications with residents
- Develop new Customer Experience strategy

- In 2021/22 a new performance measure for satisfaction was introduced. Customers score their experience out of 10 in relation to the “effort required to complete their request”. During 2021/22 this score dropped from 5.6/10 to 4.12/10. In Q2 2022/23, this score was 5.1, an increase since quarter 1 (lower the score, the better the performance).

- A new measure in relation to customer satisfaction with online services is under development.

The council to be regarded as a good partner.

- At the beginning of quarter 2 (in July 2022), the Adults and Health Committee agreed the Terms of Reference for the Place Partnership Board. Corporate Policy Committee appointed members to the Place Partnership Board in relation to integrated health and social care.

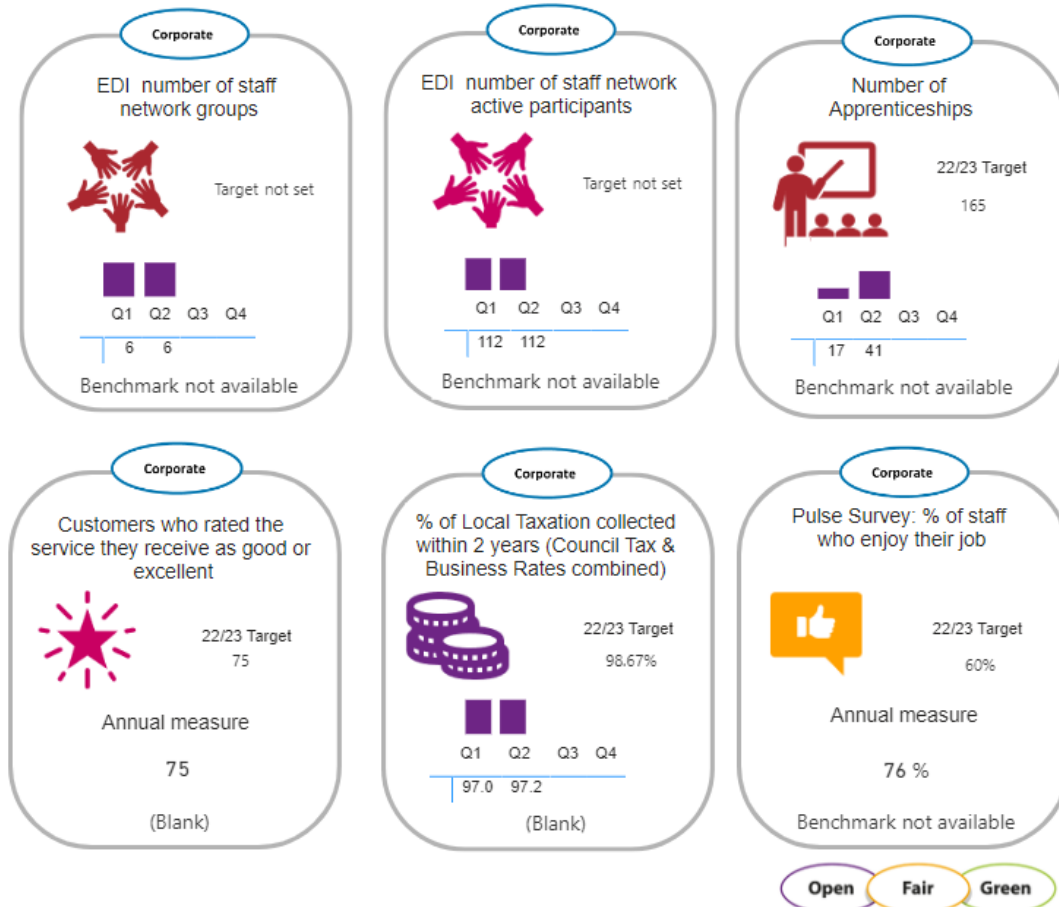
- The Council hosts a regular Cheshire East Leaders Board for key stakeholders.

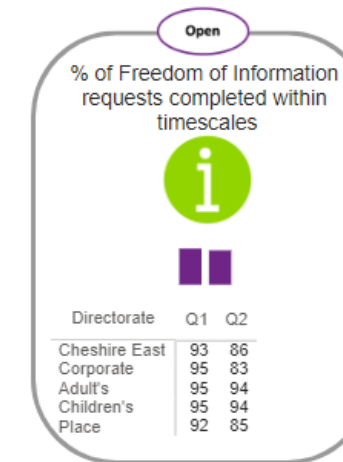
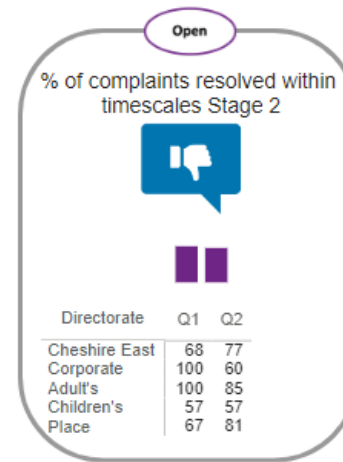
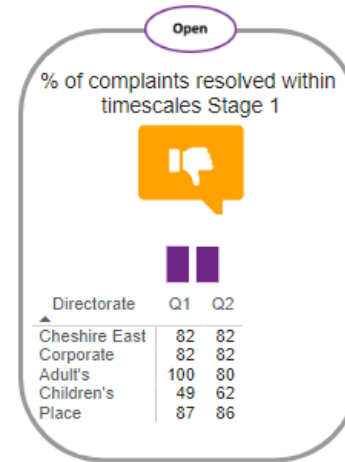
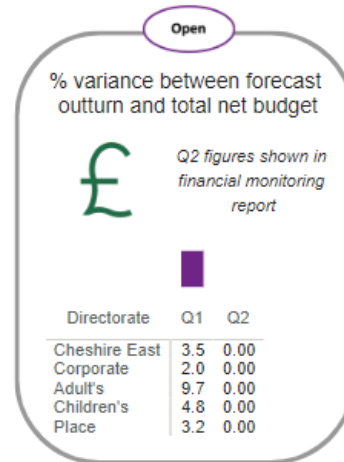
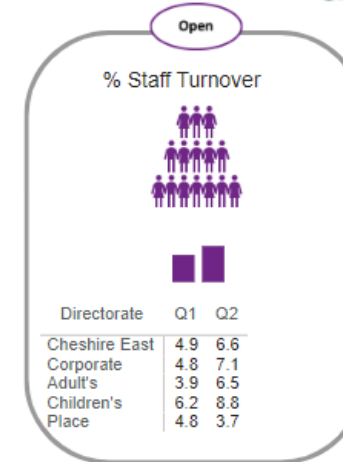
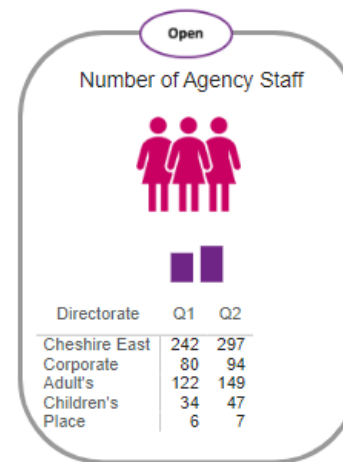
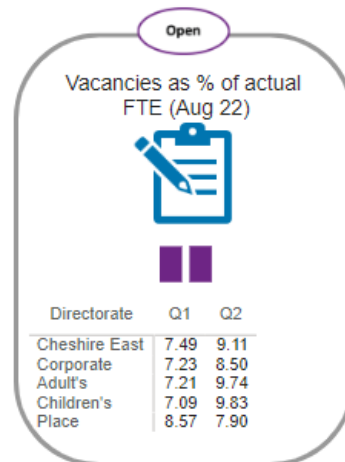
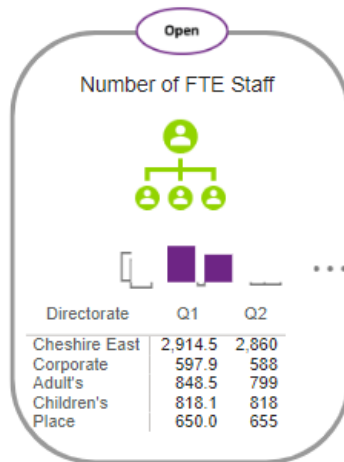
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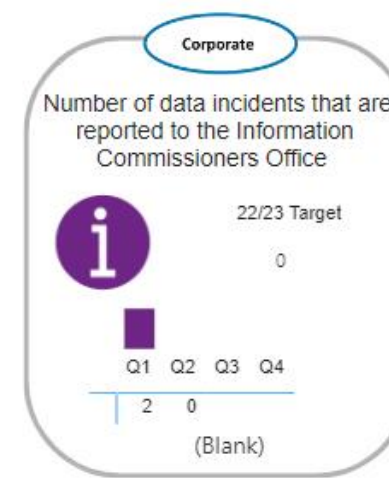
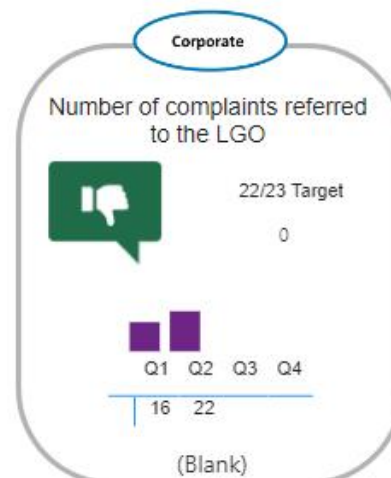
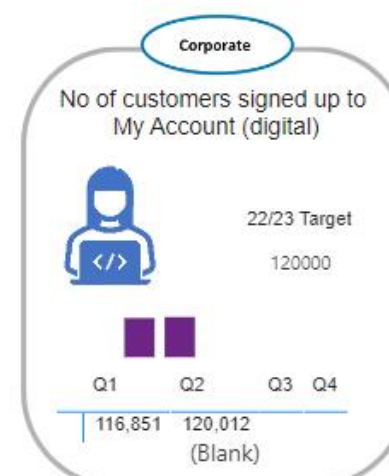
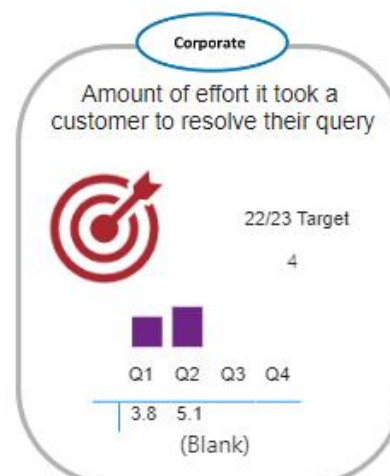
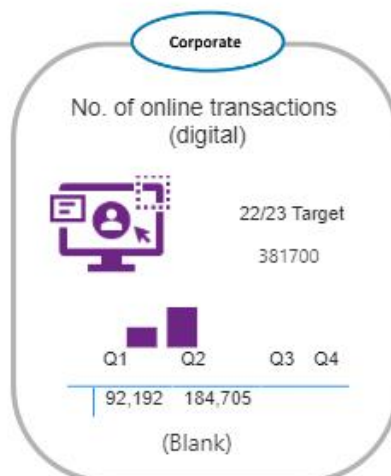


## Performance measures supporting An open and enabling organisation

- Ensure that there is transparency in all aspects of council decision making
- Listen, learn and respond to our residents, promoting opportunities for a two-way conversation
- Support a sustainable financial future for the council, through service development, improvement and transformation
- Look at opportunities to bring more income into the borough
- Support and develop our workforce to be confident, motivated, innovative, resilient and empowered
- Promote and develop the services of the council through regular communication and engagement with all residents







# A council which empowers and cares about people

By 2025 we want:	Performance 2022/23 – Quarter 1 Update
Priority: Work together with our residents and our partners to support people and communities to be strong and resilient	
<p>All services to be developed together with our residents and communities, so they are based on what works for people in Cheshire East.</p> <p>Key actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Embed our vision for children and young people, and working together</li> <li>• Work with residents to understand the continuing impact of Covid</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A new children and young people's plan for 2022-26 was coproduced and launched at a young people's event in August 2022.</li> <li>• The Children and Families Committee have endorsed the Cared for Children and Care Leavers Strategy 2022-26 and the Children and Young People's Plan 2022-26.</li> </ul>
<p>Families and communities are strong and resilient.</p> <p>Key actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a strong, local, social impact structure</li> <li>• Develop a locality model of working</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cheshire East Council launched an exciting new crowdfunding initiative, Cheshire East Crowd, to encourage and create community led projects that will make a difference. Residents who have ideas on how to improve their community now have the opportunity to gain funding via the crowdfunding platform. Since the launch we have seen over 1,000 people contribute towards local projects raising over £100,000 for their community. In addition to this the council have contributed over £70,000 of match funding to ensure the project reach their funding goals. Projects range from improving accessibility to cycle paths in Poynton, improving wildlife in Wilmslow, and creating a repair café in Macclesfield, all contributing to the council's open, fair and green objectives.</li> <li>• The Cheshire East Social Action Partnership (CESAP) has established a Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise (VCFSE) Leaders Group, to lead on local issues for the sector. CESAP and the VCFSE sector are embedded across the Cheshire East Place Health and Care Partnership at all levels including within our local care communities, which now have a VCFSE representatives who will feed back to the VCFSE Leadership Group. VCFSE reps are also on child health hub project group, home first and learning disability sub-groups. CESAP have successfully established a Faith Alliance and also a Mental Health Alliance.</li> </ul>

Cheshire East is a welcoming and supportive place, where equality, freedom, fairness and opportunities are available to all.

Key actions:

- Identify a suitable location within the borough and develop a traveller transit site
- Increase collaboration with marginalised groups
- Secure social value benefits

Work with partners for the benefit of our communities inspiring confidence in public services developing community cohesion and community resilience.

Key actions:

- Deliver evidence based early intervention and prevention services
- Reduce loneliness and isolation

- The traveller transit site off Cledford Lane in Middlewich continues to be progressed, with ongoing work to discharge planning conditions. There has been a successful application to Homes England for additional funding towards development costs.

- Regular engagement sessions with marginalised groups, such as the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community, and refugee and asylum seeker communities are continuing to take place, led by the Communities team. We have safely supported over 500 people from Ukraine to settle into the borough with sponsors. We continue to support on average 90 Afghans within the council's managed Bridging Hotel until they can seek long term accommodation

- Cheshire East Council has led the development of the Social Value Award (quality mark) across Cheshire and Merseyside. 58 organisations have achieved the award to date, including the council.

- Cheshire East Council agreed to support individuals brought to the UK under the Afghan Relocation and Assistance Policy (ARAP) and the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS). Wrap around support was provided by Cheshire East Council and partner agencies for 450 individuals since 12 August 2021. 5 families were resettled into permanent accommodation in Cheshire East and have gone on to employment and integrate within their new communities.

- Since 18 March 2021, Cheshire East Council have also supported Ukrainian refugees under the Homes for Ukraine scheme. The council have undertaken safeguarding checks on 320 sponsors and made over 500 'thank you' payments, with 550 Ukrainians arriving in Cheshire East and all receiving welcome payments, along with over 150 school/ early years placements offered.

- The co-produced Live Well for Longer plan was endorsed by the Adults and Health Committee in September 2022, which includes addressing loneliness and isolation. A project group has been established to deliver the implementation plan with continued coproduction and engagement with residents.

- A 'Green Social Prescribing' service has been commissioned on a pilot basis in a partnership between the NHS, Public Health and Green Spaces. People will be referred to the scheme by social prescribers in primary care and they will be supported to access, use and help maintain our parks and open spaces, increasing physical activity levels, boosting mental wellbeing and helping to reduce social isolation and loneliness.

### Priority: Reduce health inequalities across the borough

Work with partners to address the issues of poor housing, poverty, employment and education opportunities across urban and rural areas.

#### Key actions:

- Implement the Cheshire East Partnership Five Year Plan
- Promote regular screening and take up of preventative health opportunities
- Improve the mental health of all people working and living in Cheshire East
- To continue to support a zero-suicide approach

- In July 2022, the council's Adults and Health Committee agreed to launch a trial smoking cessation incentive scheme to support pregnant women and others in their household to quit smoking. Smoking is the leading cause of preventable illness and premature death in England, with about half of all lifelong smokers dying prematurely, losing on average around 10 years of life.
- Cheshire East Council have continued to implement the government reforms of the NHS including the introduction of the Integrated Care System. Cheshire East has now developed a Cheshire East Health and Care Partnership Board to allow for local decision making over health-related functions.
- A network of food poverty providers has been developed and aims to support the sustainability and coordination of activity. The network is also considering the impact of the cost-of-living crisis on residents. The network has agreed to recruit a food poverty coordinator to provide additional resource. The council has created an implementation plan to support the cost of living crisis which will enable residents, businesses and staff to know what support is available nationally and locally, this will include the council participating in the Warm Places scheme which will be launched on the 19 October 2022.
- A falls awareness week was held during September 2022, which included social media posts, a new Cheshire East falls prevention video, dissemination of a falls prevention booklet, and the Stay Well Squad conducting rapid falls risk assessments in a variety of town centre locations during the week.
- A new water sampling initiative has been introduced through the Public Health Team that will provide an 'early warning' system for COVID and other infectious diseases.
- Activities have been taken place to promote Stoptober. This includes dissemination of posters; social media posts and a press release plus the Stay Well Squad are promoting the issue of smoking to local people throughout October via town centre visits.

### Priority: Protect and support our communities and safeguard children, adults at risk and families from abuse, neglect and exploitation

Children receive the right support, by the right people, at the right time, so they are effectively protected from harm, and are supported to stay within their families and communities.

#### Key actions:

- Cheshire East Council was one of 7 councils successful with its Family Hubs Transformation Fund bid. It is anticipated that a further 5 councils will be granted funding, totalling 12 councils nationally. 84 councils applied to develop Family Hubs. Cheshire East Council will receive £985,289 (£830,289 revenue and £155,000 capital), which is expected to be spent by March 2024.
- A joint targeted area inspection took place in Cheshire East between 27 June and 15 July 2022. This focused on the multi-agency identification of risk and need in response to child criminal exploitation, including sexual exploitation. A comprehensive partnership improvement plan is in place, and work is underway across the Safeguarding Children's Partnership to strengthen the approach to supporting these children and young people.



- Continued investment in Early Help and Prevention services
- Work with our partnerships to ensure there is a joined-up approach to safeguarding children

- Children's services are continuing to focus on achieving excellence in social work practice. Nationally and locally, there are significant challenges recruiting and retaining staff within specific areas of children's services, which is resulting in some higher caseloads. Children's services are working together with HR to develop a refreshed recruitment and retention strategy to address this. The Executive Director of Children's Services is co-leading a regional Cheshire and Merseyside workstream to look at regional solutions to recruitment and retention within children's services.
- £4,407,784 of household support fund is available in Cheshire East in 2022-23 to support lower income households in the borough with food, utilities, housing costs and other essentials. In the first 6 months of delivery for 2022-23, over 70,000 individual payments worth over £2.1m were made to over 20,000 individuals in Cheshire East. More specifically, over 9,000 adults have been supported alongside over 12,000 children, receiving £1.3m in funding for food, £600,000 for utilities, £15,000 for boiler payments, 10,000 for housing and £8,000 for white goods. The funding is available until March 2023.
- Government funding of £878,640 was used to establish holiday activity clubs for young people eligible for free school meals, including food provision during Easter, summer and Christmas holidays. During the Easter delivery, over 1,200 young people attended the programme across 53 locations. In summer, we supported over 2,000 young people across 64 locations in Cheshire East, with over 19,000 meals provided alongside 2,761.85 hours of support. This funding has been extended for two years, to include 2023/24 and 2024/25, with £878,640 worth of funding allocated each year.

People and organisations to work together to prevent and stop the risk and experience of abuse and neglect, whilst promoting the well-being of adults with care and support needs.

Key actions:

- Prevent harm and reduce the risk of abuse and neglect to adults with care and support needs
- Safeguard adults at risk

- Work has continued to raise awareness about abuse, neglect and exploitation.
- A multi-agency Complex Safeguarding Forum has been established to discuss cases of exploitation and risk management.
- Cheshire East Council's housing team received the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance accreditation in July 2022, meaning they offer a safe and effective response to domestic abuse.

- To address causes of abuse, neglect or exploitation
- To ensure that officers are adhering to legislation and promoting best practice

#### Priority: Be the best corporate parents to the children in our care

Always deliver on our pledges to care for children and young people, and those who are cared for will have an experience, that we will:

- Be a good corporate parent
- Improve education, training and employment outcomes
- Work to achieve permanence and keep children safe
- Improve health and wellbeing outcomes
- Prepare young people for adulthood

- 100% of young people have health passports by their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.
- Mentoring and wellbeing support to our care leavers has continued to be offered through our partnership with Pure Insight. In April 2021 we increased our funding to Pure Insight in response to demand from our young people; as a result we were able to ensure that no young person was on a waiting list to access support. Feedback from young people around the support they receive from Pure Insight is overwhelmingly positive.
- In response to the publication of the Education White Paper “Opportunity for All: Strong Schools with great teachers for your child” during quarter 2, Cheshire East Council have submitted a “Registration of Interest” to establish a new trust(s).

#### Priority: Support all children to have the best start in life

All children enjoy access to high quality childcare and support programmes that maximises their development in terms of speech and language, resilience and ability to learn and play.

Key actions:

- The take up of the 2-, 3- and 4-year-old offer remains consistently high, ensuring that children are receiving support at the earliest opportunity. For the 2-year-old offer the percentage take up was 77% during Q2 22/23. For the 3- and 4-year-old the figure was 96% take up. These figures have increased when compared with the 2021/22 outturn figures, which were 73% for the 2-year-old offer, and 95% for the 3- and 4-year-old offer.



- Maintain high numbers of children placed in high quality childcare settings
- Promote and improve access to the parenting journey, with additional support offered to the most vulnerable families

**Priority: Increase opportunities for children, young adults and adults with additional needs**

Great services and provision across the partnership for children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) which means children's needs are met effectively and efficiently.

**Key actions:**

- Ensure that all recommendations from Ofsted inspections have been addressed and improvements are embedded in practice.
- Focus on further improving communication across the SEND partnership
- Review the pathways for transition to adulthood
- Expand the local provision of SEND places to enable

- In quarter 2, the Children and Families Committee approved allocation of the Additional High Needs Dedicated Schools grant provided by the Department for Education.

more children to attend a school	
<p>Provision for young adults to live independently within in the community.</p> <p>Key actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leisure, life and meaningful employment opportunities are developed to improve life chances for young adults</li> <li>Promote citizen engagement and participation</li> </ul>	<p>The new Day Opportunities contracts have been let and the new service provision is now operational, providing broader opportunities for young adults with additional needs to engage in purposeful daytime activities.</p> <p>The programme of activity to support people with additional needs into employment is being expanded following a successful bid to the UK Prosperity Fund.</p>
Priority: Ensure all children have a high quality, enjoyable education that enables them to achieve to their full potential	
<p>All children enjoy the best education which prepares them to thrive in adulthood.</p> <p>Key actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure we have sufficient school places locally to meet the differing needs of children and respond to our growing population.</li> <li>Support and challenge all education settings to deliver our key priorities with a focus on addressing inequalities.</li> <li>Provide support and challenge where children are not attending school or receiving an appropriate education.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Our priority is to ensure that all children have a high quality, enjoyable education that enables them to achieve their full potential. During Q2 2022/23, 94% of primary schools have been rated good or outstanding, 90% of secondary schools and 75% of special schools. Therefore, most children in Cheshire East attend a good or outstanding school.</li> <li>Cheshire East Council currently have the lowest rate of exclusions nationally for primary school children.</li> </ul>

- Support children to catch up on the learning they lost during Covid
- Support children and young people's mental health and wellbeing to resolve problems as early as possible

**Priority: Reduce the reliance on long-term care by improving services closer to home and providing more extra care facilities, including dementia services**

Vulnerable and older people live safely and maintain independence within community settings.

Key actions:

- Work with partners to develop appropriate accommodation and extra care housing models

- Work is underway to develop a service model and more detailed service specification which clearly articulates the council's requirements. This can then be used to encourage development of extra care housing schemes and inform negotiations with registered housing providers and developers.

People are cared for and valued by a professional and caring workforce.

Care4ce to become an exemplar high quality trading company.

Key actions:

- Develop a quality trading company
- Recruit and train a skilled and motivated workforce.
- Provide a professional pathway for progression

- During the pandemic, Care4ce became the Council's provider of last resort; they have continued to undertake the role because of market fragility. Practically this means they respond when a provider is unable to meet commissioned needs on ad-hoc days, stepping in when a provider is no longer able to meet its contracted responsibilities and "hands-back" contracts, and they are the provider that delivers care in geographical areas where the Council is otherwise unable to meet demand.
- Given the ongoing market challenges, and the forecast of continuing market fragility within the care sector the Directorate is currently reviewing how this approach may be sustained in the long-term and the implications for the operation of Care4CE.
- A programme of activity with Cheshire South and West College to develop a joint approach to the recruitment and training of new entrants to care is now being developed. The programme will support recruitment into Care4Ce and for private providers.

To prioritise Home First for patients discharged from hospital. Where possible patients are discharged to a home of their choice.

Key actions:

- Expand and develop the Home First service to support people to stay at home longer
- Work to develop integrated health and social care teams
- Carers Strategy to be implemented
- Develop the Shared Lives service
- Increased use of technology

- A new technology enabled care service aiming to help keep people safe and independent in their own homes commenced in July 2022. The new service will enable residents to access support from a greater range of technology such as Alexa, tablets and digital lifeline devices. This service includes support for early discharge from hospital through a free four-week offer for patients.

- A pilot programme to co-locate staff from Brokerage, Reablement and Communities teams with Integrated Discharge Teams at both hospitals has been implemented. Known as Transfer of Care Hubs, this project is starting to show positive results in supporting timely hospital discharge and improving communications between the various disciplines.

Adults receive quality assessments of need and support planning and good quality services to keep them safe and maintain their physical and mental wellbeing.

Key actions:

- Fully implement social work practice within adult social care
- Maintain and improve the quality of care and support services

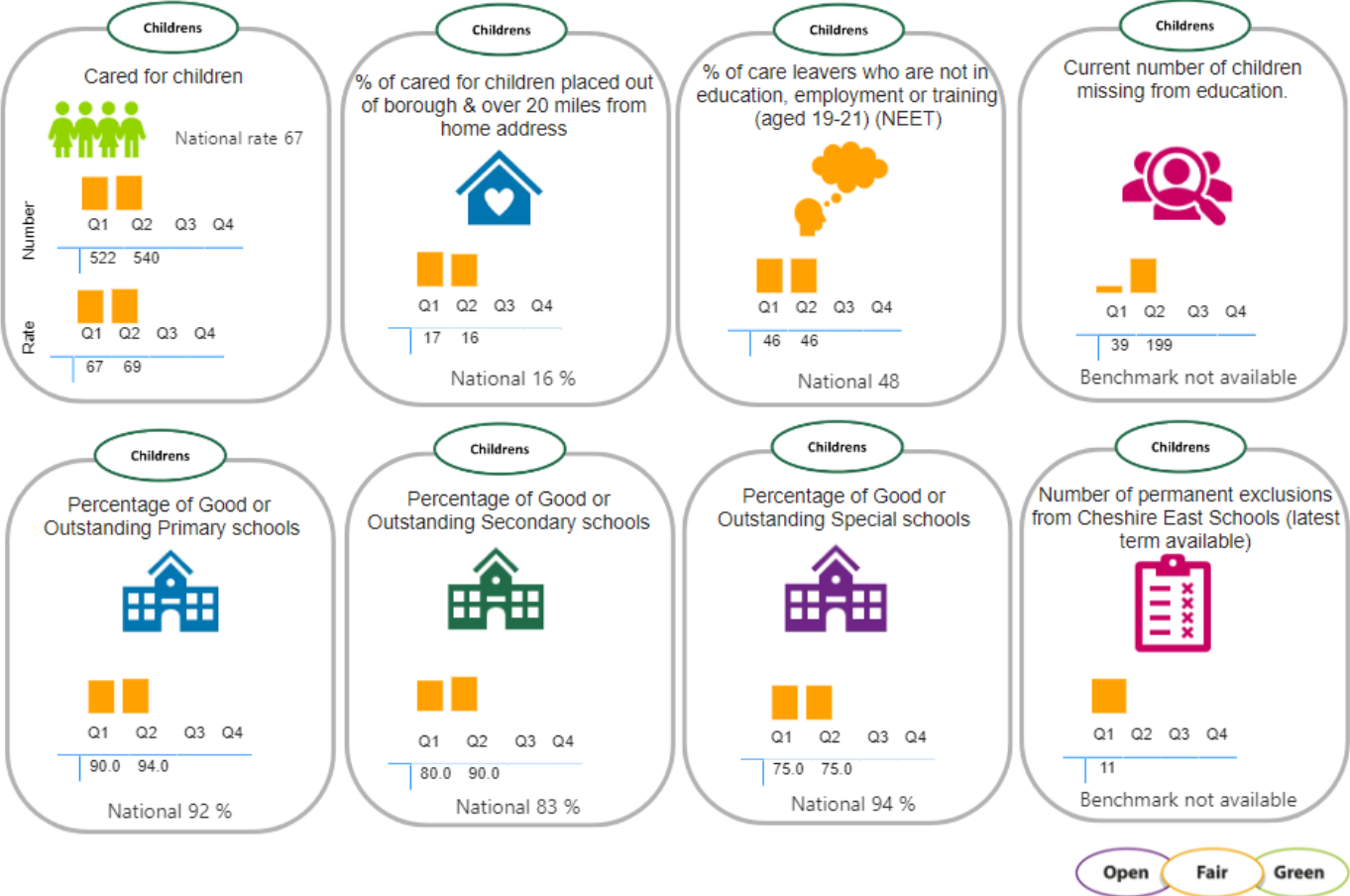
- As set out in the performance report the Directorate continues to meet its targets for timely assessments. In addition, a new audit tool is being implemented to enable practitioners and managers to:
  - test the quality of assessments;
  - the effectiveness of assessments in meeting the identified needs of people requesting support; and
  - the consistency of assessments across all teams.

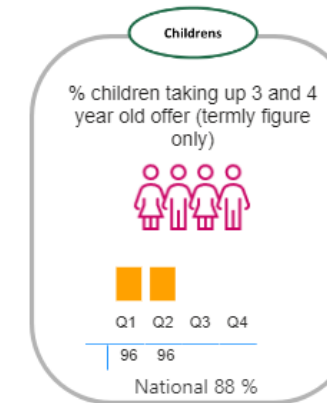
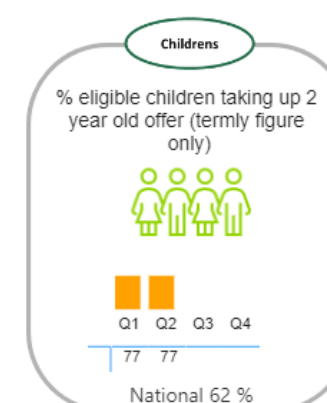
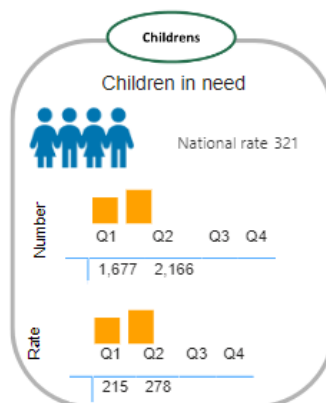
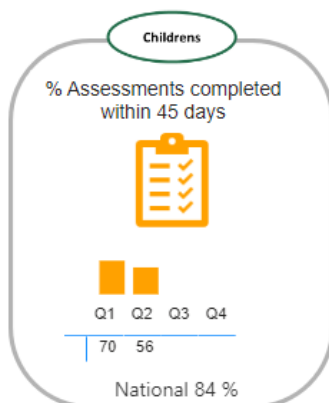
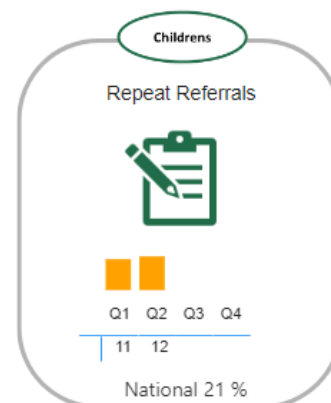
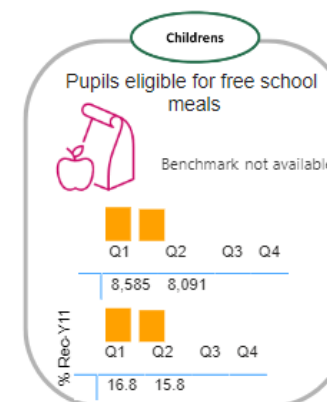
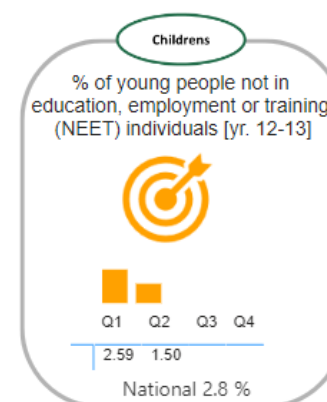
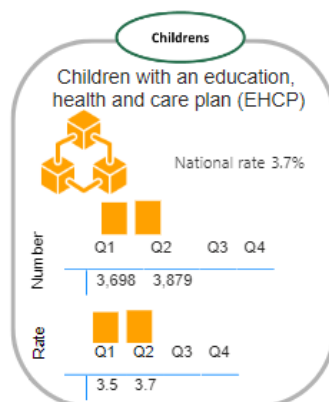
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Performance measures supporting A council which empowers and cares about people

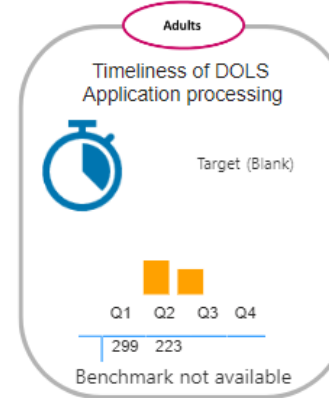
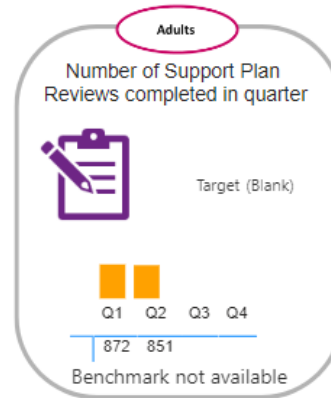
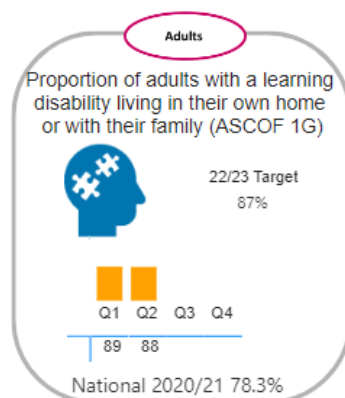
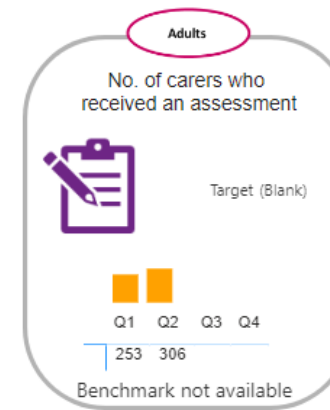
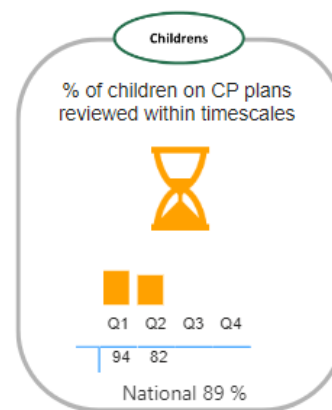
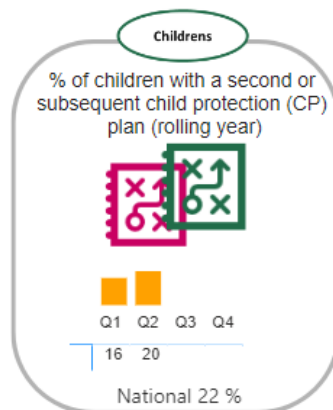
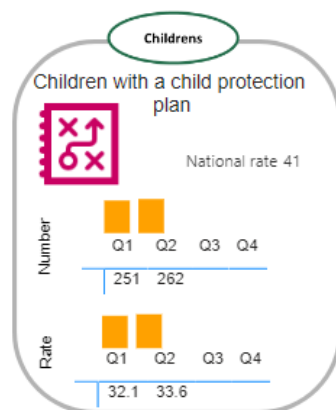


- Work together with residents and partners to support people and communities to be strong and resilient
- Reduce health inequalities across the borough
- Protect and support our communities and safeguard children, adults at risk and families from abuse, neglect and exploitation
- Be the best Corporate Parents to our children in care
- Support all children to have the best start in life
- Increase opportunities for all children and young adults with additional needs
- Ensure all children have a high quality, enjoyable education that enables them to achieve their full potential
- Reduce the reliance on long term care by improving services closer to home and providing more extra care facilities, including dementia services



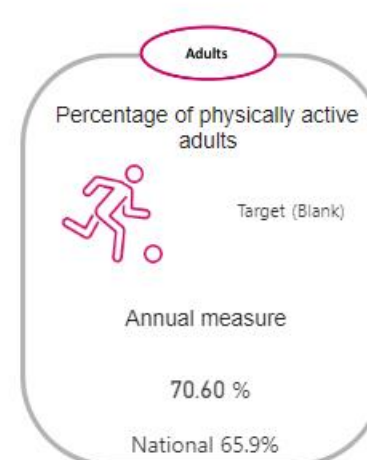
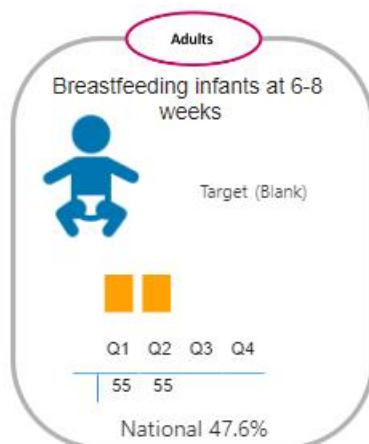
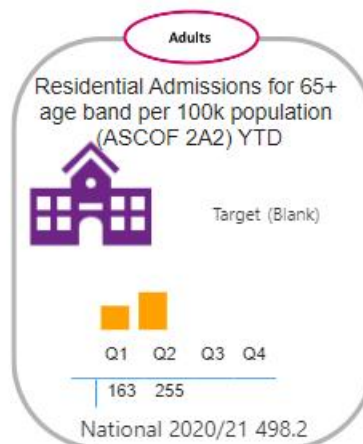
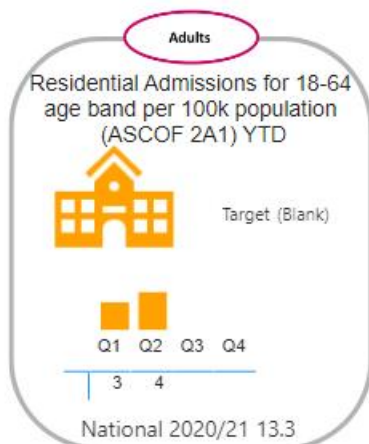


Open Fair Green



Open Fair Green





# A thriving and sustainable place

By 2025 we want:	Performance 2022/23 – Quarter 2 update
Priority: A great place for people to live, work and visit	
<p>Enable access to well designed, affordable and safe homes for all our residents.</p> <p>Key actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver housing to meet the needs of all residents including vulnerable and older people in the borough</li> <li>• Review and evaluate the need for a private rented sector licensing scheme</li> <li>• Ensure affordable homes are “tenure blind” and focussed on quality</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 140 new affordable housing completions in quarter 2, which totals 274 new homes delivered to date during 22/23 against an annual target of 355 new affordable homes. Performance against this target is on track.</li> <li>• 214 sponsors’ homes inspected for the Homes for Ukraine scheme, to ensure accommodation is a safe and decent standard</li> <li>• Promoted the new Housing Supplementary Planning Document, which provides guidance on the development of affordable housing, self-build and Specialist, Supported living and Older Persons Housing</li> </ul>
<p>A high-quality accessible library service, that remains relevant to the changing needs of Cheshire East residents and delivers value for money.</p> <p>Key actions:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There have been 279,897 visitors to libraries during Q2, with 482,484 physical books issued and 6,312 new borrowers.</li> <li>• Children’s usage continues to grow and c.5500 children participated in the summer reading challenge. 5 libraries are currently undergoing enhancements to improve the children’s offering.</li> <li>• Staff at Nantwich library were filmed by the BBC for an item documenting how public libraries were responding to the cost-of-living crisis.</li> </ul>

By 2025 we want:	Performance 2022/23 – Quarter 2 update
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve and adapt our libraries to meet any changing needs which offer value for money             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update and refresh the Library Strategy</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<p>High quality leisure and sports provision across the borough that delivers good value for money.</p> <p>Key actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve our leisure centres</li> <li>• Provide walking and cycling recreational routes and outdoor recreational space</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There have been 620,625 visitors to council owned leisure facilities in Q2.</li> <li>• The redevelopment of Congleton Leisure Centre is continuing and is due to re-open in 2023.</li> <li>• Holmes Chapel Leisure centre has reopened following a short closure to upgrade fitness equipment and refresh finished in the fitness studio.</li> <li>• The Learn to swim scheme has grown to 9700 swimmers in weekly sessions</li> </ul>
<p>To reduce the number of long-term empty dwellings.</p> <p>Key actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish baseline and review current strategy and policies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A report on a proposed approach to Empty Homes is programmed for Economy and Growth Committee in March 2023.</li> </ul>
<p>New development to be appropriately controlled to protect and support our borough.</p> <p>Key actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To keep the Local Plan Strategy under review</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning application performance against statutory performance measures (including agreed extensions to time) is above target for major applications (95%) but below (83%) for minors. However, a backlog of planning applications remains with staff retention and recruitment difficulties across all aspects of the Planning service including Building Control.</li> <li>• The number of applications in hand has reduced slightly but the majority of applications are still taking 4-6 months to determine. The service are determining around 100 planning applications every week.</li> </ul>

By 2025 we want:	Performance 2022/23 – Quarter 2 update																			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provide an effective Planning Service with capacity to efficiently determine planning applications</li><li>• Robust and effective planning enforcement</li><li>• Implementation and maintenance of additional supplementary policy documents</li><li>• Effective and competitive Building Control Service</li><li>• Continued application of CEC Design Guide principles and focus on Place</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Following the initial deep dive review of the Planning Service by the Executive Director of Place an update report was presented to the Environment and Communities Committee in October 2022. This will set out the background to the review, will describe a series of measures and changes already undertaken by the service to help address reducing the number of applications in hand, as well as describing next steps for the review including proposed updated governance arrangements. This will be reported on in quarter 3 performance reporting.</li></ul>																			
<p>To make best use of our surplus buildings and assets to support the borough and our partners.</p> <p>Key actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Review the community asset transfer policy</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Asset Transfer Policy was approved by Economy and Growth Committee in July 2021.</li><li>• Since April 2022, 2 transfers have been completed, and a further 4 have agreed heads of terms for land and property. As at quarter 2, a number of expressions of interest are being considered and evaluated.</li></ul>																			
<p>Continue to grow the Cheshire East visitor economy.</p> <p>Key actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Deliver Cultural Strategy and Place Marketing Action Plan</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Annual STEAM figures for value of the Cheshire East Visitor economy in 2021 were reported at the end of quarter 2, in September 2022.</li><li>• The figures are as follows:</li></ul> <table><tr><td></td><td>STEAM 2021</td><td>Increase since 2010</td><td>Increase 2020-2021</td></tr><tr><td>Economic activity of the visitor economy in Cheshire East</td><td>£735m</td><td>34.6%</td><td>34.1%</td></tr><tr><td>Visitor Numbers to Cheshire East</td><td>11.85m</td><td>8.3%</td><td>24.4%</td></tr><tr><td>Visitor Days spent in Cheshire East</td><td>13.17m</td><td>5.7%</td><td>24.4%</td></tr></table>					STEAM 2021	Increase since 2010	Increase 2020-2021	Economic activity of the visitor economy in Cheshire East	£735m	34.6%	34.1%	Visitor Numbers to Cheshire East	11.85m	8.3%	24.4%	Visitor Days spent in Cheshire East	13.17m	5.7%	24.4%
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By 2025 we want:		Performance 2022/23 – Quarter 2 update			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Deliver Tatton Park business plan</li></ul>	<b>Total FTE employment in Visitor Economy in Cheshire East</b>		8,648	5.2%	24.3%
Priority: Welcoming, safe and clean neighborhoods					
Crime and anti-social activity and anti-social behaviour to be reduced.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The Corporate Enforcement Policy has been reviewed and will be recommended for adoption to Environment &amp; Communities Committee in November 2022.</li></ul>			
Key actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Use our full range of education, engagement and enforcement tools to protect our communities.</li><li>Take formal enforcement action as appropriate</li><li>Clear and integrated enforcement approach with relevant fit for purpose policies</li><li>Investment in technology to enhance CCTV delivery</li></ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The Regulatory Services service specific enforcement policy has also been reviewed and will be recommended for adoption to Environment &amp; Communities Committee in November 2022.</li><li>A procurement exercise for the design, supply and implementation of a new wireless CCTV network has been completed.</li><li>Our community enforcement team continues to make a significant impact in and around the alleyways in Crewe. The fantastic work was recently recognised nationally by winning the ‘Best Partnership award which was presented at an awards evening for the Local Authority Recycling Advisory Committee, this is down to the outstanding work that has taken place on the Cleaner Crewe project by all the partners involved in the initiative.</li></ul>			
Victims of crime and exploitation to be supported effectively by the council and partners through collaboration.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>£63,900 of detriment has been saved for residents from rogue trading and scams interventions. Aftercare visits to victims of scams completed including the installation of call blockers.</li></ul>			
Key actions:		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>In partnership with Cheshire Police, the CCTV service identified three individuals involved in County Lines criminality in the Macclesfield area.</li><li>The Multi Agency Action Group (MAGG) continues to meet on a quarterly based. It most recently met to discuss</li></ul>			

By 2025 we want:	Performance 2022/23 – Quarter 2 update
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with the police and partners to share intelligence and problem solve local issues</li> <li>• Refresh the Safer Cheshire East Partnership Plan for 2020-23</li> <li>• Raise awareness around safeguarding</li> </ul> <p>Raise awareness around safeguarding and community safety issues</p>	<p>issues with anti-social behaviour (ASB) in Poynton. Through collaboration with partners, mitigation measures have been instigated which will reduce the significant levels of ASB that has been affecting the lives of the local residents.</p>
<p>To protect residents and improve our environment.</p> <p>Key actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review local air quality through our Annual Status Reports, taking action to respond to areas of poorer air quality</li> <li>• Air Quality Management Areas have an action plan outlining planned measures to improve quality</li> <li>• A regulatory service that balances advice and education</li> <li>• Provide a robust licensing regime for alcohol, gambling and hackney carriage private hire vehicles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The 2022 Annual Air Quality Status Report has been approved by Defra and received positive feedback on its detail and demonstrable commitment to local air quality management. Objectives within the Air Quality Action Plan continue to be delivered, including a series of highway network improvements and a new education campaign highlighting the impact of vehicle engine idling and domestic fuel burning.</li> <li>• Environment &amp; Communities Committee approved an updated Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing policy to reflect national standards, effective from 1 November 2022. There is currently ongoing work to communicate relevant changes to the licensed trade and ensure that licensing staff are trained in any new administrative processes.</li> <li>• The Animal Health and Welfare Team have been preparing for the potential impact of Avian Influenza (AI) outbreaks both within Cheshire East and our neighbouring authority areas. AI season officially starts on 1 October although early outbreaks in September have already tested our processes. This work is done in conjunction with national agencies including the Animal Plant and Health Authority, Defra and UKHSA.</li> <li>• A recent ‘temperature check’ against the Food Standards Agency Recovery Plan indicates that we are meeting the necessary intervention requirements of the plan. In addition, our intervention work with lower risk premises continues with the support of external inspectors and ensures ongoing involvement with our local food businesses.</li> <li>• A revised Statement of Gambling Principles will be recommended for adoption to the Environment &amp; Communities Committee in November 2022.</li> </ul>

By 2025 we want:	Performance 2022/23 – Quarter 2 update
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proactive inspection and surveillance programmes</li> </ul> <p>Improved green spaces for all. Enabling people to exercise and socialise in our parks and open spaces.</p> <p>Key actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review and improve our play areas and parks</li> <li>• Work with partners to provide a more welcoming environment</li> <li>• Secure funding for additional recreation provision along with improvements to the current provision</li> <li>• Increase the number of rewilded areas within our parks and open spaces</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NHS / Public health prescribed volunteering in urban green spaces is now ready to go live with first volunteering groups expected Q3.</li> <li>• Wider parks development continues with completion of works to Victoria Park Macclesfield.</li> </ul>
Priority: To reduce our impact on our environment	
<p>To have minimised overall waste generated in the borough and maximised our levels of recycling.</p> <p>Key actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction of the Municipal Waste Strategy</li> <li>• To review and consult on the household waste recycling provision</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capital improvement works to our HWRCs under development as part of the award of the new HWRC contract by Ansa Environmental Services.</li> <li>• Procurement of new contract for silver bin recycling processing underway by Ansa Environmental Services.</li> <li>• Recycling figures appear lower this year compared to previous years due to the Government's reclassification of Wood and MDF waste, this type of waste has been reclassified from recycle to biomass.</li> </ul>

By 2025 we want:	Performance 2022/23 – Quarter 2 update
<p>To improve biodiversity and natural habitats in the borough.</p> <p>Key actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased rewilding</li> <li>• Embed biodiversity, including offsetting, across Cheshire East Council estate</li> <li>• Deliver the tree planting programme</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Due to the seasonality of tree planting only undertaken between October and May our main planting schemes of between 30-40 ha for this year will be delivered in Q3 and Q4.</li> </ul>
Priority: A transport network that is safe and promotes active travel	
<p>Improvements in the strategic infrastructure that support sustainable and inclusive growth across the borough.</p> <p>Key actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delivery of major infrastructure programmes</li> </ul>	<p>The Cheshire and Warrington Sustainable and Inclusive Growth Commission was set up in Nov 2020 and has been working on four themes: Inclusive Economy, Sustainable Transport, Sustainable Land Use and Net Zero. The commission has developed an evidence base for the current position across Cheshire and Warrington, a vision and a set of recommended actions to achieve the vision. The full report can be found at:</p> <p><a href="https://cheshireandwarrington.com/what-we-do/sustainability/sustainable-and-inclusive-growth-commission/">https://cheshireandwarrington.com/what-we-do/sustainability/sustainable-and-inclusive-growth-commission/</a></p>
<p>Safer and well-maintained roads.</p> <p>Key actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver planned investment to maintain the highway network</li> <li>• Review of appropriate strategies, such as speed management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• £19m Council capital investment over 3 years now being delivered.</li> <li>• In September 2022, the following strategies were approved by the Highways and Transport Committee: Speed Management, Vehicle Restraint Systems: Installation, Inspection and Maintenance Strategy and the Skid Resistance Strategy.</li> <li>• Highways Ward Member budget have been agreed at an increased level of £6,500 per member. The scheme will operate for a four year period with effect from April 2023.</li> </ul>



By 2025 we want:	Performance 2022/23 – Quarter 2 update
Investment in electric vehicle infrastructure in our key service centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funding application for public EV charging points was approved by OZEV in August 2022. Installation of 15 chargers in 9 towns will be completed in 2022/23.</li> </ul>
<p>To increase parking provision close to local transport hubs.</p> <p>Key actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete Local Transport Plan parking reviews</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parking review for Crewe Town centre has been completed to support regeneration programmes including the Royal Arcade Multi Storey Car Park.</li> <li>• During quarter 2, work has continued on the development of a car parking strategy to support development of Crewe HS2 Hub Station</li> </ul>
<p>To promote uptake of cycling in our local service centres.</p> <p>Key actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Installation of cycle storage facilities in Cheshire East car parks</li> <li>• Invest in new cycle routes and improve existing ones</li> <li>• Prohibit parking in existing cycle lanes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The cycle lanes along the route of Wilmslow-Royal London-Alderley Park have completed, funded by the Local Growth Fund.</li> <li>• Plans have been prepared and consulted on for cycle lane schemes in the following locations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Manchester Road, Wilmslow – Handforth</li> <li>○ Manchester Road – Macclesfield – Tytherington</li> <li>○ Black Lane, Macclesfield to Middlewood Way</li> </ul> </li> <li>• These schemes will commence on site later this year upon confirmation of funding from Active Travel England.</li> </ul>
<p>To improve the speed and efficiency of public transport and encourage more residents to make fewer car journeys.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feasibility studies into the creation of rapid transit routes connecting existing infrastructure with key employment sites</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The outline business case for “Re-opening Your Railways” funding has been prepared for the Sandbach – Middlewich – Northwich rail line, jointly with Cheshire West &amp; Chester Council and the LEP.</li> </ul>

By 2025 we want:	Performance 2022/23 – Quarter 2 update
<p>To reduce areas of the borough not served by public transport.</p> <p>Key actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Submit proposals to Rural Transport Fund</li> <li>• Develop quality bus partnerships with operators and town councils</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhanced Bus Partnership proposals have been developed jointly with local bus operators. These proposals were approved at Highways Committee in July 2022.</li> <li>• To Go-Too bus service has been operating for 12 months, as part of a 3 year trial funded by the Rural Mobility Fund.</li> </ul>
<p>To encourage an increase in the use of public transport (especially buses).</p> <p>Key actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Operators work together to share real time information</li> <li>• Bus routes planned to provide multi-modal connectivity</li> <li>• Cheshire East bus app developed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Cheshire East Enhanced Bus Partnership Agreement has been agreed with all local operators and the Department for Transport, which provides the formal governance framework for actions to improve local services.</li> <li>• The Bus Service Improvement Plan has been published, in accordance with the National Bus Strategy, setting out a programme of actions to enhance services.</li> <li>• Cheshire East Council is continuing to support the local network at an elevated level, deploying pandemic recovery funding until end of March 2023.</li> <li>• A public consultation on updated Bus Support Criteria will commence in quarter 3, following a Committee Report in November 2022.</li> </ul>
<p>More residents to use walking routes.</p> <p>Key actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote existing routes and nature trails</li> <li>• Create new walking routes between service centres</li> </ul>	

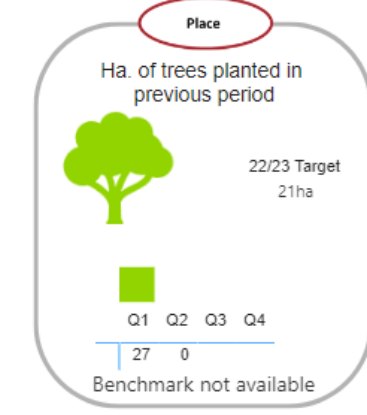
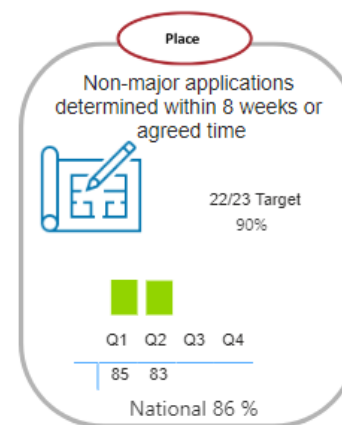
By 2025 we want:	Performance 2022/23 – Quarter 2 update
Priority: Thriving urban and rural economies with opportunities for all	
<p>Delivery of a strategic regeneration plan for Crewe.</p> <p>Key actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Successful delivery of the regeneration programmes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two bids for Levelling Up Funding were submitted in quarter 2 (August 2022). An expression of interest for an Investment Zone was also submitted.</li> </ul>
<p>Delivery of a strategic regeneration plan for Macclesfield.</p> <p>Key actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Successful delivery of the regeneration programme for Macclesfield</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A bid for Levelling Up funding was submitted in quarter 2 (August 2022).</li> </ul>
<p>Successful town centres in our other key towns.</p> <p>Key actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with our partners and key stakeholders to understand what is important to our towns</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Town Centre Vitality Plans are now completed in draft form for member and public consultation in Q2 – these will identify a number of suggested interventions that could support each of the towns' vitality and recovery.</li> </ul>

By 2025 we want:	Performance 2022/23 – Quarter 2 update
<p>Maximise the commercial and regeneration opportunities associated with HS2 for the whole borough</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li></li> </ul>
<p>Thriving and active rural communities.</p> <p>Key actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Deliver the Rural action plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Rural Action Plan was approved by the Economy and Growth Committee in September 2022. This provides a rural focus on the authority's existing strategies and plans. Priorities addressed in the plan include digital connectivity, access, housing, visitor economy and support for rural based businesses.</li> <li>• In September 2022, the Government launched a new Rural England Prosperity Fund. To access the fund, an addendum to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund Investment Plan has to be submitted by 30 November 2022. It is expected that first payments are expected to local authorities in April 2023. Cheshire East Council is eligible to receive funding of £827,000.</li> </ul>

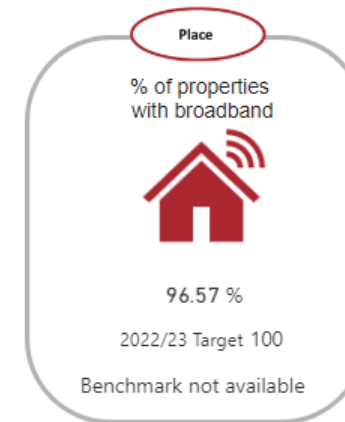
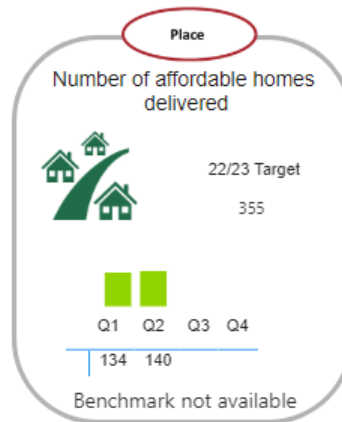
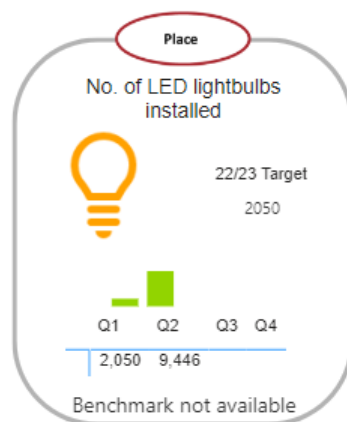
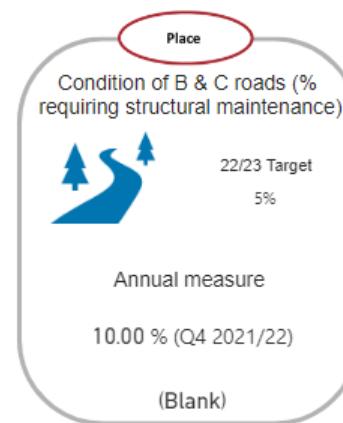
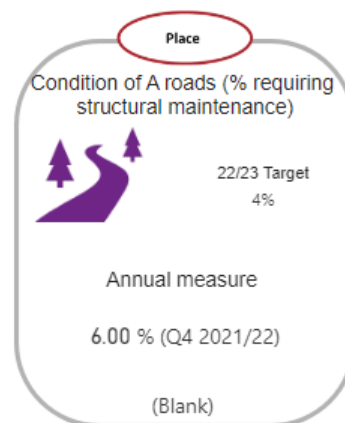
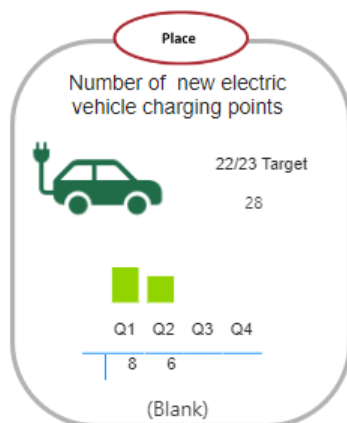
By 2025 we want:	Performance 2022/23 – Quarter 2 update
Priority: To be carbon neutral by 2025	
<p>To have delivered the milestones in becoming a carbon neutral council.</p> <p>Key actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver actions in the Cheshire East Council Carbon Action Plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work has been undertaken to provide a detailed measure of Borough wide carbon to assist the council in its 2045 pledge which will form the basis for Council discussion, further stake holder engagement and decision making on wider borough targets.</li> <li>• LED lightbulbs continue to be implemented as part of the public sector decarbonisation scheme works.</li> <li>• A campaign and community toolkit to reduce the use of single use plastics was launched, this is called “A life with less plastic”</li> </ul>

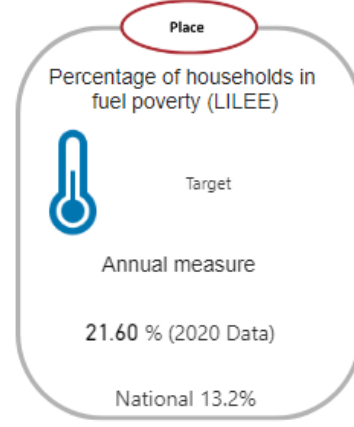
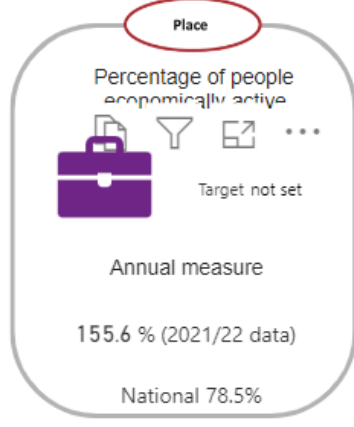
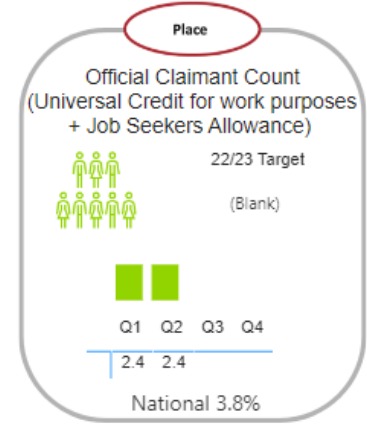
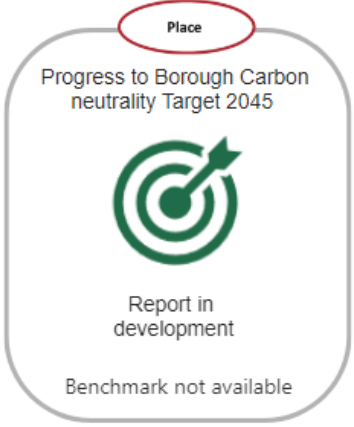
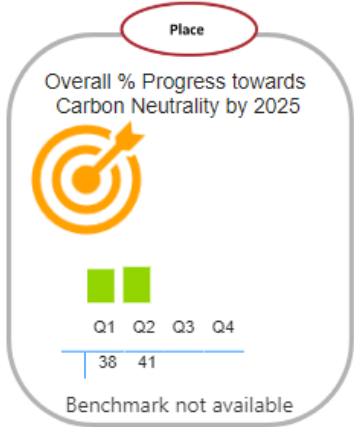
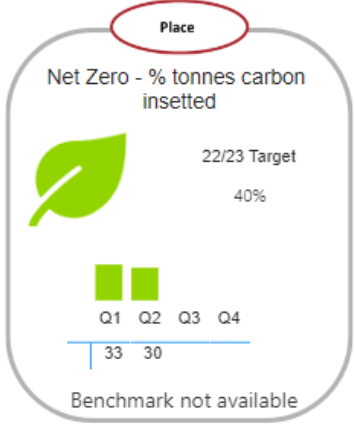
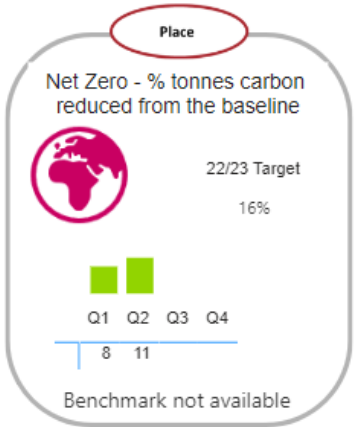
## Performance measures supporting A thriving and sustainable place

- A great place for people to live, work and visit
- Welcoming, safe and clean neighbourhoods
- Reduce impact on the environment
- A transport network that is safe and promotes active travel
- Thriving urban and rural economies with opportunities for all
- Be a carbon neutral council by 2025



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*Working for a brighter future together*

## **Corporate Policy Committee**

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<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	1 December 2022
<b>Report Title:</b>	Strategic Risk Register Assurance Report Q2 2022/23
<b>Report of:</b>	Jane Burns, Executive Director Corporate Services David Brown, Director of Governance and Compliance
<b>Report Reference No:</b>	CP/25/22-23
<b>Ward(s) Affected:</b>	All wards

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### **1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1. One of the responsibilities of the Corporate Policy Committee is to have a co-ordinating role across all other committees and exercising a corporate view of outcomes, performance, budget monitoring and risk management.
- 1.2. This report provides an update on the activity of the Council's Strategic Risk Register for Quarter 2 (July – September) 2022/23.
- 1.3. Reporting on the Strategic Risk Register supports effective risk management, is central to good governance and supports the efficient delivery of the Council's corporate plan objectives.

### **2. Executive Summary**

- 2.1. This report provides the Corporate Policy Committee with an update on the activity of the Strategic Risk Register for Quarter 2 2022/23, with the Strategic Risk Register set out in further detail in the report appendix.

### **3. Recommendation**

- 3.1. To note the position of the Strategic Risk Register for Quarter 2 2022/23.

### **4. Reasons for Recommendations**

- 4.1. Risk management is central to facilitating good governance and the achievement of corporate objectives. As a publicly accountable body, the Council must demonstrate effective identification and management of the

risks that threaten the achievement of its corporate objectives and the effectiveness of its operations.

## **5. Other Options Considered**

- 5.1.** No alternative options considered; this is an update report to support the Committee in meeting its responsibilities under its Terms of Reference.

## **6. Background**

- 6.1.** Risks included on the Strategic Risk Register are those which materially threaten the organisation's ability to achieve its strategic goals, in this case our corporate objectives in the Corporate Plan. This could be in the form of an individual threat to a specific objective, or the compound effect of a threat across several areas.
- 6.2.** Items on the Strategic Risk Register are "owned" by members of the Corporate Leadership Team and are reviewed on a quarterly basis. Co-ordination and administration of the Strategic Risk Register and the Risk Management Framework is undertaken by the Head of Audit and Risk Management.

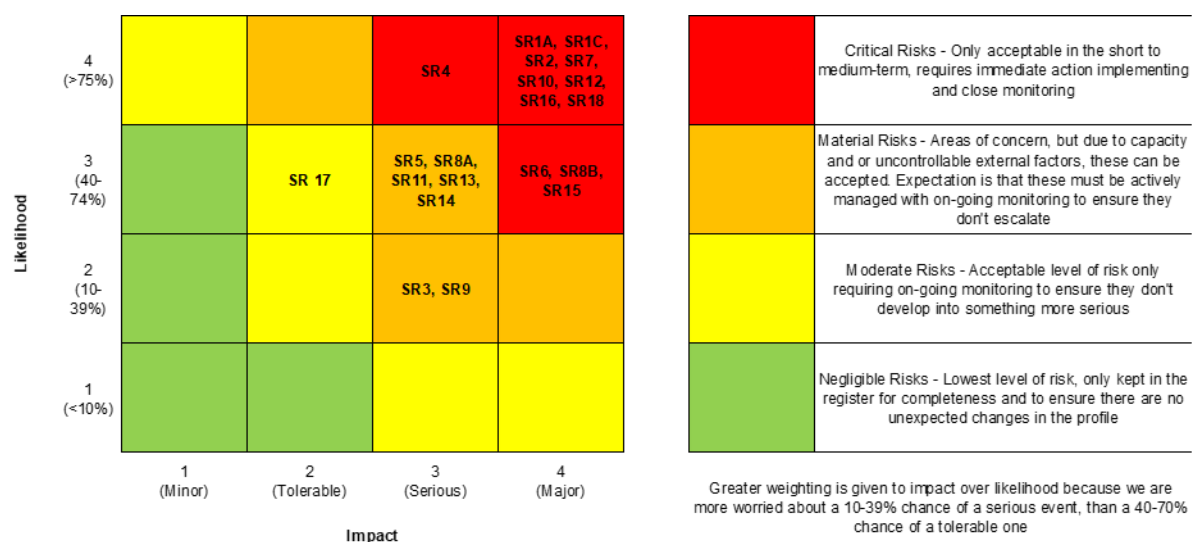
### **Quarter 2 2022/23**

- 6.3.** Quarter 2 continued to be a period of on-going economic pressure and politically uncertainty for the country, and the council. During the period from July to September, inflation rose from 9.1% to 10.1%, interest rates rose to 2.25% in September, and a leadership election took place, with a Prime Minister taking office on 5 September.
- 6.4.** Continued rises in the cost of living have inevitably presented further demand for Council services, whilst the cost of providing those services continues to increase.
- 6.5.** For a limited time, or in isolated areas, factors such as these can often be withstood with minimal impact on overall performance. However extended periods, widespread or multiple factors, can and will, impact on an organisation's resilience. In this context, resilience indicates the ability to continually deliver services to a required standard within available resources.
- 6.6.** Table 1 below sets out the strategic risk register content and the gross and net scores for Q2 22/23; the direction of travel being informed by the net position of the risk at the previous quarter review; Q1 2022/23.
- 6.7.** However, the heat map below that (Chart 1) shows more starkly, the high concentration of critical and material rated risks.

6.8. Table 1- Strategic Risk Register Position Quarter 2 2022/23

Ref	Risk	Q1 Net	Q2 Gross	Q2 Net	Target	Travel
SR1A	Increased Demand for Adult's Services	16	16	16	9	↔
SR1C	Increased Demand for Children's Services	12	16	16	9	↑
SR2	NHS Funding	16	16	16	12	↔
SR3	Failure of Financial Management and Control	9	16	6	6	↓
SR4	Information Security and Cyber Threat	12	16	12	12	↔
SR5	Business Continuity	9	12	9	9	↔
SR6	Organisational Capacity and Demand	12	16	12	12	↔
SR7	Council Funding	12	16	16	9	↑
SR8A	Governance and Decision Making	9	16	9	4	↔
SR8B	Political Uncertainty	12	12	12	6	↔
SR9	Capital Projects - Place	6	16	6	6	↔
SR10	HS2 Infrastructure Investment	16	16	16	6	↔
SR11	Pandemic Virus	9	12	9	6	↔
SR12	Fragility and failure in the Social Care Market	16	16	16	9	↔
SR13	Reputation	9	16	9	9	↔
SR14	Climate Change (CEC Carbon Neutral 2025)	9	16	9	6	↔
SR15	Failure of the local economy	9	16	12	12	↑
SR16	Integrated Care System (ICS) Integration	16	16	16	8	↔
SR17	Local Planning Authority Modernisation Plan	-	12	6	6	NEW
SR18	Delivery of the JTAI Improvement Plan	-	16	16	12	NEW

Chart 1 – Strategic Risk Heat Map Quarter 2 2022/23



6.9. The descriptions to the right of the heat map have been developed to help provide better context to the ratings of risks.

### Summary of Quarter 2 reviews

- 6.10.** Themes in the second quarter generally represent the underlying challenges noted in the first quarter, arising from cost increases, and demand pressures. Additionally, we have noted the following:
- The effectiveness of our arrangements in relation to outsourcing and governance of partnerships and external arrangements (SR8A, SR16, SR18).
  - The continued impact of the weak national economy (SR1A, SR2, SR6, SR10, SR15).

### Changes to individual risk descriptions and scores

- 6.11.** All strategic risks are detailed in full in Appendix A, changes to ratings and comments from the Quarter 2 update are described in this section of the report.
- 6.12.** SR1A Increased Demand for Adult's Services; we are seeing the impacts of inflation impacting on demand for social care. Families are increasingly turning to Adult Social Care to offer support when they are no longer able to offer this support. The pressure on the system to discharge from acute hospitals together with a shortage of available care in the market is resulting in longer waiting lists and the subsequent frustrations that families feel. Some individuals waiting for hospital interventions, for example knee and hip surgery, are turning to Adult Social Care for support whilst awaiting their procedures. In addition, care providers report staffing shortages and difficulties maintaining stable structures.
- 6.13.** The difficulties of recruitment and retention of staff is having an impact across Adult Social Care, resulting in the increased use of agency staff across the whole service.
- 6.14.** Due to the challenges of managing the budget, consideration will need to be given to the creation of waiting lists for assessments. This risks reputational damage to the council and an increase in complaints and LGO investigations.
- 6.15.** SR1C Increased Demand for Children's Services; the net score for this risk has increased to the highest rating, this is the second quarter in a row there has been an increase.
- 6.16.** Children's services have a mitigated budget deficit of £3.5m as reported in the first financial review for 2022-23 due to an increase in the complexity of children and young people's needs and the increased costs of placements and services including transport because of inflation. A report elsewhere on the agenda reports on the forecast budget outturn.
- 6.17.** Due to difficulties with recruitment and retention, which are also being experienced nationally, some teams within SEND and children's social care

are experiencing higher than average workloads. This is impacting on our ability to deliver timely services to children, young people, and families at the high quality we aspire to. Work is underway to improve recruitment and retention however this is a significant national pressure and challenge.

- 6.18.** We are participating in the DfE's "Delivering Better Value" (DBV) programme to support the council to achieve a more sustainable financial position in relation to SEND.
- 6.19.** SR2 NHS Funding; There has been no material change to the risk in Q2; it remains at the highest possible score for the gross and net risk. An action has been added for the development of new local Integrated Governance arrangements.
- 6.20.** The end of short-term grants such as the Hospital Discharge Fund and increasing costs of short stay bed provision is impacting on care capacity and increasing Adults Social Care costs.
- 6.21.** SR3 Failure of Financial Management and Control; The risk description and title have been updated to draw out the consequences and causes, with several completed actions moved to the controls section. In turn, this has reduced the likelihood aspect of the net risk score, which means that the net score is now equal to the target score.
- 6.22.** Consideration will be given to this risk during Q3 review as to its continued inclusion on the Strategic Register, and whether this risk should now be monitored on the Finance Service's operational risk register. For the moment, its inclusion does reflect that any funding issues currently being experienced are not due to failures of internal controls.
- 6.23.** SR4 Information Security and Cyber Threat; there has been no change to the risk's rating from the previous quarter.
- 6.24.** Work continues to define the work plan and activities under the Security and Compliance Programme. Risk workshops have been held with managers in ICT Services to embed a risk approach to project and business activities.
- 6.25.** Public Services Network (PSN) accreditation has been achieved for 2022/23. New tools to monitor and capture phishing exploits are being deployed with additional training for staff to raise awareness being made available. Enhanced security features secured from Microsoft are being rolled out to further protect the estate.
- 6.26.** An Information Security Steering Committee has been set up to co-ordinate activity across the Security and Compliance Programme, the DLUHC Cyber Funded projects and the security projects within ICT Services.
- 6.27.** SR5 Business Continuity; there has been no change to the risk's rating from the previous quarter.

- 6.28.** A review of training materials to support use of the business continuity software is in progress, and an exercise to ensure employee and users of the system are current began in Quarter 2 and continues into Quarter 3.
- 6.29.** Work with ICT Services to identify key connection points from service business continuity plans into central IT disaster recovery plans is also being supported, to ensure service plans are challenged and tested in relation to their reliance on ICT, and expectations on sustained loss of service. These can be progressed through the refresh of the individual and organisation wide plans.
- 6.30.** SR6 Organisational Capacity; there has been no change to the risk's rating from the previous quarter.
- 6.31.** As mentioned under SR 1, the labour market nationally remains challenging, with some services experiencing recruitment and retention difficulties. In addition, the cost-of-living crisis is impacting on staff financially and in terms of their wellbeing and resilience. It is anticipated that this will continue over the winter months. Proactive support for employees and residents on the cost of living has been progressed during this quarter, continuing into Quarter 3.
- 6.32.** SR7 Council Funding; As part of the Q2 review, the risk description has been updated to draw out the consequences and causes, recognising the increase in the likelihood aspect due to high levels of national debt, high inflation, and a weak national economy. Further action on budget balancing has been added, along with the review of funding for SEND services which is underway; this is also noted on SR1C Increased Demand for Children's Services risk.
- 6.33.** Based on the external influences and very challenging context for this risk, the net score has been increased from 12 to 16, and the target score has also been increased to 9. This reflects that with the current pressures, there is a reduction in the "best-case scenario".
- 6.34.** SR8A Governance & Decision Making; Although the scoring for this risk has not changed since the previous quarter, the risk has been updated across several areas of the risk record.
- 6.35.** This includes an update to the risk description, including the poor use of public funds and reputational damage in the consequence, and re-wording the causes for greater clarity. Further detail on control has been added for the adjustments before an election as per the Recommended Code of Practice for Local Authority Publicity. Constitutional updates this period have focused on routine administrative amendments.
- 6.36.** An action has been added for a review of shared service/partnership governance arrangements due to two issues recognised in this quarter: the publication of the joint targeted area inspection (JTAI) on Cheshire East Safeguarding Children's Partnership's response to children at risk of



criminal exploitation, and the review of ASDV governance arrangements as a significant governance issue in the Annual Governance Statement. This recognises the need for the Council's arrangements to be reviewed and updated in light of updated CIPFA guidance and several related public interest reports.

- 6.37.** Two potential issues in relation to the organisation's arrangements for the forthcoming election in May 2023 are being monitored and managed: the proposed changes to legislation in relation to voter identification and the close proximity to the Coronation of King Charles III to the local elections.
- 6.38.** SR8B Political Uncertainty; Again, although the scoring of the risk is unchanged, the risk record has been updated in several areas. Detail on the consequences, causes and controls has been updated. Whilst there has been no material change to the council and its internal operations, the national political picture has seen significant change over course of Quarter 2, which continues into Quarter 3. Changes in national political leadership bring about a degree of change, challenge, and a lack of clarity on future policy.
- 6.39.** Current issues that are potentially disruptive is the level of uncertainty in central government policy and national financial instability. Notable issues are the absence of or delays in decisions on Levelling Up, ICS implementation, reforms to adult social care, HS2, Great British Railways HQ and devolution.
- 6.40.** SR9 Capital Projects - Place; there has been no change to the risk's rating from the previous quarter, the existing controls for effective governance and management of major capital projects remain in place.
- 6.41.** Each major capital scheme has its own project or programme governance in place. Additional governance mechanisms include officer-level Assets Board and Place Board providing oversight on thematic programmes. These governance arrangements consider and advise on the prioritisation of resources and funding, including, where appropriate, adjustments to time, cost, and quality parameters.
- 6.42.** The review of the inflationary impact on capital projects has been completed. Additional funding has been agreed for some projects, funded from allocations within the Capital Programme for Exceptional Inflation and Strategic Projects, subject to appropriate approval procedures. However, this will need to be kept under review in line with the Council's significant financial challenges.
- 6.43.** SR10 HS2 Infrastructure Investment; there has been no change to the risk's rating from the previous quarter, amendments in the risk record have been made to the risk description, updating it to better define and articulate the risk.

- 6.44.** SR11 Pandemic Virus, the level of threat has persisted through the period with significant pressure is expected during the winter for the NHS and consequent follow-on pressures to adult social care. The medium to long-term impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic have influenced services and delivery, as described elsewhere across the Strategic Risk Register.
- 6.45.** SR12 Fragility and Failure in the Social Care Market; The score risk for this risk remains at 16. The impact of the recruitment and retention crisis in Adult Social Care is mentioned above. There are currently over 200 people awaiting a package of domiciliary care (equating to over 2,700 hours of care required) and packages of care are being handed back by care providers on a regular basis due to staff leaving the care sector to work in higher paid and less stressful positions in retail and hospitality or staff sickness. This is impacting significantly on the hospitals with over 100 medically fit patients awaiting discharge.
- 6.46.** During the Quarter 2 period, the Council's Reablement team has been called on to support a Care at Home provider with care calls and training for staff due to a high number of resignations and sickness.
- 6.47.** Although care home bed vacancies remain higher than normal, many of the beds cannot be filled due to staffing shortages or closures due to COVID-19 or other infectious diseases such as diarrhoea and vomiting. There are particular shortages of nursing and nursing dementia beds.
- 6.48.** A Crisis Response team utilising CEC staff is in the process of being set up to respond in an emergency situation.
- 6.49.** The same issues are being experienced throughout the region and nationally as evidenced by a recent CQC report on the State of Care. In response the Government has just announced a £165.2m fund to support the adult social care workforce. While it is anticipated that this short-term funding may help alleviate some of the issues it may not provide a longer-term solution to the problem of care staff feeling undervalued and underpaid.
- 6.50.** SR13 Reputation; there has been no change to the risk's rating from the previous quarter. The risk has three distinct elements, and comments on each element are provided below.
- 6.51.** Communication & Media: The Corporate Policy Committee approved the draft Communications Strategy for Residents to go to public consultation ahead of consideration for approval and adoption by Corporate Policy Committee in December 2022. During the second quarter we saw particular interest and activity in the following topics:
- HM Queen Elizabeth II
  - Great British Railway HQ bid
  - HS2
  - South Macclesfield Development Area

- Homes for Ukraine scheme
- Crewe Town Centre regeneration
- Best4Business programme
- Middlewich petition
- Roadworks
- Public art projects
- Recruitment and retention

- 6.52.** Customer Experience: The first phase of technology to enhance the management, monitoring and analysis of customer contact was being prepared during the second quarter, ready for implementation in October 2022. A revised process for managing the quality of complaints and formal correspondence was approved and will be trialled within the Planning Service in the next quarter. Work has been ongoing in embedding and monitoring the Customer Charter.
- 6.53.** Consultation: New arrangements are being put in place for consultation and engagement which will reduce duplication.
- 6.54.** SR14 CEC Carbon Neutral Status; there has been no material change to the risk in this quarter, previously identified pressures remain significantly challenging but existing controls and planned actions are being delivered as expected.
- 6.55.** SR15 Failure of the Local Economy; recent political uncertainty and national economic performance have driven an increase in both the net and target scores although headroom remains for a further increase to the net score. The scope of the risk has been refined with a focus on the local economy rather than the national. Risk appetite, controls and interdependencies updated. No further actions have been identified as net score is equal to target, indicating that the risk is being managed as well as possible given the level of influence available.
- 6.56.** Specifically drawn out in the description is that central government policy and the national economy are the main drivers for this risk.
- 6.57.** SR16 ICS Integration; there has been no change to the risk's rating from the previous period, remains at the highest score possible.
- 6.58.** New governance arrangements and Section 75 agreements have been approved and are now in place, including the Cheshire East Health and Care Partnership Board, which has met in shadow format, and will meet fully in November 2022.
- 6.59.** Communications between the ICS and local 'Places' including the ICB are still limited while structures are still under development, with ongoing mapping of programme at Cheshire and Merseyside and Place level. The joint appointment of the Council's Director of Commissioning within the ICB as the Associate Director Transformation & Partnerships/Cheshire &

Mersey ICB Cheshire East will have an impact on communications from the ICS to the local authority.

- 6.60. Visits are due on the 27 October and 7th November from the ICS (including Graham Urwin, Chief Executive of the NHS Cheshire and Merseyside) with the Cheshire East Place to understand more about the progress and level of 'maturity' of the Cheshire East 'Place'. Our local self-assessments indicate that we have progressed against most of the domains within the Cheshire and Merseyside Maturing Framework. This is due to the development of our local integrated governance arrangements, partnership working and strategic developments.
- 6.61. SR17 Local Planning Authority Modernisation Plan; this is a new inclusion on the Strategic Risk Register, recognising the impact that failure to achieve the objectives of the modernisation plan would have; undermining the planned transformation of the service, perpetuating, and potentially extending the issues identified and undermining the reputation of the organisation. A gross score of 12, and net score of 6 have been set for this risk.
- 6.62. SR18 Delivery of the JTAI Improvement Plan; a new risk added by the Children's directorate with the highest possible rating for both gross and net scores. This risk recognises the potential impact of the Safeguarding children's partnership failing to achieve the improvements needed at the necessary pace, and as such failing to address the recommendations from the joint targeted area inspection (JTAI).
- 6.63. Several changes were made immediately following the inspection to ensure that children and young people at risk of exploitation were safe, and to improve processes to protect children and young people from harm. A comprehensive partnership improvement plan is now in place which addresses all the recommendations from the inspection as detailed in the letter of findings. An Improvement Executive Board is in place to scrutinise progress against the plan and ensure that this is achieved at pace. Governance arrangements are currently being established to support effective delivery of the plan and scrutiny of its impact on outcomes for children and young people. There is strong partnership commitment to ensuring changes are achieved for children and young people.

### **Emerging Areas – into Quarter 3**

- 6.64. Corporate Policy Committee will receive the Quarter 3 update at their March 2023 meeting; however, it is already clear that the achievement of the Council's objectives continues to be significantly challenged in a number of key areas reflected on the strategic risk register.
- 6.65. National policy direction and fiscal approach from central government is still emerging following the change of Prime Minister and Cabinet appointments from 25 October onwards; there could be significant impacts upon the Council's financial position depending on both national fiscal plans, which

haven't been announced at the time of writing, and specific projects and plans within the Council which are reliant upon central government funding.

- 6.66.** These will also impact upon the national and local economy, which the Council could experience as both further increases on the cost of living for residents, service users and staff, and further demand for Council services. The financial position is already being very closely monitored and managed through action plans; services will need to be clear about how the action required to manage our financial position impacts in relation to the achievement of Corporate Plan objectives.
- 6.67.** Balloting for industrial action is underway across a number of sectors and services, with strike action planned or continuing across others; this includes rail, postal services, education, and areas within health and social care. Many of these have the potential to impact upon the Council's areas of service delivery and business continuity impact assessments will be undertaken to determine the scale of impact and to ensure service delivery can be maintained wherever possible.
- 6.68. Horizon Scanning**
- 6.69.** The Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA) has recently published their 'Risk in Focus'<sup>1</sup> report identifying the top risks for 2023. Their methodology was to distribute a quantitative survey to Chief Audit Executives (CAE) in 15 European countries, including the UK. The survey received 834 responses, an all-time high for the project, with the headline question being 'What are the top five risks your organisation currently faces?'.
- 6.70.** The report presents the top risks covering all sectors and industries as a tool to inform internal audit thinking and as a benchmark for organisations to compare and contrast their own risks assessments. Organisations are encouraged to use the findings to promote discussion at Audit Committee meetings. The table below shows the risks that appeared in respondent's answers the most, arranged by most responses at the top, and how the strategic risks map against them.

<b>Risk In Focus 2023</b>	<b>CEC Strategic Risks</b>
Cybersecurity and Data Security	Information Security and Cyber Threat
Human Capital, Diversity and Talent Management	Organisational Capacity and Demand
Macroeconomics and Geopolitical Uncertainty	Failure of the Local Economy
Changes in Laws and Regulations	Political Uncertainty

<sup>1</sup> Risk In Focus 2023 ([theiia.org](https://theiia.org))

<b>Risk In Focus 2023</b>	<b>CEC Strategic Risks</b>
Digital Disruption, New Technology and AI	N/A <sup>2</sup>
Climate Change and Environmental Sustainability	Climate Change (CEC Carbon Neutral 2025)
Business Continuity, Crisis Management and Disasters Response	Business Continuity
Supply Chain, Outsourcing and 'Nth' Party Risk	Governance and Decision-Making and various others <sup>3</sup>
Financial, Liquidity and Insolvency Risks	Council Funding
Organisational Governance and Corporate Reporting	Governance and Decision Making

- 6.71.** Despite the sector and geographic differences between the IIA report and the strategic risk register, there remains a strong level of correlation as seen in other comparisons. The phrasing and scope of risks may differ, as would be expected, but the themes and positions held are consistent, providing a measure of assurance and comfort.

## **7. Consultation and Engagement**

- 7.1.** Each risk included in on the Strategic Risk Register is “owned” by a member of the Council’s Corporate Leadership Team. At each quarter, the risk detail is updated through managers in their areas of responsibility, and the updated register is reviewed collectively by the Corporate Leadership Team. For the second quarter review, this exercise included the Wider Leadership Team, and covered risk management, performance management and financial management to ensure collective understanding and onward reporting to the Corporate Policy Committee.

## **8. Implications**

### **8.1. Legal**

- 8.1.1.** There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations of this report. This report provides assurance that the Council achieves its strategic aims and operates its business, under general principles of good governance, that it identifies risks which threaten its ability to be legally compliant and operates within the confines of the legislative framework.

<sup>2</sup> There is no risk that directly maps here, digital disruption is very much a cause-based risk, rather than objective based one. For example, if there was an increase in the efficacy of AI based hacking attacks, it would be highlighted in the Information Security and Cyber Threat risk. This approach anchors an issue to an outcome, or multiple desired outcomes, and informs on its impact.

<sup>3</sup> The Governance and Decision-Making risk would indicate how well arrangements with third parties are being implemented. However there are a number of other risks that specifically draw upon the council's reliance upon specific arrangements or interdependencies; NHS Funding, Political Uncertainty, Capital Projects - Place, HS2 Infrastructure Investment, Fragility and Failure in the Social Care Market and Integrated Care System (ICS) Integration.



**8.2. Finance**

- 8.2.1.** There is no direct impact upon the MTFS from the recommendations of this update report. Costs relating to implementing risk treatment plans are included within service budgets. The need to provide financial security against the impact of risks is considered on a case-by-case basis and either included within specific budgets within the MTFS or considered under the overall assessment of the required level of General Reserves as part of the Reserves Strategy.

**8.3. Policy**

- 8.3.1.** Cheshire East Council has adopted the Risk Management Framework approved by Cabinet in June 2020. Risk management is integral to the overall management of the authority and, therefore, considerations regarding key policy implications and their effective implementation are considered within departmental risk registers and as part of the risk management framework.

**8.4. Equality**

- 8.4.1.** There are no direct implications arising from the recommendations of this update report.

**8.5. Human Resources**

- 8.5.1.** There are no direct implications arising from the recommendations of this update report

**8.6. Risk Management**

- 8.6.1.** This report relates to overall risk management and provides the Corporate Policy Committee with awareness of the most significant risks facing the Council, where strategic risks are emerging and assuring the Committee on how these are being managed.

**8.7. Rural Communities**

- 8.7.1.** There are no direct implications arising from the recommendations of this update report.

**8.8. Children and Young People/Cared for Children**

- 8.8.1.** There are no direct implications arising from the recommendations of this update report.

**8.9. Public Health**

- 8.9.1.** There are no direct implications arising from the recommendations of this update report.

**8.10. Climate Change**

**8.10.1.** There are no direct implications arising from the recommendations of this update report.

Access to Information	
Contact Officer:	Josie Griffiths Head of Audit and Risk Management Email: <a href="mailto:Josie.Griffiths@cheshireeast.gov.uk">Josie.Griffiths@cheshireeast.gov.uk</a>
Appendices:	Strategic Risk Register – Appendix A
Background Papers:	None



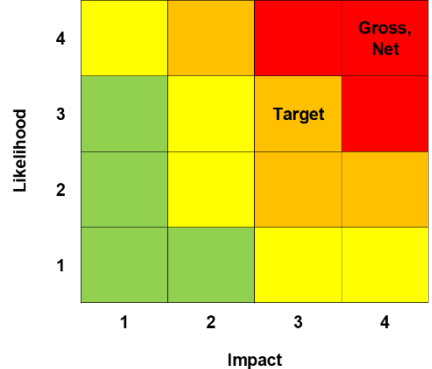
Risks in green are new for Quarter 2

Ref	Risk	Q1 Net	Q2 Gross	Q2 Net	Travel	Target
SR1A	Increased Demand for Adult's Services	16	16	16	↔	9
SR1C	Increased Demand for Children's Services	12	16	16	↑	9
SR2	NHS Funding	16	16	16	↔	12
SR3	Failure of Financial Management and Control	9	16	6	↓	6
SR4	Information Security and Cyber Threat	12	16	12	↔	12
SR5	Business Continuity	9	12	9	↔	9
SR6	Organisational Capacity and Demand	12	16	12	↔	12
SR7	Failure of Council Funding	12	16	16	↑	9
SR8A	Governance and Decision Making	9	16	9	↔	4
SR8B	Political Uncertainty	12	12	12	↔	6
SR9	Capital Projects - Place	6	16	6	↔	6
SR10	HS2 Infrastructure Investment	16	16	16	↔	6
SR11	Pandemic Virus	9	12	9	↔	6
SR12	Fragility and failure in the Social Care Market	16	16	16	↔	9
SR13	Reputation	9	16	9	↔	9
SR14	Climate Change (CEC Carbon Neutral 2025)	9	16	9	↔	6
SR15	Failure of the Local Economy	9	16	12	↑	12
SR16	Integrated Care System (ICS) Integration	16	16	16	↔	8
SR17	LPA Modernisation Plan	-	12	6	n/a	TBC
SR18	Delivery of the JTAI Improvement Plan	-	16	16	n/a	12

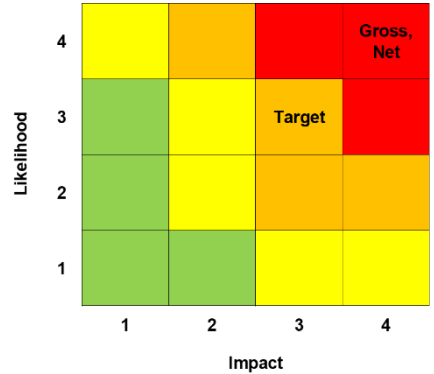
Likelihood	4 (>75%)			SR4	SR1A, SR1C, SR2, SR7, SR10, SR12, SR16, SR18
	3 (40-74%)		SR 17	SR5, SR8A, SR11, SR13, SR14	SR6, SR8B, SR15
	2 (10-39%)			SR3, SR9	
	1 (<10%)				
		1 (Minor)	2 (Tolerable)	3 (Serious)	4 (Major)
		Impact			

	Critical Risks - Only acceptable in the short to medium-term, requires immediate action implementing and close monitoring
	Material Risks - Areas of concern, but due to capacity and or uncontrollable external factors, these can be accepted. Expectation is that these must be actively managed with on-going monitoring to ensure they don't escalate
	Moderate Risks - Acceptable level of risk only requiring on-going monitoring to ensure they don't develop into something more serious
	Negligible Risks - Lowest level of risk, only kept in the register for completeness and to ensure there are no unexpected changes in the profile

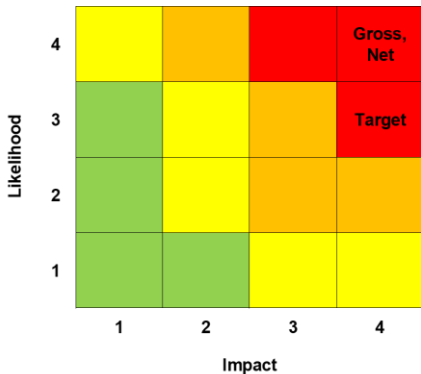
Greater weighting is given to impact over likelihood because we are more worried about a 10-39% chance of a serious event, than a 40-70% chance of a tolerable one

<b>Risk Name:</b> Increased Demand for Adult Services	<b>Risk Owner:</b> Executive Director of Adults, Health, and Integration
<b>Risk Ref:</b> SR1A	<b>Risk Manager:</b> Executive Director of Adults, Health, and Integration
<p><b>Risk Description:</b> An increase in demand for adult social services that cannot be met within the existing budget</p> <p>Since the COVID-19 pandemic the demand for adult social care has increased in both volume and complexity. There is currently a historically high demand for services from young adults right through to the elderly. This has been caused by an overall decrease in national adult health and wellbeing. Detailed consequences: A failure in one area of social care, either internal or external to the council, has knock-on effects and increases pressure on other services. This can cause an on-going downwards trend in adult health and wellbeing. In addition, the council may fail in its duty of care and its objective of supporting its most vulnerable individuals. Specific failures that have been seen are a reduction in preventative measure and early intervention, which ultimately increase demand. Increased pressure on practitioners causes stress related issues and reduces the appeal of working in the sector.</p> <p>Detailed causes: Due to the additional wellbeing pressures placed on residents, council staff, third-party providers and the NHS, the volume and complexity of demand for adult services has increased materially. As have political factors such as changes in legislation and resettlement agreements. Due to several different socio-economic factors recruitment and retention of staff is difficult resulting in increased use of agency staff.</p>	
<b>Interdependencies (risks):</b> NHS Funding Pressure, Financial resilience, Fragility in the social care market	
<p><b>Comments this quarter:</b> No change to the risk, still at the highest possible rating. We are seeing the impacts of inflation impacting on demand for Care, families are increasingly turning to Adult Social Care to offer support when they are no longer in a position to offer this support. The pressure on the system to discharge from Acute hospital care together with a shortage of available care in the market is resulting in waiting lists and the subsequent frustrations that families feel. Individuals waiting for hospital interventions are seeing their independence begin to fail and as such are turning to Adult Social Care for support whilst awaiting their operations especially those waiting for hip and knee surgery. Providers report staffing shortages and difficulties maintaining stable structures.</p> <p>The difficulties of recruitment and retention of staff is having an impact across Adult Social Care, resulting in the increased use of agency staff across the whole service. Due to the challenges of managing the budget consideration will need to be given to the creation of waiting lists for assessments this risks reputational damage to the council and an increase in complaints and LGO investigations.</p>	
<b>Actions (Monitoring):</b>	
ASC/ Commissioning and Communities, together with Public Health one Directorate continuing to work jointly to respond to challenges pertaining to prevention, health inequalities and our workforce.	
ASC/Commissioning and Communities developed a Standard Set of Fit for the Future Contracts – that set out specific measurable outcomes pertaining to each service area in driving prevention and key performance indicators that test the providers ability to retain a viable and sustainable business in responding to a population of changing need – higher levels of resident satisfaction and improved control.	
Continue to monitor and review preventative and support service activity.	
Continue to develop improved monitoring of people's outcomes	
Improved utilisation of public health JSNA and wider regional data sets informing future commissioning plans.	
Develop engagement with community groups and 3rd sector.	
Strengthen liquid logic and contract solutions to better map trend and demand.	
To monitor and review thresholds and gatekeeping processes.	
Review and strengthen partnership working with wider agencies.	
Restructured teams to ensure better integration with key partners.	
Continue to engage with leaders across teams – informing and influencing change.	
Continue with Connecting Leaders – through strong forward thinking visible leadership.	
Continued engagement with people who access services and the involvement of Healthwatch and independent advocacy	
Proactive engagement with the new Integrated Care Partnership (includes health partners)	

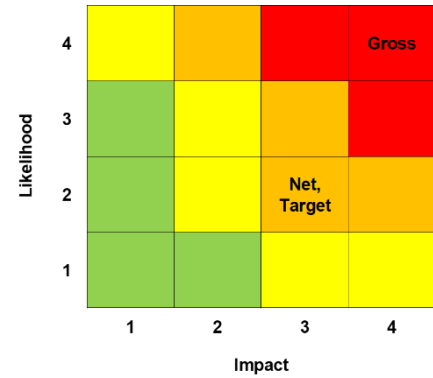
Ongoing response measures to COVID 19 pandemic
Maintaining Business Continuity across inhouse and external providers.
<p><b>Key Mitigating Controls:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ASC/Commissioning and Communities is engaged in the facilitation and forward planning of market engagement events, so to keep providers / people informed of preventative change as we progress with our People Live Well, for Longer Transformation Programme of Work.</li> <li>• ASC/Commissioning have in place a robust Contracts and Quality Monitoring Policy Framework – that makes clear – how quality is monitored in a person-centred way with a vast range of partners, when to activate a suspension protocol working with care quality commission and when/ how we are decommissioning services – keeping people at the centre of decision making regarding any service disruption or period of market failure.</li> <li>• ASC/Commissioning operate a monthly quality monitoring partnership forum that includes Police, Safeguarding, Care Quality Commission, ASC operations, Legal, CCG's and ASC lead commissioner – in the ongoing monitoring of quality and reporting and alerting of risk escalation that can be effectively managed – reports into relevant DMT's and Safeguarding Board.</li> <li>• ASC/Commissioning hold a provider risk register whereby we monitor and review risk pertaining to specific providers as part of our role working with Care Quality Commissioning pertaining to Market oversight.</li> <li>• ASC/Commissioning care sourcing/brokerage team support service and a local area co-ordination services- supporting vulnerable people to access wider community/ third sector services and wider more universal offers – diverting people away from care where appropriate.</li> <li>• ASC/Commissioning finance and planning resource allocation system to promote and engage more people to take direct payments and will enable people to identify against changing needs – an indicative robust budget thus reducing people reliance on traditional models of care.</li> <li>• ASC/Commissioning preventative policy framework that standardise of approach to prevention across adult social care “front door – whereby people will be directed away from traditional services towards a more empowering community solution, those accessing services will be fully assured working with providers – what our clear aim, vision and intentions are over the next three years.</li> <li>• ASC/Commissioning provider financial self-assessment accreditation tool – to assist with the monitoring and management of potential uplift and or additional funding. This will ensure that funding is robustly based on clear evidence, against demand / trends in market development and impact on provider/ council and people accessing the service.</li> <li>• ASC/Quarterly staff engagement groups are developed through leadership forums so to keep people informed and abreast of change as we progress to respond to demand and growth in the sector. Services operate regular staff conferences to address service specific developments and challenges.</li> <li>• ASC/Commissioning are involved in the North-West regional and local programme of work pertaining to health and care staff recruitment, retention, and selection – resulting in a robust career path being developed with key partners and in being clear pertaining to local strategy.</li> <li>• ASC/Commissioning influencing and working with Cheshire CCG pertaining to development of ICS and ICP plans</li> <li>• ASC/Commissioning/communities have developed a robust and responsive policy framework (People Helping People) with a vast range of third sector providers – thus reducing demand on adult social care.</li> <li>• To continue to develop with Children/families services joint commissioning and cross department work with adults – whereby risks can be better reduced together through a new joint commissioning management monthly working group.</li> <li>• ASC/Commissioning monitor performance and demand against capacity to ensure service meets demand where possible, developing robust action plans for service/market failure.</li> <li>• ASC performance monitoring reported on regular basis to CLT and Adult and Health Committee</li> <li>• Additional risks escalated as appropriate.</li> <li>• Consider the implementation of waiting lists to control demand and rising costs.</li> </ul>
<b>Lead Service Committee:</b> Adults and Health Committee

<b>Risk Name:</b> Increased Demand for Children's Services	<b>Risk Owner:</b> Executive Director of Children's Services
<b>Risk Ref:</b> SR1C	<b>Risk Manager:</b> Children's Services Directorate Management Team
<p><b>Risk Description:</b> That Cheshire East's local social, economic and demographic factors, including the impact of the pandemic, lead to an increase in the level of need and demand for children's services, resulting in the capacity of the council's systems relevant to these areas being unable to continue to respond/ absorb the pressures presented. Children's services has a mitigated budget deficit of £3.5m as reported in the first financial review for 2022-23 due to an increase in the complexity of children and young people's needs and the increased costs of placements and services including transport.</p> <p>Nationally and locally there are challenges recruiting and retaining staff within specific areas of children's services, which is resulting in higher than average workloads and some delays in delivering services. There is a risk that this could result in children experiencing delays in receiving support leading to escalation of need and increased risk of poorer outcomes - including risk of harm and risk to life, a lack of continuity of workers for children and young people, and increased costs to the council. There is a risk that this impacts on our ability to deliver improvements in response to the joint targeted area inspection (JTAI).</p> <p>There is also a risk that if the number of cared for children and young people increase, or if the complexity of children's needs increases, or the availability of placements decreases, this could result in increased pressure on placements, which could lead to difficulty providing the right homes for children and increased financial cost to the council.</p> <p>There is a risk that the demand for education placements for children and young people with special educational needs and/ or disabilities (SEND) outstrips the number available, leading to children and young people needing to travel further, increasing travel costs, and requiring the use of more expensive provision. Changes proposed in the SEND Review could also have an impact on pressures within the SEND service if significant changes are required to working practices. This would mean that we would not achieve the council's desired outcomes for children and young people.</p>	
<p><b>Interdependencies (risks):</b> This risk shares an interdependency with the risk relating to demand to adult social care and health services. If NHS services experience an increase in demand this could impact on demand to children's services or could impact on the quality of support delivered by children's services, as services rely on health input to ensure children's needs are assessed and met. The same social, economic and demographic factors will also impact on the demand to adult and health services so it is possible that both risks would escalate at similar points. Pressures on other parts of the public sector, for example for tier 4 mental health beds, places further pressure on council children's services.</p> <p>This risk is also affected by the risk to the council's financial resilience and lack of certainty about future funding, as increased funding may be required to enable services to meet increased demand. It is also affected by the UK economy, as rising inflation increases costs for providers, which results in increased costs of placements or services such as transport. There are also inter-relationships with the strategic risk on organisational capacity, as we need sufficient capacity to support recruitment and retention activity within children's services. Any capacity issues within support to this activity impacts children's services' ability to ensure our workforce can meet demand for services.</p> <p>If the risk as a result of increased demand is not effectively managed, this could cause damage to the council's reputation, and damage to the relationship with our partners. The quality of the council's work to support children and young people is inspected by Ofsted, and an inadequate rating by Ofsted would have a significant impact on the council's reputation, ability to recruit and retain staff, and would increase costs in order to deliver improvement activity.</p> <p>We do not have a large degree of control over our exposure to the risk as demand, and complexity of that demand, is driven by factors outside of our influence. Our appetite for the risk must remain low as the risk can result in children's needs not being met appropriately resulting in them experiencing poorer outcomes or harm. It can also impact on recruitment and retention, as an established and experienced workforce is crucial in delivering effective support to children and young people. To mitigate the risk we need to continue to monitor demand, take action to strengthen resilience within families and communities, for example through early help and prevention support, and to mitigate contributing factors which increase need, such as financial support to families made vulnerable to poverty as a result of the pandemic.</p> <p><b>Comments this quarter:</b> Net score increased due to recruitment difficulties which are impacting service delivery.</p> <p>Children's services has a mitigated budget deficit of £3.5m as reported in the first financial review for 2022-23 due to an increase in the complexity of children and young people's needs and the increased costs of placements and services including transport as a result of inflation. An action plan is in place to mitigate the deficit which was received by the Corporate Policy Committee in October 2022.</p>	

Due to difficulties with recruitment and retention, which are also being experienced nationally, some teams within SEND and children's social care are experiencing higher than average workloads. This is impacting on our ability to deliver timely services to children, young people and families at the high quality we aspire to. Work is underway to improve recruitment and retention however this is a significant national pressure and challenge.	
We are participating in the DfE's delivering better value (DBV) programme to support the council to achieve a more sustainable financial position in relation to SEND.	
<b>Actions (Monitoring):</b>	
Continue to deliver our Sustainable Futures Strategy and improve the quality of social work practice (Review through ED led Children's Transformation Board, and quarterly as part of the audit of quality of practice.)	
We are exploring expanding our in-house residential provision and fostering sufficiency, learning from North Yorkshire's 'No Wrong Door' model. We have been granted a small amount of innovation seed funding to support developing this model locally (Children's Transformation Board to be developed to monitor progress in this area)	
Develop and launch a new partnership Early Help Strategy to support good quality early help and prevention services (Progress against the strategy to be reviewed on a quarterly basis by the Early Help partnership. Impact on practice reviewed quarterly as part of the audit of quality of practice)	
Continuing to support vulnerable children and young people through the Household Support Fund and the Holiday Activity Fund (Impact reports are produced on a regular basis to the DfE)	
Continue to deliver the High Needs management plan to manage demand to SEND and the financial impact of demand (Progress against the plan reviewed on a quarterly basis by the SEND management group)	
Participation in the DfE's delivering better value (DBV) programme to support the council to achieve a more sustainable financial position in relation to SEND	
Continue to increase SEND provision in Cheshire East (Reviewed quarterly)	
Continue to develop Bespoke Children's Homes and Mockingbird fostering model (Reviewed quarterly through the Fostering Development Board and Social Care Leadership meetings)	
The Executive Director of Children's Services is co-leading a regional Cheshire and Merseyside workstream to look at regional solutions to recruitment and retention within children's services (Reviewed through the Cheshire and Merseyside workstream group)	
HR and service areas are working together to develop a refreshed recruitment and retention strategy (Reviewed monthly through directorate management team meetings)	
<b>Key Mitigating Controls:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In 2021/22, the council committed to growth bids for Children's Social Care, and for increased capacity in the SEND service to meet the continuing demands of the service. Additional business cases were agreed within the Medium Term Financial Strategy for further funding from 2022 onwards in these two areas to continue to meet the rising demand.</li> <li>We are closely monitoring the demand to services and the reasons that are driving demand so that we can be responsive and mitigate any risks to service delivery. Performance is monitored on a monthly basis by services. The children and families quarterly scorecard is reviewed at the Children and Families Committee and the Safeguarding Review Meeting attended by the chief executive and lead member for children and families. The Safeguarding Review Meeting includes discussion of workforce pressures and risks.</li> <li>We have a range of support available to families through early help and prevention services, including council, partner, voluntary, community, faith sector and commissioned services. These services support families and help prevent needs from escalating and requiring higher level intervention. We are continuing to develop our service offer through developing our partnership working and joint commissioning. We are currently reviewing our Early Help Strategy to ensure that we continue to strengthen our partnership offer moving forwards.</li> <li>The Cheshire East Safeguarding Children's Partnership and the 0-25 SEND Partnership Board meet on a regular basis and are sighted on changes to demand for services so there can be a partnership approach to meeting children and young people's needs.</li> <li>A strategy is in place to ensure only the right children come into care; this approach will reduce demand to Children's Social Care services. We are developing our in-house placement options through our Bespoke Children's Homes and Mockingbird fostering model.</li> <li>Our partnership Neglect Strategy was launched in July 2021 to ensure children at risk of neglect are identified early, which will reduce higher cost demand at a later stage.</li> <li>A robust governance structure is established for SEND. A strategy is in place to manage increasing demand and reinforce SEN Support in settings through our 'Access to SEND Services' strategy.</li> <li>Significant investment in local SEND provision to meets children's needs more locally but also reduce dependency on high cost independent school placements.</li> <li>High needs management plan in place to monitor the impact of demand to SEND services on financial pressures and monitor the delivery and impact of mitigations that have been put in place.</li> <li>We are participating in the DfE's delivering better value (DBV) programme to support the council to achieve a more sustainable financial position in relation to SEND.</li> <li>We have supported children and young people who were most vulnerable through the pandemic through the Covid Grant Scheme/ Household Support Fund and the Holiday Activity Fund.</li> <li>We are delivering a comprehensive partnership improvement plan to address the recommendations from the joint targeted area inspection of child exploitation.</li> </ul>	
<b>Lead Service Committee:</b> Children and Families Committee	
<b>Risk Name:</b> NHS Funding	<b>Risk Owner:</b> Executive Director of Adults, Health and Integration

<b>Risk Ref:</b> SR2	<b>Risk Manager:</b> Director of Commissioning
<p><b>Risk Description:</b> An NHS funding deficit reduces their health service delivery and places additional strain on the council's provision of adult social care</p> <p>The ability to meet the council's target of residents living well for longer can only be achieved by an effective and comprehensive joint programme of health and social care services.</p> <p>Detailed consequences: Additional pressure on social care may be realised in diverse and unexpected ways due to the complex and volume of interactions between the two services. Their symbiotic relationship means that one partner under or over performing has a corresponding effect on the other. An effective relationship would see reductions in health inequality and reduce the requirement for long-term care.</p> <p>Potential causes: A funding deficit would be caused by a mismatch in resource and demand. The relatively poor levels of national public health and wellbeing following the pandemic and limited expectations for economic growth are potential drivers of a mismatch. Ultimately however NHS funding is a political decision, currently an area of uncertainty</p>	
<b>Interdependencies (risks):</b> Increased Demand for Adult's Services, Increased Demand for Children's Services, Financial Resilience, Pandemic Virus	
<b>Comments this quarter:</b> The end of short-term grants such as the Hospital Discharge Fund and increasing costs of short stay bed provision is impacting on Care Capacity and increasing Adults Social Care costs.	
<b>Actions (Monitoring):</b>	
To continue to be a key player in the development of the integrated care system at a regional and local level (Via ICS review visits) bi-monthly) new Governance arrangements (Monthly), A&H Committee (bi-monthly), Health and Wellbeing Board (bi-monthly))	
The development of new local Integrated Governance arrangements (Via Health and Care Partnership Board (bi-monthly) Leadership Group (bi-weekly))	
Joint appointment of the Director of Commissioning as the Associate Director of Transformation and Partnerships (Via the Director of Place and Executive Director of Adults, Health and Integration)	
<b>Key Mitigating Controls:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A Health and Wellbeing Board is established with representation from Clinical Commissioning Groups and the Council, which provides a forum for these challenges to be addressed at a strategic level. In addition, a Cheshire East Health and Care Partnership Board has been created where system leaders are looking at integration and how to make the system more financially sustainable to achieve better outcomes for the residents of the Borough.</li> <li>Contract clauses are in place to address cessation of service and performance management arrangements should any failing performance materialise.</li> <li>Partnership working is in place and commissioning is informed through the JSNA. The H&amp;WB is working with Cheshire Fire and Rescue, NHS and other partners on various schemes of intervention and prevention which are intended to decrease demand. The Adults, Health and Community Directorate has introduced a new model for helping people to retain control and maintain their independence and reduce additional strain on services.</li> <li>The Cheshire East Integrated Care Partnership has been in place since October 2020 and is developing implementation plans across a number of work streams designed to achieve quality improvement and financial efficiencies across the system.</li> </ul>	
<b>Lead Service Committee:</b> Adults and Health Committee	



<b>Risk Name:</b> Failure of Financial Management and Control	<b>Risk Owner:</b> Executive Director of Corporate Services
<b>Risk Ref:</b> SRR3	<b>Risk Manager:</b> Director of Finance and Customer Services (s151 Officer)
<p><b>Risk Description:</b> The risk relating to the effective planning, recording, allocation, review and transacting of income and expenditure.</p> <p>Consequences: Misuse of public funds and a failure to ensure good value for money would result in poor resident services and infrastructure, ultimately a reducing the health and prosperity of the borough and its residents.</p> <p>Causes: This risk is particularly operational in nature; failure to develop and follow comprehensive and effective internal controls would result in the risk materialising.</p>	
<b>Interdependencies (risks):</b> Economy, External Funding	
<b>Comments this quarter:</b> Discussed that this was an operational risk and that with future development of the Finance service's internal risk register it could be removed from the strategic risk register. However for the moment it inclusion does reflect that any funding issues currently being experienced are not due to failures of internal controls.	
Risk description updated to draw out the consequences and causes, a number of completed actions moved to the controls section. Likelihood reduced; net score is equal to target.	
<b>Actions (Monitoring):</b>	
Training and briefing to Councillors (Committee Work Programmes)	
Action Plan on adherence to FM Code (Finance & Customer Services Departmental Plan)	
<p><b>Key Mitigating Controls:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Financial planning arrangements include preparation by the finance team, in liaison with senior operational managers, of detailed financial forecasts, based on the best available information and including prudent assumptions based on professional judgement and external advice</li> <li>Use of quality financial systems, with appropriate training and subsequent audit of their effectiveness to provide management and control of the Council's finances</li> <li>Balanced budget to put into effect the council's service plans for the forthcoming year, matched by available funding and including a risk assessment of the adequacy of general reserves</li> <li>MTFS sets out how the Council will deliver the Council's corporate plan including identification of budget gaps</li> <li>Use of a report format and report clearance process which ensures provision of relevant information on financial impact and risk exposure to the decision makers.</li> <li>Clear and effective communication of changes or updates to Finance and Contract Procedure Rules</li> <li>Sources of specialist advice and guidance</li> <li>Budget monitoring, comparing actual performance against approved budget, is undertaken throughout the financial year and reported to service committees.</li> <li>Outturn reporting and audit of statements supports in-year monitoring and future year planning</li> <li>Risk-based approach to the use of reserves, identifying appropriate reserve levels and ensuring that reserves are not depleted without first identifying a strategy to restore them to risk-assessed levels during the MTFS period.</li> <li>Where a residual deficit is forecast, a number of actions will be explored including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>use of any service or non-specific underspends to offset pressures elsewhere within the budget</li> <li>accessing external funding ensuring compliance with any funding conditions</li> <li>use of reserves</li> <li>use of general balances</li> </ul> </li> <li>Treasury management strategy to manage the council's cash flows, including an investment strategy focused on the security of principal sums and a borrowing strategy to manage interest payable and other charges</li> <li>A capital strategy that prioritises capital investment programmes, identifies the financial impact of investment in schemes and limits the amount of unsupported borrowing to be taken</li> </ul>	



- Education and training for Officers and Councillor, includes Finance and Contract Procedure rules
- Engagement with government departments related to financial models and consultation

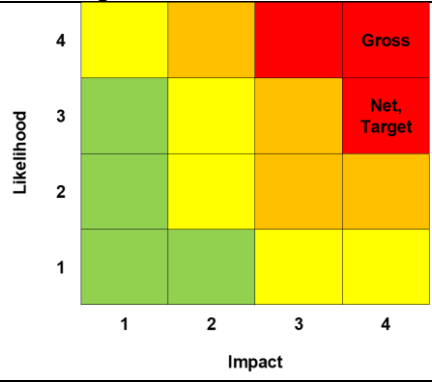
**Lead Service Committee:** Corporate Policy Committee

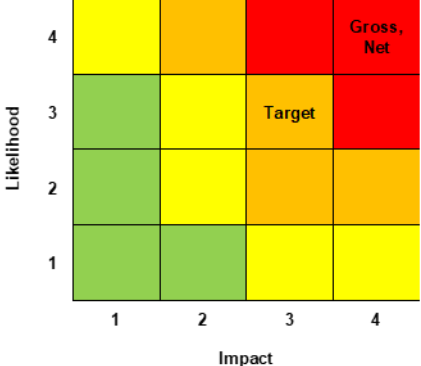
<b>Risk Name:</b> Information Security and Cyber Threat	<b>Risk Owner:</b> Executive Director of Corporate Services
<b>Risk Ref:</b> SRR4	<b>Risk Manager:</b> Head of Information Communication Technology and CIO
<b>Risk Description:</b> (Cause) There is a risk that as the Council continues to move towards using new technology systems to reduce costs and fulfil communication, accessibility, and transaction requirements, (threat) it becomes increasingly vulnerable to a security breach, either maliciously or inadvertently from within the Council or from external attacks by cyber-criminals. (Impact) This could result in many negative impacts, such as distress to individuals, legal, financial, and reputational damage to the Council, in addition to the possible penetration and crippling of the Council's IT systems preventing it from delivering its Corporate Outcomes.	<p>The risk matrix shows a risk level of 4 (High) based on the combination of Likelihood (4) and Impact (4). The cell is colored red and labeled 'Net, Target' and 'Gross'.</p>
<b>Interdependencies:</b> This risk has interdependencies with corporate risk SR5 Business Continuity and SR13 Reputation. It also has links to the Financial Resilience risk, as funds for maintenance and replacement will be stretched, placing additional strain on assets and resilience of information security controls.	
<b>Comments this quarter:</b> Work continues to define the work plan and activities under the Security & Compliance Programme. Risk workshops have been held with managers in ICT Services to embed a risk approach to project and business activities.	
PSN accreditation has been achieved for 22/23. New tools to monitor and capture phishing exploits are being deployed with additional training for staff to raise awareness being made available. Enhanced security features secured from Microsoft are being rolled out to further protect the estate.	
An Information Security Steering Committee has been setup to co-ordinate activity across the Security and Compliance Programme, the DLUHC Cyber Funded projects and the security projects within ICT Services.	
<b>Actions (Monitoring):</b>	
Simplify and consolidate the ICT infrastructure (TDA runs on a weekly basis to ensure that solution adhere to ICT principles of standardisation)	
Reduction of the information storage, removal of duplicates information and validate that the asset register is being adhered to (The Information Asset Register (IAR) is continually under review, the Records Management Team contact services via the Virtual Information Governance Group to request the services review their areas on the IAR. Services voluntarily contact the team to make amendments)	
Enhancement of the Data Classification and technical controls to further protect information, project has re-scope with the introduction of e% licensing (Peer review)	
Enable Data Quality consistency across multiple service areas. Master Data Management which will standardise the format and structure of corporate data fields which are prevalent across the Authority relating to Resident, Employee, Address and Business Records. Phase 1 MDM scheduled live date end of December (use of and assessment against the IADM national data quality standards)	
<b>Key Mitigating Controls:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The CIO is an advocate of and reports on Information Risk to the Corporate Leadership Team and the Audit and Governance Committee and makes the Annual Statement of Internal Control of Information Risk.</li> <li>The Council has a number of Information and Data Security policies which are published on the Centranet and help to protect from the Council from inappropriate and unauthorised access and communicates what to do in the case of an incident. Policies; Information Security Policy Overview, ICT Access Policy, ICT Communications and Operations Policy, ICT Computer, Telephone and Desk Use Policy, ICT Email and Messaging Policy, ICT Flexible and Mobile Device Policy, ICT Incident management Policy, ICT Infrastructure Policy, ICT Internet Policy, ICT Legal Responsibilities for Data Policy, ICT Personnel Standards for Information Security, ICT Protection Policy, ICT Removable Media Policy and ICT Software Policy. Policies review and guidance materials updated to strengthen advice to staff on how to manage various information types</li> <li>Progress on Information Risk and Information Security is monitored through the Information Security Steering Committee (ISSC), Strategic Information Governance Group (SIGG) and the Virtual IGG Task and Finish Group.</li> <li>The Council has an Incident Reporting process which has been communicated to staff, all incidents are scored and assessed by IGG to ensure that the breaches are minimised, and future breaches are reduced.</li> </ul>	

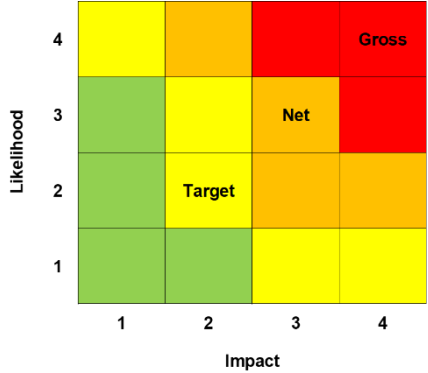
- The Council complies with the Public Services Network PSN Code of Connection, NHS Data Security and Protection Toolkit, DWP's MOU and NHS Digital controls, work continues with the consolidation and enhancement of elements of the security estate to meet the ever-developing threat profiles. This includes third party IT hardware and software tests undertaken by accredited security vendors, these validate that the network and hardware are secure and robust, if any vulnerabilities are found then a mitigation plan is drawn up and actioned.
- The Council has an Information Asset Register which is reviewed on an annual basis and has been published on the open data portal.
- There is also an Information Assurance Data Management (IADM) programme of activity to increase awareness and maturity of information assurance and governance across the Council. The programme is tasked with guiding the organisation to manage its information in a compliant and efficient way.
- Data Classification has been rolled out to the organisation; this allows the categorisation of information so that appropriate controls can be employed to protect the information.
- The Council provides security and compliance e-learning courses (which are mandatory for all employees) on the Learning Lounge and Metacompliance portal. This includes several modules of Data handling, Cyber Security, and Information Assurance.
- Controls are in place to restrict access to the data centres and network equipment and risk assessments of existing systems and networks are on-going.
- The Council has a Data Protection Officer who assists in ensuring compliance with GDPR and to specify the procedures to be adopted.
- The Council's ICT Services have a strategic direction to move to a "Cloud First" principle, whilst this enables an evergreen environment which is always up to date, additional controls are needed to prevent compromise or inappropriate use and access. This includes contract compliance and monitoring to ensure ongoing protection of information. In addition, the Council is looking to move to Zero Trust architecture, this is a direct result of increased threats posed to the working infrastructure. This shift is in line with the latest thinking and guidelines issued by the NCSC. In support of this a high-level business case was submitted and subsequently approved. This additional funding will be used to develop the necessary tools to start the implementation.
- An assessment was completed using the Council's insurance broker to understand current and future risks and whether any risks needed treating or could be offset through insurance cover.

**Lead Service Committee:** Corporate Policy Committee

<b>Risk Name:</b> Business Continuity	<b>Risk Owner:</b> Executive Director of Corporate Services
<b>Risk Ref:</b> SRR5	<b>Risk Manager:</b> Head of Audit & Risk
<p><b>Risk Description:</b> Failure to maintain business continuity after an unusual or unexpected, disruptive event or events</p> <p>The risk that, some or all, of the council's services, projects or initiatives are unable to resume operations within the expected timeframes after a disruption. A disruptive event, or multiple events, may occur either in isolation, or across the whole organisation.</p> <p>Detailed consequences: The council has a number of safeguarding obligations to its residents, a failure could result in it being unable to fulfil those obligations, and as such not protect them from mental or physical harm. Failures may also cause an unacceptable loss of local services.</p> <p>Detailed causes: The unavailability of staff, ICT systems, equipment or a suitable working environment are the most common causes of a material failure. Many different social, economic, environmental or public health factors can drive these causes to manifest themselves. Underlying this may also be a failure to reasonably allocate resources to eliminate single points of failure in these areas.</p>	
<b>Interdependencies (risks):</b> Information Security and Cyber Threat, Pandemic Virus, Fragility in the Social Care Market, Council Funding, Organisational Capacity & Demand	
<b>Comments this quarter:</b> Review of training materials to support use of ClearView use in progress. Exercise to ensure employee and users of ClearView system are current began in Q2 and continues into Q3. Working with ICT Services on refresh of Risk Registers is identifying a number of connection points into IT disaster recovery plans and areas to challenge service business continuity plans on in relation to their reliance on ICT, and expectations on sustained loss of service. These can be progressed through the refresh of the individual and organisation wide plans.	
<b>Actions (Monitoring):</b>	
Co-ordinate refresh of BC plans with specific focus on ICT systems (One off action)	
Review and refresh of the Business Continuity Framework (2-year review cycle)	
Development of training materials on Learning Lounge to support staff training and awareness (2-year review cycle)	
Introduce moderation of BC plans across a working group for internal challenge and support	
Work with Emergency Planning to hold regular scenario testing	
Assessment of BC software with ongoing organisational needs	
<b>Key Mitigating Controls:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implementation of Clearview; Business Continuity Software for business continuity planning; Clearview provides the process in an easily understandable format to identify critical and serious priority activities</li> <li>Executive Directors, Directors and Heads of Service have received training in developing Business continuity plans First round completed Feb 2020</li> <li>Awareness raising campaign by undertaking a Cyber Attack</li> <li>Awareness Exercise and fire in a public building (in addition to emergency planning colleagues and also included a community flooding and a fire scenario which had business continuity implications and the council's response) with colleagues from across various areas of the Council</li> <li>The Clearview system enabled staff to review and revise their BC plans for both Departmental and Service Level Plans with relevant templates for appendices (in line with the structure formats)</li> <li>All BC plans were uploaded to the system by March 2020 and have been asked to review in light of second wave COVID</li> <li>High level course on Business Continuity Management has been added to the Council's Learning Lounge</li> <li>ICT Shared Service also have a Crisis Recovery Plan that has been updated to take account of lessons learned as a result of ICT outage incidents. This Crisis recovery plan overview contains key information for the ICT Shared Service disaster recovery</li> <li>A corporate business continuity plan has been developed and is contained within Clearview</li> </ul>	
<b>Lead Service Committee:</b> Corporate Policy Committee	

<b>Risk Name:</b> Organisational Capacity and Demand	<b>Risk Owner:</b> Executive Director of Corporate Services
<b>Risk Ref:</b> SRR6	<b>Risk Manager:</b> Head of HR
<p><b>Risk Description:</b> Local demographic and external factors (including COVID and EU Exit) lead to increasing and changing demands on services. This, combined with ongoing financial pressures, an ageing workforce, staff turnover and skills shortages in key areas of the workforce, result in insufficient capacity and an inability to retain or attract staff. This results in a detrimental impact upon physical, emotional and mental wellbeing of staff, and impacts negatively on the Council's ability to deliver all of its intended objectives and outcomes. More recently increases to the cost of living also present risks to the resilience and wellbeing of our workforce and therefore the capacity to respond to demand.</p>	
<b>Interdependencies (risks):</b> Business Continuity, Pandemic Virus, Increased demand for Adults Services, Increased demand for Children's Services, Financial Resilience	
<b>Comments this quarter:</b> Gross scores remain the same. The labour market nationally remains challenging and additional pressures are being seen from the increases to the cost of living. Staff continue to work flexibly, alongside designing a future hybrid way of working. The development of a recruitment and retention is underway, with targeted actions to address any identified workforce gaps.	
<b>Actions (Monitoring):</b>	
Revised Council wide Workforce Strategy and Directorate /Service Workforce Plans (3-year strategy then rolling coverage and review)	
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy (3-year strategy then rolling coverage and review)	
Recruitment and Retention Programme and Steering Group. (Work of the programme overseen by Steering Group.)	
<p><b>Key Mitigating Controls:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In terms of the demand, work planning in advance has been improved. Significant increases in work pressures are being raised in advance, so that additional resource can be sourced for commissioned work. Improved HR data is being used to identify potential issues and service workforce plans developed to mitigate. The apprenticeship levy and talent management and succession planning frameworks are under development to help mitigate</li> <li>Work on a recruitment and retention programme progresses at pace to put in place any additional measures available to attract and retain staff to those areas that have identified gaps. This is alongside consideration being given to identifying controls and support that can be provided to retain existing staff. Ongoing work to reduce work on reliance on agency staff, for a more stable permanent workforce base and reduced costs</li> <li>A range of comprehensive measures are in place to support staff wellbeing and resilience and additional measures to offset cost of living pressures in place. Additional wellbeing and benefits measures are also being explored as the national cost of living crisis develops</li> <li>Labour and national markets are now seeing significant movement due to the impacts of Covid19. Locally, there are particular pressures, for example, on the care sector, social workers, planning and ICT with some neighbouring authorities are offering higher salaries which impacts on staff retention</li> <li>Agency staff are not always available to fill the roles. Additional work programmes and recruitment campaigns are also in place for areas such as Care4CE and social work. Redeployment of staff is being considered where services are stretched and agency staff are not available</li> <li>The council is moving to agile working as a permanent feature of future ways of working, which may attract a wider pool of candidates. Alongside service workforce plans, a recruitment and retention programme in place to ensure the Council addresses identified shortfalls with agreed actions and service specific solutions</li> <li>The Head of HR considers that the measures reduce the likelihood but not the impact</li> </ul>	
<b>Lead Service Committee:</b> Corporate Policy Committee	

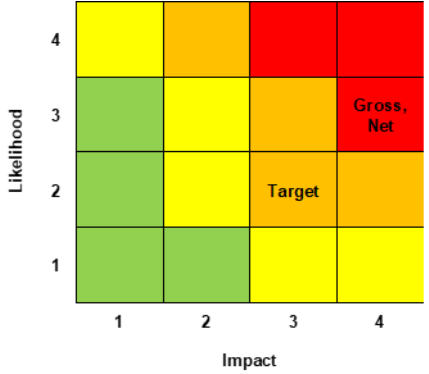
<b>Risk Name:</b> Failure of Council Funding	<b>Risk Owner:</b> Executive Director of Corporate Services
<b>Risk Ref:</b> SRR7	<b>Risk Manager:</b> Director of Finance and Customer Services (s151 Officer)
<p><b>Risk Description:</b> The risk that the level of income is insufficient to support delivery of the Corporate Plan. This risk acknowledges that council reserves are not a sufficient, or intended, to support day-to-day operations for any meaningful period.</p> <p>Consequences: Based on an extreme but plausible worst-case scenario of funding cuts, the council's regulatory obligations would be maintained, although delivered by barebones services. Other services may see similar resources reductions or be closed altogether. A reduction in services would negatively affect the quality of life in the borough and the strength of the local economy. Regulatory breaches could also occur in relation to a number of different services, financial management being one of them. Some funding is specific to a service or outcome and cannot be redistributed, without the designated funding a service could not be provided.</p> <p>Causes: Significant reduction to local income generation or central government cuts would result in the worst-case scenario. The high levels of national debt, high inflation and weak national economy mean that the council is likely to have to prioritise its spending in the short to medium-term.</p>	 <p>The risk matrix shows a 4x4 grid of risk levels. The y-axis is labeled 'Likelihood' and ranges from 1 to 4. The x-axis is labeled 'Impact' and ranges from 1 to 4. The cells are color-coded: Green (Low), Yellow (Medium), Orange (High), and Red (Very High). The current risk level is in the top-right cell (4,4), labeled 'Gross, Net'. A 'Target' label is in the cell (3,3).</p>
<b>Interdependencies (risks):</b> Financial Management and Control	
<b>Comments this quarter:</b> Risk description updated to draw out the consequences and causes, increase in the likelihood due to high levels of national debt, high inflation and a weak national economy. Budget balancing action added, funding for SEND services is also under review (also noted on SR1C Demand for children's services risk). Based on the external influences the target score has also been increased, reflecting the current pressures, there has been a reduction in the best-case scenario.	
<b>Actions (Monitoring):</b>	
Each directorate is required to develop an action plan to balance their budgets due to recent forecasts of financial pressure	
Children's Directorate is participating in the DfE's delivering better value (DBV) programme to support the council to achieve a more sustainable financial position in relation to SEND	
<p><b>Key Mitigating Controls:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Financial planning arrangements include preparation by the finance team of detailed financial forecasts, based on the best available information and including prudent assumptions based on professional judgement and external advice</li> <li>Balanced budget to put into effect the council's service plans for the forthcoming year, matched by available funding and including a risk assessment of the adequacy of general reserves</li> <li>Monitoring of grant funding formula, and engagement with consultants and government representatives to enhance local forecasting and access to funding.</li> </ul>	
<b>Lead Service Committee:</b> Corporate Policy Committee	

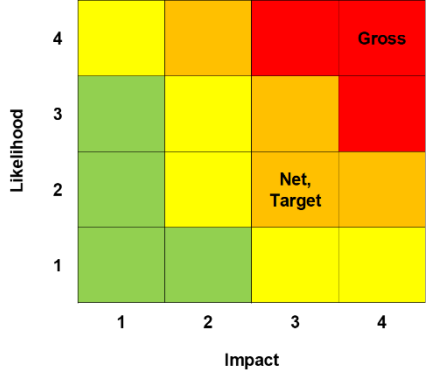
<b>Risk Name:</b> Governance & Decision Making	<b>Risk Owner:</b> Executive Director of Corporate Services
<b>Risk Ref:</b> SRR8A	<b>Risk Manager:</b> Director of Governance and Compliance
<p><b>Risk Description:</b> Failure to develop a robust corporate governance infrastructure and ensure aligned decision-making throughout the organisation</p> <p>The council is a complex public sector organisation with a broad range of objectives, some of which it is legally obligated to deliver, others are identified within its Corporate Plan. Formal reporting and decision-making within the council is prescribed by local authority regulation. The decision-making process at all levels, must comply regulatory requirements while also delivering those stated objectives.</p> <p>Detailed consequences: The failure of governance and decision-making may result in stated goals may not be met and, or public funds wasted. Ultimately these can result in a reduction of living standards and physical health and mental wellbeing of residents. Failure to provide a reasonable level of service to residents at an appropriate cost, or to follow legal decision-making protocols, can result in increased regulatory scrutiny and reputational damage. Possible outcomes of which may be, public censure, financial penalties or direct central government intervention.</p> <p>Detailed causes: The volume and complexity of the council's services and objectives, coupled with finite resources and differing stakeholder views, make the application of the Corporate Plan into 'good' decision-making, a challenge. Interpretation of 'good' decision-making may be inconsistent throughout the organisation without a holistic approach to guidance, reporting, oversight and challenge. Without comprehensive vertical reporting and challenge, senior management cannot effectively implement a robust level of accountability and drive positive change in their areas of responsibility.</p>	
<b>Interdependencies (risks):</b> Financial Resilience, Reputation, Capacity and demand, Political uncertainty	
<p><b>Comments this quarter:</b> Consequences updated to include poor use of public funds and reputational damage, causes reworded for greater clarity. Control added for the officer adjustments before an election as per the Recommended Code of Practice for Local Authority Publicity. Constitutional updates this period have focused on routine administrative amendments, action moved to the control section, as has decision-making reporting for committee meetings. Action added for a review of shared service governance arrangements due two issues that have developed this quarter. The publication of the joint targeted area inspection (JTAI) on Cheshire East Safeguarding Children's Partnership's response to children at risk of criminal exploitation. Also, the Annual Governance Statement 21/22 includes the review of ASDV governance arrangements as a significant governance issue, recognising the need for the Council's arrangements to be reviewed and updated in light of updated CIPFA guidance and a number of related public interest reports.</p> <p>Two potential issues in relation to the upon coming local election are being monitored and managed, proposed changes to legislation in relation to voter ID and the close proximity to the coronation of the monarch. With due note to the above, the overall position on this risk remains unchanged. Issues remain but are being identified and addressed in a practical manner.</p>	
<b>Actions (Monitoring):</b>	
Review of shared service governance arrangements with specific actions to be identified	
<p><b>Key Mitigating Controls:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Council's Constitution covers decision making processes, including finance and contract procedure rules. Following the change to Committee system, mechanisms are in place to capture learning form the use of the committee system from Members (Constitution Working Group)</li> <li>Constitution is a publicly available document; guidance on the use of the decision-making processes is provided by enabling services including Legal, Finance, Democratic Services, and Audit and Risk. Constitutional updates are overseen (recommended and administrated) by the Director of Governance and Compliance (also the Monitoring Officer) in response to regulatory changes and Full Council decisions.</li> <li>Administration of local elections and monitoring of behaviour in the period of heightened sensitivity beforehand. During which time, appropriate adjustments are made to the publishing or reporting of controversial issues or anything that seeks to influence voters.</li> <li>Reports to Committees are developed and reviewed by senior officers and enabler sign off, briefings are arranged with Committee Members to address any further knowledge requirements ahead of the relevant meeting. All decisions are formally recorded in meeting minutes and administrated in line with delegated authorities as per the constitution.</li> <li>Schemes of delegation; local and financial are in place to provide clarity on responsibilities ensure separation of duties is in place where required, and minimise the risk of management override</li> <li>Assurance mechanisms on the organisations' compliance with its decision-making processes are provided through the external audit (Statement of Accounts) and the work of the internal audit team. There are other external inspections, such as Ofsted, which may examine elements of our decision-making processes through their work, although this I not usually the primary focus</li> </ul>	

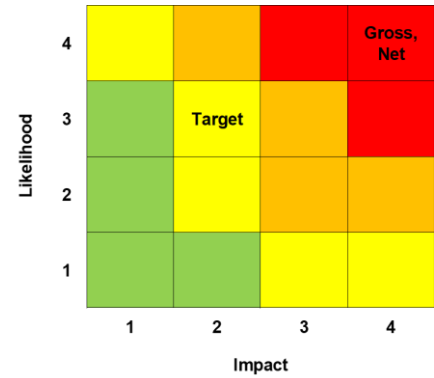
- The organisation publishes an Annual Governance Statement identifying significant governance issues which have occurred, any known areas which may cause issues if not managed effectively and updates on issues previously identified

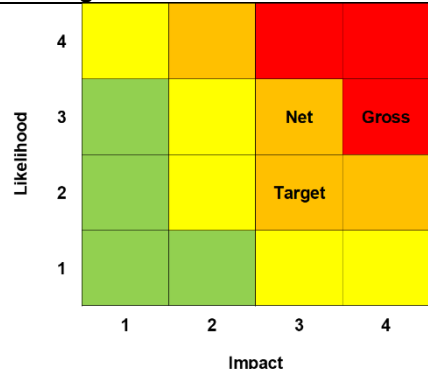
**Lead Service Committee:** Corporate Policy Committee

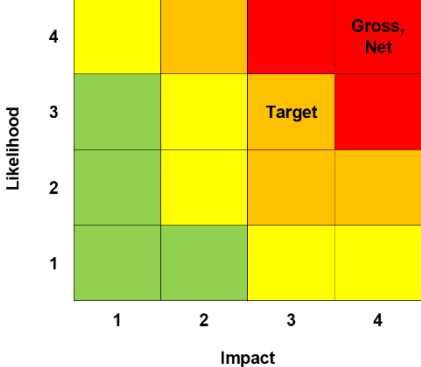


<b>Risk Name:</b> Political Uncertainty	<b>Risk Owner:</b> Chief Executive
<b>Risk Ref:</b> SRR8B	<b>Risk Manager:</b> Director of Governance and Compliance (Monitoring Officer)
<p><b>Risk Description:</b> Failure to anticipate and manage local and national political uncertainty</p> <p>The Corporate Plan guides the council's decision-making, it informs what is considered a 'good' outcome and areas of priority. Political changes may result in stakeholders no longer being aligned with that current plan. Central government policy decisions can materially impact the council in many ways, while other risks might draw out specific changes and capture their direct impact, this risk brings together the total effect of political uncertainty for consideration.</p> <p>Detailed consequences: Unplanned changes in priorities or the introduction of new goals are likely to result in a budgetary overspend or previously agreed targets not to be met. A high level of uncertainty can create confusion, increased administrative overhead or delay planned initiatives. Changes in funding or the cancellation of infrastructure projects can undermine both the Corporate Plan and the MTFS.</p> <p>Detailed causes: The ever-changing social and economic situation in the UK and globally can result in swift changes in political views, leadership, public sentiment or regulatory requirements. National macroeconomic factors, such as GDP, interest and exchange rates, are key drivers of uncertainty.</p>	
<b>Interdependencies (risks):</b> Reputation, Council Funding, Governance & Decision-Making	
<p><b>Comments this quarter:</b> Consequences, causes and controls updated, actions were in place and being repeated, so moved to controls section. No material change to the council and its operations. Uncertainty has increased and remains is high, no change to the rating. As at the end of Q2 a new Prime Minister has just be elected which is expected to bring about a degree of change, challenge and future clarity on policy.</p> <p>Current issues that are potentially disruptive is the level of uncertainty in central government policy and national financial instability. Notable, developing or slow burn issues are levelling up, ICS, social care, HS2, Great British Railways and devolution.</p>	
<b>Actions (Monitoring):</b>	
System for briefing and information exchange on white papers, levelling up, ICS and devolution solutions	
Preparation Elections 2023 and delivery of Corporate Plan Reprioritisation/new plan after elections.	
<p><b>Key Mitigating Controls:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engagement with national government, consultations and requests for feedback</li> <li>Application for and funding agreement processes, governance process for ad hoc grants</li> <li>Engagement with political administration of CEBC</li> <li>Engagement with group leaders of CEBC parties</li> <li>Training and briefing to CEBC members</li> <li>Service Committee support and briefings for members and senior officers</li> <li>Corporate Plan and MTFS regular and ad hoc (post material changes) review process, including contingency planning</li> </ul>	
<b>Lead Service Committee:</b> Corporate Policy Committee	

<p><b>Risk Name:</b> Capital Projects - Place</p> <p><b>Risk Ref:</b> SRR9</p> <p><b>Risk Description:</b> Failure to deliver major capital projects.</p> <p>The council delivers a broad range of capital projects in support of the aims and objectives of its Corporate Plan. The range of projects includes transport infrastructure, town centre regeneration, refurbishment and improvement of existing council assets such as schools and leisure centres, and renewable energy generation.</p> <p>Without a robust system for managing the capital programme and individual projects, the stated objectives may not be delivered. Projects could also fail to deliver to the time, cost and quality parameters set out in business cases. This could have significant financial and reputational implications for the Council.</p> <p>The scale and complexity of the overall capital programme is challenging. Appropriate governance and controls are important to ensure resources and funding are prioritized effectively, and where required agree adjustments to the time, cost and quality parameters set out in the business case. Where appropriate, members are updated on significant changes to agreed objectives through briefings to the relevant committee.</p> <p>The broad range of partners and stakeholders for individual projects and interdependencies between projects are also significant challenges that require effective management.</p> <p><b>Interdependencies (risks):</b> Climate change, Infrastructure Investment, Economy, Council Funding</p> <p><b>Comments this quarter:</b> The existing controls for effective governance and management of major capital projects remain in place. Each major capital scheme has its own project or programme governance in place. Additional governance mechanisms include Assets Board and Place Board providing oversight on thematic programmes. The review of the inflationary impact on capital projects has been completed. Additional funding has been agreed for some projects, funded from allocations within the Capital Programme for Exceptional Inflation and Strategic Projects, subject to appropriate approval procedures.</p> <p><b>Actions (Monitoring):</b></p> <p>A new module within the Unit4 ERP system will improve financial monitoring to provide more regular information on actual and forecast spend</p> <p><b>Key Mitigating Controls:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Capital Strategy and overall Capital Programme is presented annually as part of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy at full Council.</li> <li>• New projects and schemes are subject to the approval of detailed business cases in accordance with the Finance Procedure Rules</li> <li>• The Assets Board provides strategic oversight of the Council's land and property assets including recommendations and reports on acquisition, disposal and development.</li> <li>• The Capital Programme Board undertakes detailed appraisals of projects and business cases; undertakes gateway reviews and risk management reviews of major capital projects; and receives post project completion reports to assess benefit realisation and lessons learnt.</li> <li>• Appropriate and proportionate governance has been established to oversee project delivery, including risk registers. This includes project boards to manage individual projects and thematic programme boards to provide additional strategic oversight and manage interdependencies, e.g. Carbon Neutral Programme Board, Leisure Investment programme Board, Place Board. This governance considers and makes practical decisions on the prioritisation of resources and funding including, where appropriate adjustments to agreed time, cost and quality parameters.</li> <li>• The Place Board provides strategic oversight of all the major Crewe-centric and Macclesfield-centric projects, including HS2 and strategic housing sites, to ensure individual projects are fully aligned to the overarching vision and delivery plan for each town.</li> <li>• Financial monitoring undertaken quarterly, with summary data reported to Finance Sub-Committee and appropriate service committee twice a year</li> <li>• High level progress updates are reported to the appropriate service committee twice a year. More detailed progress reports on individual projects or programmes are provided on a periodic basis.</li> <li>• Regular 121s between Executive Director and Directors which includes updates on major projects</li> </ul> <p><b>Lead Service Committee:</b> Economy and Growth, Environment and Communities, Highways and Transport</p>		<p><b>Risk Owner:</b> Executive Director of Place</p> <p><b>Risk Manager:</b> Place Directors and Business Managers as relevant to</p>  <p>The risk matrix shows a 4x4 grid of risk levels. The y-axis is labeled 'Likelihood' and ranges from 1 to 4. The x-axis is labeled 'Impact' and ranges from 1 to 4. The cells are color-coded: Green for Low risk (Likelihood 1-2, Impact 1-2), Yellow for Medium risk (Likelihood 3, Impact 1-2; or Likelihood 1-2, Impact 3-4), and Red for High risk (Likelihood 3-4, Impact 3-4). The cell at (4,4) is labeled 'Gross' and the cell at (3,3) is labeled 'Net, Target'.</p>	
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<b>Risk Name:</b> HS2 Infrastructure Investment	<b>Risk Owner:</b> Executive Director of Place
<b>Risk Ref:</b> SRR10	<b>Risk Manager:</b> Director of Highways and Transport
<p><b>Risk Description:</b> HS2 is a government led scheme, impacting Cheshire East Borough. HS2 services will call at Crewe station when Phase 2a opens between 2029 and 2033 with 2 HS2 trains per hour. Plans for Phase 2b include the Crewe North Connection that could enable up to 5/7 HS2 trains per hour calling at Crewe, in each direction. However, the business case for Phase 2b does not include any additional services, from the 2 HS2 trains per hour, calling at Crewe when Phase 2b opens between 2035 and 2040.</p> <p>Government's proposals for Crewe hub station fall far below those of other HS2 hubs and don't reflect its role as a rail super-hub and the first HS2 hub in the North. Current proposals are unlikely to unlock the regeneration, growth and levelling up potential for Crewe from the investment in HS2. Securing the required investment for the Crewe station is critical to the Council in delivering its Crewe hub vision, maximise cost and programme efficiencies and minimise disruption to rail passengers and local communities.</p> <p>The government is in control of the HS2 programme and its delivery timescales. Delays to the scheme have been announced as part of the Integrated Rail Plan, published in November 2021. Such delays, and the risk of further delays to HS2 Phase 2b, leads to uncertainty on the delivery and viability of the Council's wider ambitions for the Crewe hub. The Council has been developing its vision and plans for the Crewe hub alongside partners for several years, at significant cost to the Council, lack of firm commitments about timing, infrastructure and HS2 train services means there are uncertainties on the programme delivery and scope puts increasing risk on these costs being abortive</p>	
<b>Interdependencies (risks):</b> Economy and World Events, Organisational Capacity and demand, Council funding, Capital Projects	
<b>Comments this quarter:</b> Risk description updated to better define the risk, no change to the rating, actions updated.	
<b>Actions (Monitoring):</b>	
Tactical lobbying to Government, gaining support from local politician, MPs and neighbouring authorities (Business Case and Investment Integration Programme Board)	
Seeking necessary Crewe hub investments via petitioning of the Phase 2b hybrid bill (HS2 and Crewe Superhub Programme Board and Place Board)	
Decoupling investments from HS2 programme and seek funding from existing government funds	
<p><b>Key Mitigating Controls:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This risk will be reviewed by the Place Board (chaired by the Executive Director of Place) and the Business Case and Investment Integration Board (chaired by the Director of Finance) on a monthly basis and the chairs inform CLT accordingly.</li> <li>Day to day management of the actions in place to reduce the risk is a combination of the BCII: Business Case and Investment Integration, the Programme Director and the Programme Manager. The controls above will be used to monitor the risk.</li> <li>There have been no control failures to date. In fact, the controls in place today are probably stronger than at any point in achieving the objective. This is commensurate to the closing window of opportunity and the increase in work required by the Council to turn the outputs of the consultants Business Case work. Future issues may arise if the dedicated resource currently requested is not quickly put in place to release the efficiencies of working a close dedicated team brings.</li> <li>Ultimately, while the Council can control the technical evidence, business case formation and the technical level negotiation with Government Departments, the risk may be impacted on by changes Government policy and prevailing global economic factors.</li> <li>Value engineering of design and development of projects and Early Contractor Involvement where appropriate.</li> <li>Bringing forward elements of the vision through existing funding sources such as Levelling Up Fund</li> <li>Liaison with the contracting industry to identify the most efficient design solutions.</li> <li>Constant review and effective management arrangements of capital projects and programme budgets.</li> <li>Managing outward facing expectations on the scheme</li> <li>Ongoing cost review based on latest construction inflation forecasts</li> </ul>	
<b>Lead Service Committee:</b> Highways and Transport, Environment and Communities, Economy and Growth	

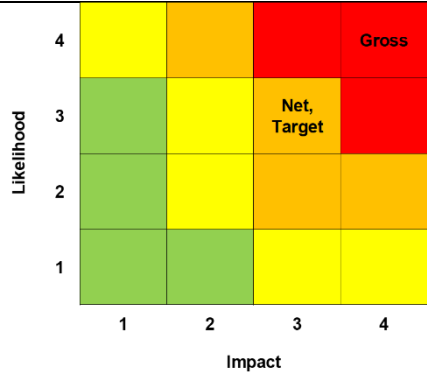
<b>Risk Name:</b> Pandemic Virus	<b>Risk Owner:</b> Executive Director of Adults, Health and Integration
<b>Risk Ref:</b> SRR11	<b>Risk Manager:</b> Director of Public Health
<p><b>Risk Description:</b> Ongoing risk of genetic shift resulting in rapidly spreading strain of influenza and other diseases previously unseen in humans for which there may be multiple Variants and no guaranteed preventative treatment available. In addition to the human health risks pandemic illnesses poses a risk to healthcare capacity and CEC business continuity.</p> <p>(Cause) The world-wide spread of COVID-19 in the early part of 2020 and the ongoing spread of the virus within the population, and the measures being introduced or in place to try to contain that spread and manage the impact of the virus, (threat) have a negative impact upon the health and wellbeing of the Cheshire East population, place significant pressures upon the health and care system and its workforce, threaten the viability of local business and further exacerbate the financial pressures faced by health and care organisations and the Council, (impact) resulting in serious illness and in some cases death, unmet health and care needs, interruption to education, economic down turn and business failure and a widening financial gap in health and care organisations.</p>	 <p>The risk matrix shows a 'Net' risk of Orange (Medium-High) and a 'Gross' risk of Red (Critical) for a Likelihood of 3 and Impact of 4.</p>
<b>Interdependencies (risks):</b> Fragility in the social care market, Business continuity, Financial resilience	
<b>Comments this quarter:</b> This threat persists into winter 2022/23 with significant pressures being placed on NHS organisations within Cheshire East and consequent follow on pressures to adult social care. The medium to long term impacts of this pandemic will impact on our services and delivery.	
<b>Actions (Monitoring):</b>	
Initiating flu vaccination programme for all staff and communications supporting need for public vaccinations (reviewed monthly)	
Development of regional 'business as usual' approach for Cheshire and Merseyside (reviewed quarterly)	
Horizon scanning to understand long-term management of Covid-19, including the development of a Covid-19 'Early Warning System' and wastewater monitoring project with UKHSA (reviewed monthly)	
<p><b>Key Mitigating Controls:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limited National Government advisory measures. Published guidance and advice is now only available in limited sectors. The primary universal guidance is now outlined in the HM Government 'Living with Covid-19' plan but all mandatory Legislation and restrictions have now been removed in the UK</li> <li>National Vaccine roll out</li> <li>Cheshire East Emergency Planning activity, reduced frequency - Local Outbreak Engagement Board, Health Protection Board, Operational meetings, Track and Trace Huddle</li> <li>Advice and guidance to schools, businesses and residents</li> <li>Track and Trace Team activity, proactive in supporting targeted individuals/communities/businesses as well as initiating a mobile health and wellbeing offer to improve individual health and resilience. TTCE Programme maintained until October 2022</li> <li>Cheshire East organisational activity, managed return to the workplace, hybrid working option, public health advice, targeted LFT home testing for staff</li> <li>Vaccination tracing to target individuals not vaccinated to promote uptake</li> <li>Supporting NHS roll out of COVID 19 vaccination programme, established and operating including mobile offer. Spring programmes being supported by the public health and communities teams.</li> <li>Initiating flu vaccination programme for all staff and communications supporting need for public vaccinations</li> </ul>	
<b>Lead Service Committee:</b> Adults and Health Committee	

<b>Risk Name:</b> Fragility and Failure in the Social Care Market	<b>Risk Owner:</b> Executive Director of Adults, Health and Integration
<b>Risk Ref:</b> SRR12	<b>Risk Manager:</b> Director of Adult Social Care, Director of Commissioning
<p><b>Risk Description:</b> A failure of the local social care market</p> <p>The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has exposed weaknesses in the national social care market which have yet to be resolved.</p> <p>Detailed consequences: The council is unable to deliver a robust adult social care package without the use of third-party providers, without these outsourced services the overall social adult care package would fail, and the council would not be able to achieve its objective of people living well and for longer.</p> <p>Detailed causes: The adult social care sector continues to experience financial strain, staffing costs are a high proportion of their overall expenditure while recruitment and retention remain a challenge. Traditionally the market suffers from small margins and has suffered from systemic challenges for years, which were further exposed by the COVID-19 pandemic. The impacts of inflation and the fair cost of care regulations have yet to be fully realised, although it is clear that additional costs will be passed on to the council.</p>	
<b>Interdependencies (risks):</b> NHS Funding Pressure, Financial resilience, Business Continuity, Pandemic Virus	
<b>Comments this quarter:</b> No change to the risk, still at the highest possible rating. We are seeing the impacts of inflation impacting on our Care budget, fee increases are having a major impact on our ability to manage the budget and this is having a further destabilising effect on the market. Providers report staffing shortages and difficulties maintaining stable structures. Some providers are now recruiting workers from abroad and this is beginning to have some limited benefit in areas of Care at Home	
<b>Actions (Monitoring):</b>	
Identify short term funding to support care providers to maintain sufficiently qualified workforce to meet need and reduce pressure on hospitals (Weekly via Market Oversight meetings)	
Establish a CEC crisis response team who can be called on at short notice to deliver care (Weekly via Market Oversight meetings)	
Expand the existing British Red Cross service to respond to crisis situations in the community by providing low level support over a 7-day period (Weekly via Market Oversight meetings)	
Undertake a review of care fees for all sectors of the market (Weekly meetings with contractor, findings reported to Health and Adult Committee)	
ASC/ Commissioning continues to respond to significant challenges pertaining to the acceleration of prevention (Twice weekly ASC meetings)	
ASC/Commissioning and Communities have a Standard Set of Fit for the Future Contracts – that set out specific measurable outcomes pertaining to each service area in driving prevention and key performance indicators that will test the providers ability to retain a viable and sustainable business in responding to a population of changing need – higher levels of resident satisfaction and improved control (Quarterly contract management meetings)	
Continue to monitor and review preventative and support service activity (Twice weekly ASC meetings)	
Improved utilisation of public health JSNA and wider regional data sets informing future commissioning plans (Monthly JSNA steering group)	
Develop engagement with community groups and 3rd sector (Twice weekly ASC meetings)	
Liquid logic and contrOCC solutions to better map trend and demand (Twice weekly ASC meetings)	
To monitor and review thresholds and gatekeeping processes (Twice weekly ASC meetings)	
Review and strengthen partnership working with wider agencies (Monthly Quality Monitoring Partnership Forum)	
Data intelligence is used to understand where and what kind of service demand needs are in order to commission appropriately and effectively (Monthly Care at Home Commissioning meetings)	
Continue to engage with leaders across teams – informing and influencing change (Twice weekly ASC meetings)	
Continued engagement with people who access services and the involvement of Healthwatch and independent advocacy (Twice weekly ASC meetings)	
Joint working with 'skills for care' to encourage individuals to take up employment within the care sector (Weekly via Market Oversight meetings)	
Ongoing support for care providers to assist in their response to the COVID-19 outbreak (Fortnightly Mutual Aid calls with providers)	
'Hidden Carer's' initiative launched through Carer's Hub to help identify and support carers not known to the system (Weekly via Market Oversight meetings)	
<p><b>Key Mitigating Controls:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ASC/Commissioning comply with the Care Act 2014, in holding a provider risk register whereby we monitor and review risk pertaining to specific providers as part of our role working with Care Quality Commissioning pertaining to Market oversight</li> </ul>	

- ASC/Commissioning have in place a robust Care Act compliant – Contracts and Quality Monitoring Policy Framework – that makes clear – how quality is monitored in a person-centred way with a vast range of partners, when to activate a suspension protocol working with care quality commission and when/ how we are decommissioning services – keeping people at the centre of decision making regarding any service disruption or period of market failure
- ASC/Commissioning operate a monthly quality monitoring partnership forum that includes Police, Safeguarding, Care Quality Commission, ASC operations, Legal, CCG's and ASC lead commissioner – in the ongoing monitoring of quality and reporting and alerting of risk escalation that can be effectively managed – reports into relevant DMT's and Safeguarding Board
- ASC/Commissioning have a care sourcing/brokerage team support service and a local area co-ordination services- supporting vulnerable people to access wider community/ third sector services and wider more universal offers – diverting people away from care where appropriate utilising People Healing People services
- ASC/Commissioning provider financial self-assessment accreditation tool – to assist with the monitoring and management of potential uplift and or additional funding. This will ensure that funding is robustly based on clear evidence, against demand / trends in market development and impact on provider/ council and people accessing the service. For providers at risk we are offering an open book accounting exercise to ascertain the level of risk within that service
- ASC/Quarterly staff engagement groups are developed through leadership forums so to keep people informed and abreast of change as we progress in order to respond to demand and growth in the sector
- ASC/Commissioning are influencing and working with Cheshire CCG pertaining to local ICS and ICP plans regarding the overall reduction in demand and systems redesign work supporting an improved community offer and redesigned front door
- ASC/Commissioning with communities are developing a robust and responsive policy framework (People Helping People) with a vast range of third sector providers – thus reducing demand on adult social care
- ASC/Commissioning working with partners across the North-West via ADASS to address the future market capacity and workforce issues.
- The Council is working with skills for care to see what support it can give to the market in terms of recruitment and retention and build knowledge.
- As part of the contract management and quality assurance processes we check each provider's Business Continuity plan for robustness and make recommendations for improvement if required
- The Council has commissioned a new offer for informal and formal carers to ensure the right level of support is received for them to maintain their caring duties
- An on-call rota has been established to address any issues that may arise at weekends such as external provider staffing shortages impacting on the ability to undertake care calls
- The Council has written to service users to advise of the current situation and to request their patience and understanding if there is some disruption to their usual routine of care calls
- Care providers are RAG rated according to the risk of business disruption and have been asked to RAG rate service users according to their level of need
- Weekly market oversight and risk management meetings have been established within the Contracts and Quality team to update the risk register and oversight report and escalate issues as appropriate

**Lead Service Committee:** Adults and Health Committee



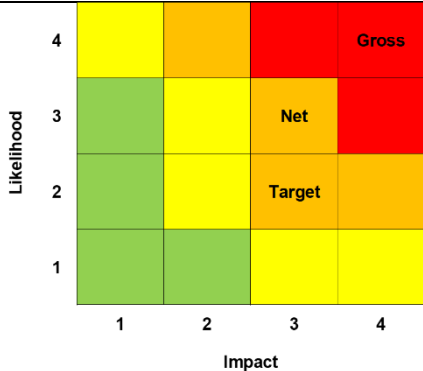
<b>Risk Name:</b> Reputation	<b>Risk Owner:</b> Chief Executive
<b>Risk Ref:</b> SRR13	<b>Risk Manager:</b> Head of Communications, Head of Customer Services, Research and Consultation Team Leader
<p><b>Risk Description:</b> That consideration is not given, and management action is not taken, to effectively manage the reputation of the Council, leading to a loss of public confidence, threatening the stability of the Council and our ability to meet the corporate priorities.</p> <p>The risk is managed primarily through the work in three different areas; Communication &amp; Media, Customer Experience and Consultation.</p>	
<b>Interdependencies:</b> The emergence of any issue highlighted as a strategic risk has the potential to represent a strategic risk to reputation	
<p><b>Comments this quarter:</b>  Communication &amp; Media: Corporate Policy Committee approved the draft Communications Strategy for Residents to go to public consultation ahead of consideration for approval and adoption at CPC in December 2022. During this period (Q2) we saw particular interest and activity in the following topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HM Queen Elizabeth II</li> <li>• Great British Railway HQ bid</li> <li>• HS2</li> <li>• South Macclesfield Development Area</li> <li>• Homes for Ukraine scheme</li> <li>• Crewe Town Centre regeneration</li> <li>• Best4Business programme</li> <li>• Middlewich petition</li> <li>• Roadworks</li> <li>• Public art projects</li> <li>• Recruitment and retention</li> </ul> <p>Customer Experience: First phase of technology to enhance the management, monitoring and analysis of customer contact implemented October 2022. Further phases including the delivery of live chat functionality and the management of e mails to be delivered Q3. Revised process for managing the quality of complaints and formal correspondence approved and to be trialled within Planning Service Q3. Ongoing embedding and monitoring of the Customer Charter. Successful leadership session delivered and plans for further sessions to wider audience underway.</p> <p>Consultation: Instances of EIA being published without modification or amendment have been occurring. As a result, a review of the sign off process will be undertaken to ensure that this remains robust and reduces risk. WLT have undertaken Customer Experience training. Improving the Customer Experience is a focus of the Transformation Programme, to support this new customer satisfaction measures have been developed and are monitored and reported on a quarterly basis through performance monitoring arrangements</p>	
<b>Actions (Monitoring):</b>	
Communication & Media:	
Explore development of communication strategies to influence public awareness of and informedness about key universal services, inc: planning, highways, waste and recycling (Quarterly review)	
Further development of the communications approach to supporting decision making under the ctte system (On-going reviews)	
Review Media Relations Protocol (Annual review)	
Align developing communications strategy to customer experience and digital strategies and approach to consultation and engagement (Quarterly review)	
Continue to develop proactive direct comms to be issued via e-mail / SMS – we currently have 34,000 subscribers for ‘push’ notifications across a range of topics (On-going review)	

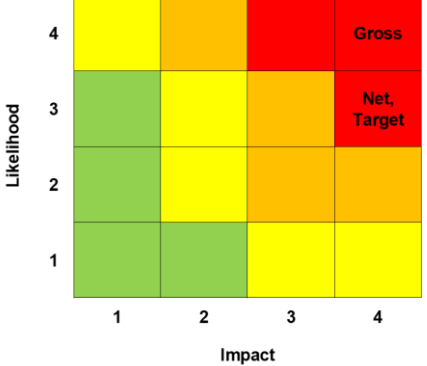
Include customer contact centre enquiries, MES and MP correspondence in reputation monitoring (On-going review)
Undertake a survey of residents to understand how they want to get information about council services, policies etc. To inform communications strategy(ies) and plans (Bi-annual review)
Use performance management reports for council services and programmes to identify reputational opportunities and risks at an early stage (On-going review)
Customer Experience
Improve the monitoring and analysis of customer contact and complaints to identify and resolve issues at an early stage
Introduce enhanced policies and procedures to improve the quality of responses to complaints and formal correspondence
Implement technology to enable front line staff to monitor the full end to end customer journey
Develop a new operating model for customer service delivery across the Council
Develop a policy for how the Council uses and engages with customers via social media
Consultation
Develop and introduce a One Council approach to consultation and engagement
Share and promote the new EIA template and guidance
The pilot of the Cheshire East People's Panel
<b>Key Mitigating Controls:</b> Communication & Media; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective monitoring and reporting of organisational reputation and sentiment.</li> <li>• Weekly reputation reporting to senior managers</li> <li>• Monitoring of social and traditional media</li> <li>• Communications and media function advised at an early stage of all future demand and emerging issues to enable effective planning</li> <li>• Providing a 24/7 emergency communications on call function</li> <li>• Communications strategies for key projects and issues developed agreed and reviewed with senior stakeholders and decision makers</li> <li>• Positive proactive communication across multiple channels to celebrate the council's successes and achievements, building positive reputation.</li> <li>• Comms programme planned and reviewed over short-term (daily) and long-term (monthly / annually)</li> <li>• Review communications business continuity, priorities and emergency / crisis comms protocols and plans</li> <li>• Media protocol and approvals process</li> <li>• Media training programme for key spokespersons</li> <li>• Senior member overview of COVID-specific communications activity through Local Outbreak Engagement Board</li> <li>• Regular COVID-specific comms activity reporting and planning as part of CEMART</li> <li>• Regular meetings with comms leads from public sector partner organisations to collaborate, share plans and intelligence</li> <li>• Values and behaviours for officers and members are established and organisational culture is monitored and supported through a range of initiatives under the culture programme.</li> <li>• Ensure that information about the Council, its services and how to access them is easily available in a range of formats for a wide range of audiences</li> <li>• Monitor public sector press (e.g. MJ and LGC) and maintain and develop relationships with these media outlets to maximise opportunities for positive coverage.</li> </ul> Customer Experience Existing Controls and Evidence; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consistency in standards of service and behaviours through the Customer Charter</li> <li>• Training for all staff and leaders to promote the importance of customer experience</li> <li>• Key performance measures on customer satisfaction and experience monitored</li> <li>• Random sampling and analysis of end to end customer journeys</li> <li>• Customer satisfaction and effort assessed post contact</li> <li>• Voice recording of all calls and ongoing performance management of Advisors</li> <li>• Regular liaison with services to ensure ongoing accuracy of advice and information provided and to plan for initiatives likely to generate high customer demand</li> <li>• Proactive identification of arising issues for customers and liaison with Communications Team to develop appropriate communications</li> <li>• Continuous improvement team tasked with root cause analysis of issues and identifying service improvements</li> </ul> Consultation; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that consultation is undertaken when any proposals are still at a formative stage</li> <li>• Consultation must give sufficient reasons for any proposal or change to permit stakeholders to undertake intelligent consideration and response to the options</li> <li>• Ensure consultation and engagement activity informs our evidence-based decision-making approach and that adequate time is given between the end of a consultation to allow for consideration of and where required, a response to, the output of a consultation or engagement</li> </ul>

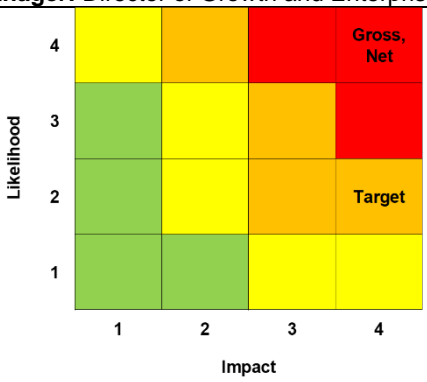


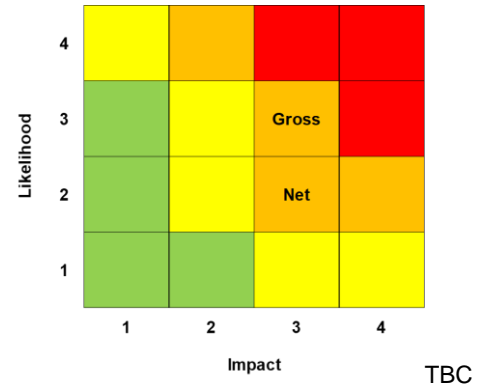
- Ensure that Equality Impact Assessments (EIA) are completed, appropriate for the purpose of use and that they are signed off before any consultation can begin
- When communicating about decisions, make it clear HOW consultation and engagement activity, EIA and other intelligence has been conscientiously taken into account when finalising the decision
- Evidence where are how output from consultation has been used to inform the decision-making process

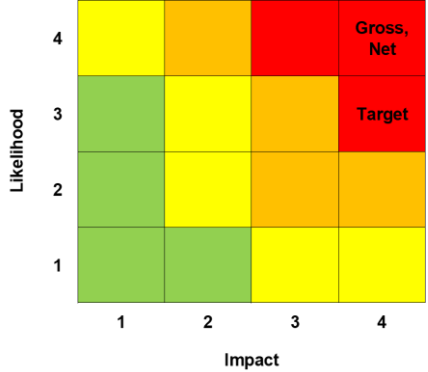
**Lead Service Committee:** Corporate Policy Committee

<b>Risk Name:</b> Climate Change (CEC Carbon Neutral Status 2025)	<b>Risk Owner:</b> Executive Director of Place
<b>Risk Ref:</b> SRR14	<b>Risk Manager:</b> Director of Environment & Neighbourhood Services, Head of Environmental Services
<b>Risk Description:</b> Failure to achieve Carbon Neutral status for the Council by the 2025 milestone target as a result of ineffective planning and delivery of actions, will result in non-delivery of a key priority in the Council's Corporate Plan. It will also contribute to climate change temperature rise and severe weather events which could have an impact on public health and safety. It could also have financial implications with increased need for adaptation of key infrastructure for severe weather events across the borough.	 <p>The risk matrix shows a risk level of 'Gross' (Red) for a Likelihood of 4 and Impact of 4. The risk level is 'Net' (Orange) for a Likelihood of 3 and Impact of 3. The risk level is 'Target' (Yellow) for a Likelihood of 2 and Impact of 3, and for a Likelihood of 3 and Impact of 2. The risk level is 'Gross' (Red) for a Likelihood of 4 and Impact of 2, and for a Likelihood of 4 and Impact of 1. The risk level is 'Gross' (Red) for a Likelihood of 3 and Impact of 4, and for a Likelihood of 2 and Impact of 4. The risk level is 'Gross' (Red) for a Likelihood of 1 and Impact of 4, and for a Likelihood of 1 and Impact of 3. The risk level is 'Gross' (Red) for a Likelihood of 1 and Impact of 2, and for a Likelihood of 1 and Impact of 1. The risk level is 'Gross' (Red) for a Likelihood of 2 and Impact of 1, and for a Likelihood of 3 and Impact of 1. The risk level is 'Gross' (Red) for a Likelihood of 4 and Impact of 3, and for a Likelihood of 4 and Impact of 2, and for a Likelihood of 4 and Impact of 1. The risk level is 'Gross' (Red) for a Likelihood of 3 and Impact of 2, and for a Likelihood of 3 and Impact of 1, and for a Likelihood of 2 and Impact of 3, and for a Likelihood of 2 and Impact of 2, and for a Likelihood of 2 and Impact of 1, and for a Likelihood of 1 and Impact of 2, and for a Likelihood of 1 and Impact of 1.</p>
<b>Interdependencies (risks):</b> Economy and World Events, Organisational Capacity and demand, Council funding, Capital Projects	
<b>Comments this quarter:</b> No material change to the risk in Q2, previously identified pressures remain a significant hurdle but existing controls and planned actions are being delivered as expected. No significant events to note since the last update.	
<b>Actions (Monitoring):</b>	
Secure land for tree planting and solar farm development for 2023/24 and 2024/25 planting seasons. (Final land agreements to be agreed with Assets and Rural Economy)	
Assess mitigation for risk of Fleet and Heat decarbonisation projects failing to meet targets. (Annual progress update presented to Economy & Growth committee)	
<b>Key Mitigating Controls:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Risk is reviewed as part of the brighter futures transformation projects board, operational board and member steering group.</li> <li>• Carbon Neutral programme established with Programme Board reviewing progress and risks monthly</li> <li>• Member Advisory group overseeing its delivery</li> <li>• Annual update on progress reported to relevant committee</li> <li>• Climate change is a key consideration as part of our statutory planning duties as an authority and within the development of local planning policy</li> <li>• Planned natural offset set at 10% more than required to reduce risk of non-delivery in any one project area.</li> </ul>	
<b>Lead Service Committee:</b> Environment and Communities	

<b>Risk Name:</b> Failure of the Local Economy	<b>Risk Owner:</b> Executive Director of Place
<b>Risk Ref:</b> SR 15	<b>Risk Manager:</b> Director of Growth and Enterprise
<p><b>Risk Description:</b> Failure of the local economy</p> <p>The risk that the local economy does not realise the expected level of growth due to an inability to attract, grow and retain commercial enterprises, residents and visitors. The borough has a strong local economy, an above average Gross Value Added (GVA), some areas of deprivation and is reliant on a number of different industries.</p> <p>Consequences: The failure of enterprises reduces the local money supply, reducing the standard of living for residents and council income. Secondary effects can include a reduction in public health and the loss of highly trained or skilled individuals. Consequences and causes, over the medium to long-term can have a symbiotic relationship, creating either an upward or downwards spiral. An example of this is shops closing in a town centre, then reduced footfall resulting in further closures.</p> <p>Causes: The local economy is significantly driven by changes in the national economy, taxation and other government policies. However the failure to maintain parity, or offer benefits above other boroughs, can lead to a relatively larger economic downturn. As noted above poverty and deprivation, like other issues, can be both a consequence and cause causing a snowball effect.</p>	
<b>Interdependencies (risks):</b> Capital Projects, HS2 Infrastructure Investment, Pandemic Virus, Climate Change	
<b>Comments this quarter:</b> Scope of the risk refined with a focus on the local economy rather than the national. Risk appetite, controls and interdependencies updated. No actions as net score is equal to target, indicating that the risk is being managed as well as possible given the level of influence available. As noted in the risk description, central government policy and the national economy are the main drivers. Recent political uncertainty and poor national economic performance have driven an increase in both net and target score although headroom remains for a further increase.	
<b>Actions (Monitoring):</b>	
N/A	
<p><b>Key Mitigating Controls:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employment support</li> <li>• Business forum to engage and plan future support</li> <li>• Investment plans to support regeneration and development</li> <li>• Place marketing and inward investment</li> <li>• Central government support and business grants</li> </ul>	
<b>Lead Service Committee:</b> Economy and Growth	

<b>Risk Name:</b> Integrated Care System (ICS) Integration	<b>Risk Owner:</b> Executive Director of Adults, Health and Integration
<b>Risk Ref:</b> SR16	<b>Risk Manager:</b> Director of Growth and Enterprise
<p><b>Risk Description:</b> The failure to integrate communication and decision-making with the local ICS partnership</p> <p>The ICS develops strategies that improve public health, reduce health inequalities and ensure the health and care system across Cheshire and Merseyside is sustainable.</p> <p>Potential consequences: Without effective and timely communication to support decision-making all partners could struggle to deliver their services to the best of their ability. Public health and wellbeing would suffer in the Cheshire and Merseyside areas.</p> <p>Potential causes: Poor or incomplete governance arrangements and delayed transfer of care assessments impact on the efficiency of the council services.</p>	 <p>The risk matrix shows a 4x4 grid of Likelihood (1-4) vs Impact (1-4). The colors represent risk levels: Green (Low), Yellow (Medium), Orange (High), and Red (Very High). The top-right cell (4,4) is labeled 'Gross, Net' and the cell (3,4) is labeled 'Target'.</p>
<b>Interdependencies (risks):</b> Increased demand for Adult's Services, Increased demand for Children's Services, Pandemic Virus	
<p><b>Comments this quarter:</b> New Governance arrangements and section 75 have been approved and are now in place, including the Cheshire East Health and Care Partnership Board, which has met in shadow format, and will meet fully in Nov 22. The joint appointment of the Director of Commissioning within the ICB as the Associate Director Transformation &amp; Partnerships /Cheshire &amp; Mersey ICB Cheshire East will have an impact on communications from the ICS to the LA. Although Communications between the ICS and local 'Places' including the ICB are still limited while structures are still under developments, with ongoing mapping of programme at C&amp;M and Place level.</p> <p>Visits are due on the 27th Oct and 7th Nov from the ICS (including Graham Urwin) with the Cheshire East Place to understand more about the progress and level of 'maturity' of the Cheshire East 'Place'. Our local self-assessments against the indicate that we have progressed against most of the domains within the C&amp;M Maturing Framework. This is due to the development of our local integrated Governance arrangements, partnership working and strategic developments.</p>	
<b>Actions (Monitoring):</b>	
To continue to be a key player in the development of the integrated care system at a regional and local level (Via ICS review visits (bi-monthly) new Governance arrangements (Monthly), A&H Committee (bi-monthly), Health and Wellbeing Board (bi-monthly))	
The development of new local Integrated Governance arrangements (Via Health and Care Partnership Board (bi-monthly) Leadership Group (bi-weekly))	
Joint appointment of the Director of Commissioning as the Associate Director of Transformation and Partnerships (Via the Director of Place and Executive Director of Adults, Health and Integration)	
<p><b>Key Mitigating Controls:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Cheshire East Integrated Care Partnership has been in place since October 2020 and is developing implementation plans across a number of work streams designed to achieve quality improvement and financial efficiencies across the system</li> <li>Progress on the ICP is reported to the Health and Wellbeing Board and Adults and Health Committee</li> <li>Evidence of progress and reporting is available via Full Council and Adults and Health Committee</li> <li>Self-Assessments have been undertaken against the C&amp;M Maturing Framework, which provides evidence of progress towards health and care integration against four domains. Presentations on local integration progress have been delivered during regular review visits with the ICS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Governance reports and minutes for newly formed Governance arrangements for integration including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Health and Care Partnership Board</li> <li>Strategic Planning and Transformation Group</li> <li>Operational Group</li> <li>Enabler Workstreams</li> <li>Programme Groups</li> <li>Care Communities</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<b>Lead Service Committee:</b> Adults and Health Committee	

<b>Risk Name:</b> LPA Modernisation Plan	<b>Risk Owner:</b> Executive Director of Place
<b>Risk Ref:</b> SR17 (NEW)	<b>Risk Manager:</b> Director of Environmental and Neighbourhood Services
<p><b>Risk Description:</b></p> <p>Following the completion and report of the Local Planning Authority Report, a modernisation plan is in place to achieve the transformation of the service. Failure to complete the actions of the modernisation plan will undermine the planned transformation of the service, perpetuating and potentially extending the issues identified and undermining the reputation of the organisation.</p> <p>Detailed consequences: Failure to achieve completion of the modernisation plan will undermine the performance of the Council in its Local Planning Authority role, result in non-compliance with statutory processes, and reputational damage to the Council. By not achieving the modernisation plan within agreed timescales, the potential for overspend increases.</p> <p>Detailed causes: Insufficiency of the relevant/necessary resource to ensure completion of actions in the required timescales (ICT, staff, and skills), failure to engage with internal and external stakeholders to affect necessary changes, lack of oversight from the Planning Transformation Board, lack of agreed change management process within the modernisation plan.</p>	 <p style="text-align: right;">TBC</p>
<b>Interdependencies (risks):</b> Organisational Capacity and Demand, Reputation, Council Funding,	
<b>Comments this quarter:</b> TBC	
<b>Actions (Monitoring):</b>	
TBC	
<p><b>Key Mitigating Controls:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environment and Communities Report 31/10/2022; Local Planning Authority Review and Service Transformation Report and Modernisation Plan.</li> <li>• Planning Services Transformation Plan</li> <li>• Monitoring of progress against modernisation plan by Transformation Board and Environment and Communities Board</li> <li>• Internal Audit reports on Community Infrastructure Levy and Section 106 will inform the scope of a member/officer working group</li> </ul>	
<b>Lead Service Committee:</b> Environment and Communities	

<b>Risk Name:</b> Delivery of the JTAI Improvement Plan	<b>Risk Owner:</b> Executive Director of Children's Services
<b>Risk Ref:</b> SR18 (NEW)	<b>Risk Manager:</b> Executive Director of Children's Services
<p><b>Risk Description:</b> That as a safeguarding children's partnership, Cheshire East Council's children's services, health, and police, do not achieve the improvements needed at the necessary pace to address the recommendations from the joint targeted area inspection (JTAI) of child exploitation, including child sexual exploitation.</p> <p>This would mean that we would not achieve the council's desired outcomes for children and young people at risk of exploitation. There is also a reputational risk of not delivering the required improvements, as this could result in an inadequate rating by Ofsted. An inadequate rating by Ofsted would have a significant impact on the council's reputation, ability to recruit and retain staff, and would increase costs in order to deliver improvement activity.</p> <p>Significant work is required to deliver these improvements which requires sufficient capacity and resources. High quality work to support children and young people is dependent on being able to achieve a stable and experienced workforce. Nationally and locally there are challenges recruiting and retaining staff within specific areas of children's services, which is resulting in higher than average workloads and some delays in delivering services. There is a risk that this could result in children experiencing delays in receiving support leading to escalation of need and increased risk of poorer outcomes - including risk of harm and risk to life, a lack of continuity of workers for children and young people, and increased costs to the council.</p>	
<p><b>Interdependencies (risks):</b> This risk shares an interdependency with the risk relating to demand to children's services, and demand to adult social care and health services. If adult services or NHS services experience an increase in demand/ complexity this could impact on the quality of support delivered by children's services, as services rely on adults and health input to ensure children's needs are assessed and met. Increased demand to children's services will result in increased workloads which will impact on the ability to release staff for training or to deliver high quality and timely work. Improving the quality of support to children and young people requires all three statutory partners (local authority, health and police) to work together effectively to develop services at pace. All three agencies are dependent on each other to work together as a partnership and provide robust scrutiny and challenge on the outcomes achieved for children and young people.</p>	
<p><b>Comments this quarter:</b> This is a new risk following the joint targeted inspection of child exploitation in Cheshire East, and the publication of the inspection findings. A number of changes were made immediately following the inspection to ensure that children and young people at risk of exploitation were safe, and to improve processes to protect children and young people from harm. A comprehensive partnership improvement plan is now in place which addresses all of the recommendations from the inspection as detailed in the letter of findings. An Improvement Executive Board is in place to scrutinise progress against the plan and ensure that this is achieved at pace. Governance arrangements are currently being established to support effective delivery of the plan and scrutiny of its impact on outcomes for children and young people. There is strong partnership commitment to ensuring changes are achieved for children and young people.</p>	
<p><b>Actions (Monitoring):</b></p> <p>Establish robust governance structures to support the delivery and evaluation of the improvement plan (Improvement Group to review to ensure achieved by the completion date)</p> <p>Independent scrutineer to conduct a review of the LSCP Executive and the sub-groups with recommendations on developments to enable the partnership to improve its effectiveness and impact for children and young people (Safeguarding Children's Partnership Executive to ensure achieved by the completion date)</p> <p>Deliver the improvement plan and scrutinise impact on outcomes for children and young people at risk of exploitation (Monthly by the Improvement Executive Board)</p>	
<p><b>Key Mitigating Controls:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A partnership review was completed immediately following the inspection to ensure that all children and young people at risk of exploitation had the right plans in place to support them. No child/ young person was identified as being at immediate risk.</li> <li>We have a comprehensive partnership improvement plan in place to address the recommendations from the JTAI inspection.</li> <li>An independent scrutineer has been recruited to provide scrutiny to the partnership.</li> <li>Meetings of the Executive Group of the Safeguarding Children's Partnership have been increased to bi-monthly from quarterly to support increased pace of change.</li> <li>An Executive Board is in place which consists of the Chief Executive of the council, Chief Constable and Chief Nurse, which scrutinises partnership progress against the improvement plan.</li> <li>A strategic improvement group is in place which is focused on delivery of the improvement plan.</li> <li>All exploitation screening tools received by the front door are now reviewed within 24 hours and managed as a contact. This involves partnership information gathering, analysis by an experienced social worker and management approval of the most appropriate course of action. A decision will be made on the same day either to progress to a referral to children's social care and allocated to a social worker or into early help and prevention and allocated to an early help practitioner. Statutory intervention commences immediately including a visit to the child and the initiation of a child and family assessment, and specific risk mitigation now begins without delay.</li> </ul>	

- The integrated front door meeting now retrospectively reviews the immediate safety planning for all children at risk of exploitation who have been referred into either children's social care or early help in the previous 7 days.
- Performance is monitored on a monthly basis by services. The children and families quarterly scorecard is reviewed at the Children and Families Committee and the Safeguarding Review Meeting attended by the chief executive and lead member for children and families. The Safeguarding Review Meeting includes discussion of workforce pressures and risks.
- Audits of practice are completed quarterly to evaluate the quality of practice and the effectiveness of service improvements.

**Lead Service Committee:** Children and Families Committee

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*Working for a brighter future together*

## **Corporate Policy Committee**

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<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	1 December 2022
<b>Report Title:</b>	Health and Safety Update 2022/23
<b>Report of:</b>	Jane Burns, Executive Director Corporate Services
<b>Report Reference No:</b>	CP/56/22-23
<b>Ward(s) Affected:</b>	All

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### **1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to ensure Members of the Corporate Policy Committee are briefed on the health, safety and wellbeing of the organisation and understand how the Council's responsibilities as an employer and to members of the public are met. The Corporate Health and Safety Forum, which consists of representatives from management and the Trade Unions, meets on a quarterly basis and provides both an overview and a route for escalation.

### **2. Executive Summary**

- 2.1. This report and the appendix provide a summary of data regarding accident and information data for the Council and maintained schools for the first two quarters of 2022/23 and comparative data for the same periods in the last three years.

### **3. Recommendations**

- 3.1. That the Corporate Policy Committee note the update.

### **4. Reasons for Recommendations**

- 4.1. To ensure that Members are aware of Health and Safety activity and developments in line with the Committee's terms of reference.

### **5. Other Options Considered**

- 5.1. Not applicable

## 6. Background

- 6.1. Table 1 sets out the key accident and incident data for Quarter 1 and Quarter 2 2022/23, with comparison data for the previous 3 years.

Table 1

<b>Council (EMPLOYEES)</b>	Q1 22/23	Q1 21/22	Q1 20/21	Q1 19/20
Average Head Count	3,514	3,573	3,601	3,554
Accidents	31	29	22	68
RIDDOR Reportable	0	1	1	-
Incident Rate	8.8	8.1	6.1	19.1
<b>Schools (EMPLOYEES)</b>	Q1 22/23	Q1 21/22	Q1 20/21	Q1 19/20
Average Head Count	2,501	3,004	3,029	3,198
Accidents	17	19	4	27
RIDDOR Reportable	1	2	-	2
Incident Rate	6.8	6.3	1.3	8.4
<b>Council (MOTP)</b>	Q1 22/23	Q1 21/22	Q1 20/21	Q1 19/20
Accidents	131	99	83	140
RIDDOR Reportable	1	-	1	-
<b>Schools (MOTP)</b>	Q1 22/23	Q1 21/22	Q1 20/21	Q1 19/20
Accidents	72	115	87	87
RIDDOR Reportable	1	1	-	-
<b>Total Accidents</b>	Q1 22/23	Q1 21/22	Q1 20/21	Q1 19/20
Council	162	128	105	208
Schools	89	134	91	114
<b>Incidents</b>	Q1 22/23	Q1 21/22	Q1 20/21	Q1 19/20
Council	89	114	55	133
Schools	11	5	13	13

<b>Council (EMPLOYEES)</b>	Q2 22/23	Q2 21/22	Q2 20/21	Q2 19/20
Average Head Count	3,590	3,585	3,660	3,593
Accidents	38	46	42	67
RIDDOR Reportable	1	3	1	5
Incident Rate	10.6	12.8	11.5	18.6
<b>Schools (EMPLOYEES)</b>	Q2 22/23	Q2 21/22	Q2 20/21	Q2 19/20
Average Head Count	2,526	2,994	3,113	3,079
Accidents	15	19	15	13
RIDDOR Reportable	1	2	-	2
Incident Rate	5.9	6.3	4.8	4.2
<b>Council (MOTP)</b>	Q2 22/23	Q2 21/22	Q2 20/21	Q2 19/20
Accidents	144	114	93	200
RIDDOR Reportable	1	1	1	4
<b>Schools (MOTP)</b>	Q2 22/23	Q2 21/22	Q2 20/21	Q2 19/20
Accidents	39	95	27	71
RIDDOR Reportable	-	1	-	3
<b>Total Accidents</b>	Q2 22/23	Q2 21/22	Q2 20/21	Q2 19/20
Council	182	160	135	267
Schools	54	114	42	84
<b>Incidents</b>	Q2 22/23	Q2 21/22	Q2 20/21	Q2 19/20
Council	93	96	131	122
Schools	8	5	-	7

- 6.2. This length of comparison data is included to provide meaningful context, given the impact of lockdown restrictions during the previous two years which restricted the number of employees in buildings, presence in school locations, and the impact on members of the public on Council premises/land, and generally saw significantly lower rates of accidents and incidents. Appendix A provides more detailed trend analysis of accident and incident information for the Council and maintained schools
- 6.3. An accident is an unplanned and uncontrolled event which causes injury to persons, damage to property or a combination of both. Examples include a fall resulting in a fracture, incorrect operation of machinery leading to a breakdown, an act of non-consensual physical violence done to a person at work.
- 6.4. Accident and incident/near miss reports are recorded for members of staff and for members of the public. This covers Council and school staff/employees, and members of the public who are injured or have a near miss on Council land, or while receiving services provided by the Council.
- 6.5. Recorded accidents for Council employees; Quarter 1 (April – June) accident numbers remain consistent with the previous two years figures, still significantly lower than the pre-Covid figures. Quarter 2 (July – September) by comparison shows a small drop. This may be due to staff absences increasing over the summer period, rather than under-reporting of accidents.
- 6.6. Recorded accidents for staff in maintained schools; in both quarters, accident numbers are broadly consistent with the previous year, but have not returned to the pre-covid year levels for Q1. Some caution needs to be exercised in comparing the levels in maintained schools as the overall number of maintained schools lowers through academisation. Q2 figures are generally lower because of the summer holidays.
- 6.7. Recorded accidents for members of the public on Council premises, land or in receipt of Council services; we have seen an increase in the accident figures for both Q1 and Q2 2022/23 by comparison to previous years, although both are still lower than the 2019/20 period.
- 6.8. In a school context, accidents and incidents to pupils are treated and recorded as members of the public. As the RIDDOR reporting guidance is to record when a person is taken directly to hospital for treatment, many accidents are initially flagged as RIDDORs as pupils attend hospital as a precaution. The Health and Safety Executive advice is for these to be reported under RIDDOR only where there is a fault with equipment, facilities or the accident arose as a lack of supervision.
- 6.9. Recorded accidents for members of the public in maintained schools; for both quarters, accident numbers are significantly lower than the same period in the previous year, and lower than the 2019/20 period. Further

analysis of the figures hasn't shown any reasons behind the drop in numbers, but as previously referenced, Q2 does cover the summer holiday period.

- 6.10.** An incident, or near miss is an unplanned and uncontrolled event which does not cause injury or damage but could do so. Services use this to record any incident that involves verbal abuse, threatening behaviour, offensive language towards staff, and so it represents each service areas differing needs.
- 6.11.** The number of incidents reported in both Q1 and Q2 2022/23 appears to be lower than the comparable periods in previous years. Reminders will be shared through the Corporate Health and Safety Forum to ensure incidents are captured on the accident and incident reporting system.
- 6.12.** The data in Table 1 also includes events which have been reported under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases, or Dangerous Occurrence Regulations (RIDDOR). These regulations require the employer to report certain categories of accident, injury, certain diseases, and certain types of dangerous occurrences (those which had the potential to cause injury) to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). Also reportable are accidents where the injury results in the person being off work for more than 7 days. The HSE may choose to further investigate these reports.
- 6.13.** An incident, although an event where no physical injury occurs, may still be reportable under RIDDOR depending on the circumstances. Data is provided on events reported from Council staff, School Staff and Members of the Public (MOTP).
- 6.14.** During Quarter 1 there were no RIDDOR reportable accidents to staff in maintained schools or to Council staff, with one RIDDOR reportable accident relating to a member of the public in Council services or on Council land, and one RIDDOR reportable accident to a member of the Public (Pupil) at a maintained school.
  - 6.14.1.** A member of the public fell on steps in Queens Park and hurt their ankle. Examination at hospital showed the injury to be a bad sprain. The steps were inspected and corrected.
  - 6.14.2.** A pupil at a High School was slightly scalded during a science lesson by chemicals. This was thoroughly treated at the school, and the pupil attended A&E as a precautionary measure, where further examination confirmed no further issues.
- 6.15.** During Quarter 2 there were no RIDDOR reportable accidents for pupils (members of the public) in maintained schools. There was one RIDDOR reportable accident relating to a member of Council staff, one member of the public on Council land, and one relating to a member of staff at a maintained school.

- 6.15.1. A member of the public fell off their bike at Tatton Park and landed against the metal fencing; after initial first aid on site, they were taken to hospital to have a laceration treated. There was no fault with the fence, and so no remedial work required.
- 6.15.2. A Care4CE support worker slipped whilst mopping a tenant's floor as the bucket handle broke; they damaged their knee and were absent for over 7 days. New equipment was provided.
- 6.15.3. A teacher at a Primary School fell on a step entering the school building and was taken to A&E for assessment and was found to have fractured a bone in their arm. The accident was not caused by a defect, and all staff were reminded to take care when entering and exiting the building
- 6.16.** There are no accidents or incidents requiring investigation from the Health and Safety Executive in either Council or maintained school figures during the year to date.
- 6.17.** Data relating to the Council's Alternative Service Delivery Vehicles is not reflected in these figures. This information is reported to and considered by their respective Boards.
- 6.18.** Data relating to Academies is also excluded. Academies are responsible for completing their own accident reporting, including making RIDDOR reports to the Health and Safety Executive where necessary. There is no requirement for Academies to publish information in relation to accidents and incidents publicly, but arrangements for responsibilities for Health and Safety, including monitoring and reviewing activity will be set out in their Health and Safety policy, which they are required to have to ensure compliance with various Health and Safety legislation.
- 6.19.** A range of Health and Safety related training is co-ordinated by the Health and Safety team, in conjunction with the Council's Workforce Development team. This is provided to Council and School delegates. Course provision usually includes a variety of first aid training, including refresher and requalification training, and courses such as "Leading Safely" and "Managing Safely" supported by the Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH).
- 6.20.** Details of courses and attendance held in the year to date are provided in Appendix A; course provision held "face to face" has increased during the year. Course feedback continues to be positive, particularly around the care taken in delivering face to face training.
- 6.21.** Support to maintained schools is supplemented by a bought back advice and guidance service provided by the Health and Safety team. This is also available to Academies. Visits to schools were paused during the first national lockdown and have been subsequently provided through a

combination of 'virtual' and physical site visits, which have been positively received.

**6.22.** School visits have returned to the on-site format, although the decision for remote or on-site visit is confirmed between the school and the Schools Health and Safety advisor prior to the visit. Earlier in the year, the Schools Health and Safety Advisor was successful in taking their career next step in outside of the Council, and recruitment for a replacement role will begin shortly. The Council's Senior Health and Safety Advisors are undertaking the visits due in the interim period, as well as providing guidance to the Council's Education team, and individual schools as needed.

**6.23.** The Health and Safety team undertake reviews of policies on a rolling basis to ensure they reflect relevant legislation, current best practice, and the operation of the Council. Updates to existing policies are made following consultation with the Corporate Health and Safety Forum. Since the last report to Committee, the following policies and guidance notes have been reviewed and updated.

- Driving at Work Policy and Guidance Note
- Driving Minibuses Policy and Guidance Note
- Noise at Work Policy and Guidance Note
- New and Expectant Mothers at Work Guidance Note
- Safety in Caretaking and Maintenance activities (non schools) guidance note
- Event Safety Brief Guide
- Visitors Guidance Note
- Control of Contractors Policy and Guidance Note
- Stress Guidance Note

## **7. Implications**

### **7.1. Legal**

7.1.1. Activity relating to the summaries in this report contributes to ensuring that the Council's statutory responsibilities as an employer are met.

### **7.2. Finance**

7.2.1. There are no implications for the Council's MTFS arising from this report.

### **7.3. Policy**

7.3.1. Policy implications are covered in the body of the report.

#### **7.4. Equality**

7.4.1. There are no direct equality implications arising from this update report.

#### **7.5. Human Resources**

7.5.1. There are no direct HR implications arising from this report; the activity outlined in this report is to ensure the health, safety, and wellbeing of employees.

#### **7.6. Risk Management**

7.6.1. There are no specific risks arising as a result of this update report.

#### **7.7. Rural Communities**

7.7.1. There are no direct implications for rural communities arising from this update report.

#### **7.8. Children and Young People/Cared for Children**

7.8.1. There are no direct implications for children and young people arising from this update report.

#### **7.9. Public Health**

7.9.1. There are no direct implications for public health arising from this update report.

#### **7.10. Climate Change**

7.10.1. There are no direct implications for climate change arising from this update report.

<b>Access to Information</b>	
Contact Officer:	Josie Griffiths Head of Audit and Risk Management <a href="mailto:Josie.griffiths@cheshireeast.gov.uk">Josie.griffiths@cheshireeast.gov.uk</a>
Appendices:	Appendix A – 2022/23 to date Accident and Incident Statistics
Background Papers:	n/a

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<b>Council (EMPLOYEES)</b>	Q1 22/23	Q1 21/22	Q1 20/21	Q1 19/20
Average Head Count	3,514	3,573	3,601	3,554
Accidents	31	29	22	68
RIDDOR Reportable	0	1	1	-
Incident Rate	8.8	8.1	6.1	19.1

<b>Schools (EMPLOYEES)</b>	Q1 22/23	Q1 21/22	Q1 20/21	Q1 19/20
Average Head Count	2,501	3,004	3,029	3,198
Accidents	17	19	4	27
RIDDOR Reportable	1	2	-	2
Incident Rate	6.8	6.3	1.3	8.4

<b>Council (MOTP)</b>	Q1 22/23	Q1 21/22	Q1 20/21	Q1 19/20
Accidents	131	99	83	140
RIDDOR Reportable	1	-	1	-

<b>Schools (MOTP)</b>	Q1 22/23	Q1 21/22	Q1 20/21	Q1 19/20
Accidents	72	115	87	87
RIDDOR Reportable	1	1	-	-

<b>Total Accidents</b>	Q1 22/23	Q1 21/22	Q1 20/21	Q1 19/20
Council	162	128	105	208
Schools	89	134	91	114

<b>Incidents</b>	Q1 22/23	Q1 21/22	Q1 20/21	Q1 19/20
Council	104	114	55	133
Schools		5	13	13

<b>Council (EMPLOYEES)</b>	Q2 22/23	Q2 21/22	Q2 20/21	Q2 19/20
Average Head Count	3,590	3,585	3,660	3,593
Accidents	38	46	42	67
RIDDOR Reportable	1	3	1	5
Incident Rate	10.6	12.8	11.5	18.6

<b>Schools (EMPLOYEES)</b>	Q2 22/23	Q2 21/22	Q2 20/21	Q2 19/20
Average Head Count	2,526	2,994	3,113	3,079
Accidents	15	19	15	13
RIDDOR Reportable	1	2	-	2
Incident Rate	5.9	6.3	4.8	4.2

<b>Council (MOTP)</b>	Q2 22/23	Q2 21/22	Q2 20/21	Q2 19/20
Accidents	144	114	93	200
RIDDOR Reportable	1	1	1	4

<b>Schools (MOTP)</b>	Q2 22/23	Q2 21/22	Q2 20/21	Q2 19/20
Accidents	39	95	27	71
RIDDOR Reportable	-	1	-	3

<b>Total Accidents</b>	Q2 22/23	Q2 21/22	Q2 20/21	Q2 19/20
Council	182	160	135	267
Schools	54	114	42	84

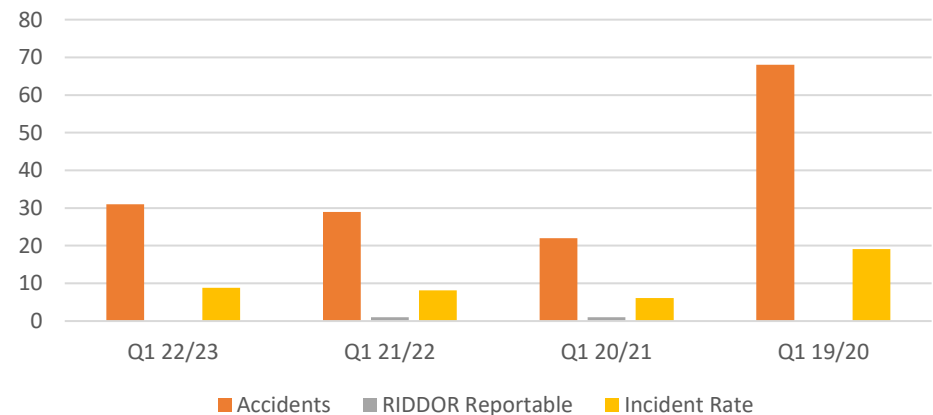
<b>Incidents</b>	Q2 22/23	Q2 21/22	Q2 20/21	Q2 19/20
Council	93	96	131	122
Schools	8	5	-	7

# Accident and Incident Statistics Quarters 1 and 2 2022/23

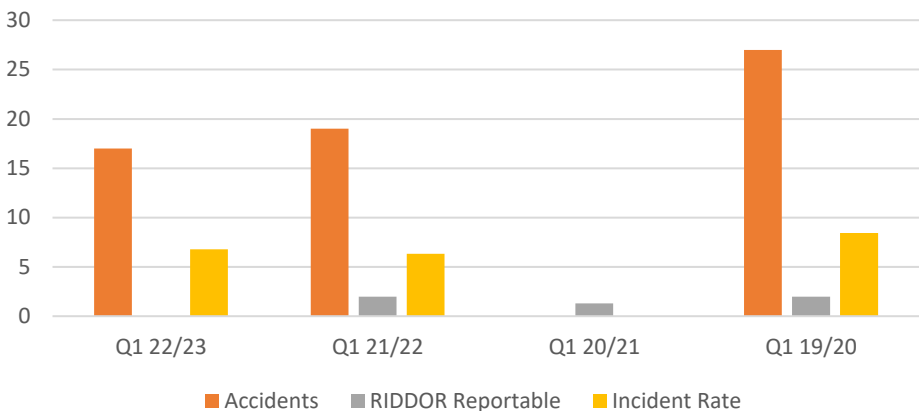
OFFICIAL

# Quarter 1 2022/23 and previous year comparisons

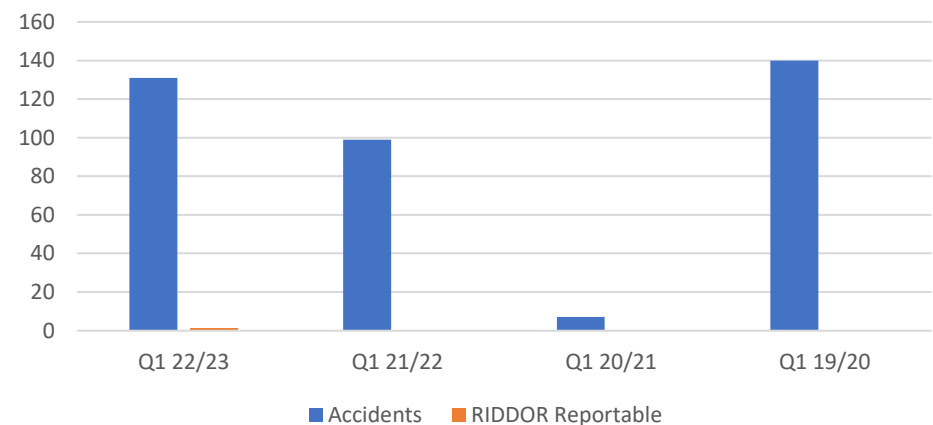
Council Employee Accidents  
Q1 2022/23 and previous year comparisons



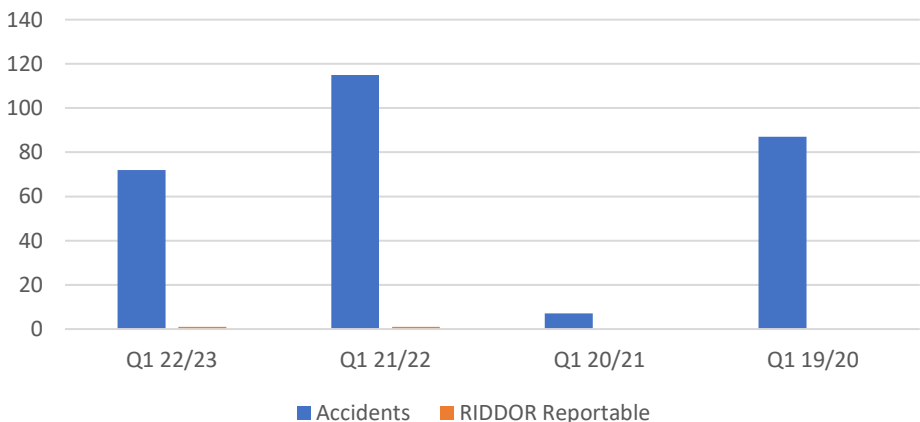
School Employee Accidents  
Q1 2022/23 and previous year comparisons



Council - Members of the Public Accidents  
Q1 2022/23 and previous year comparisons

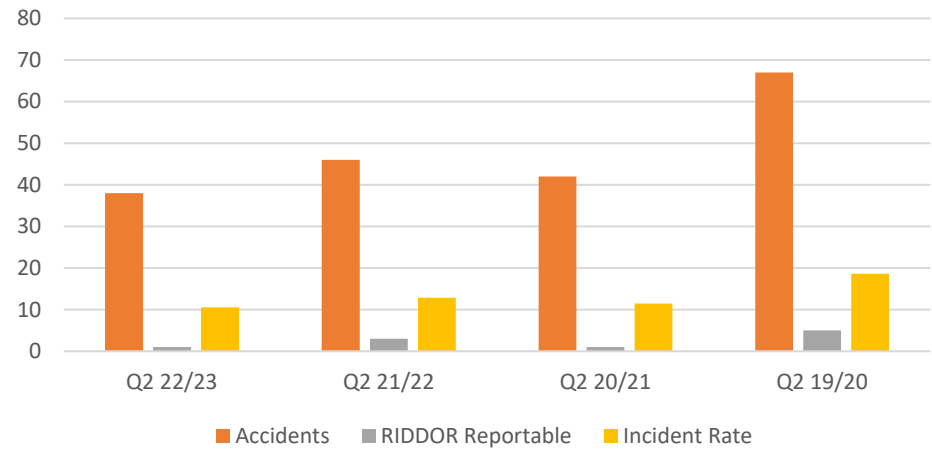


School - Members of the Public Accidents  
Q1 2022/23 and previous year comparisons

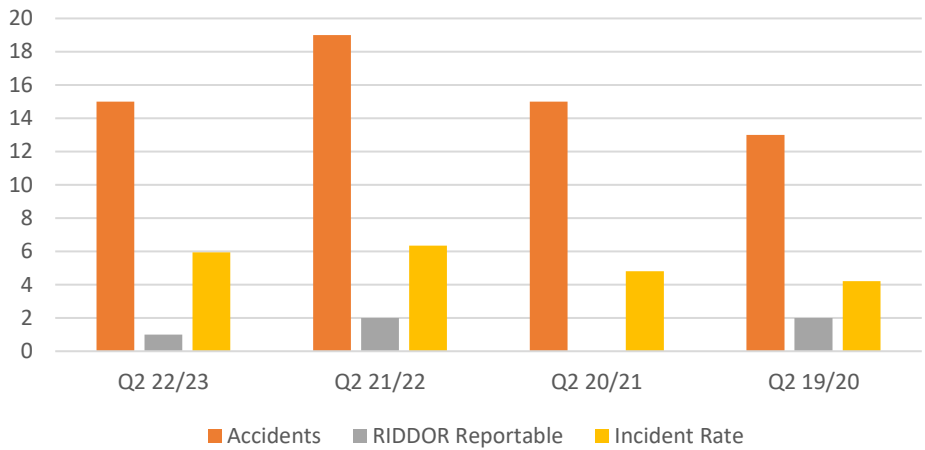


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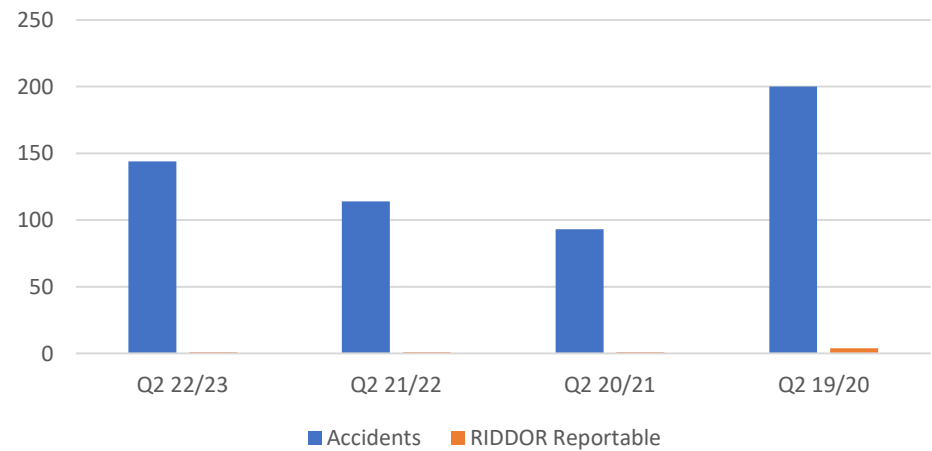
Council Employee Accidents  
Q2 2022/23 and previous year comparisons



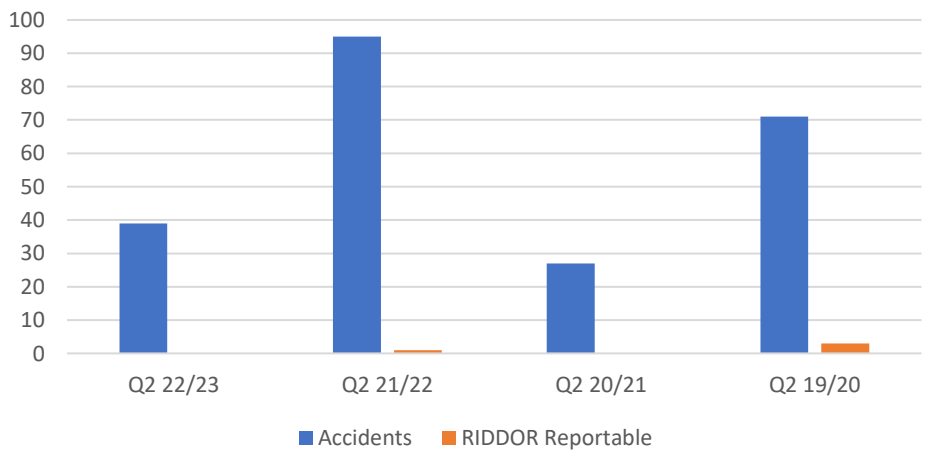
School Employee Accidents  
Q2 2022/23 and previous year comparisons



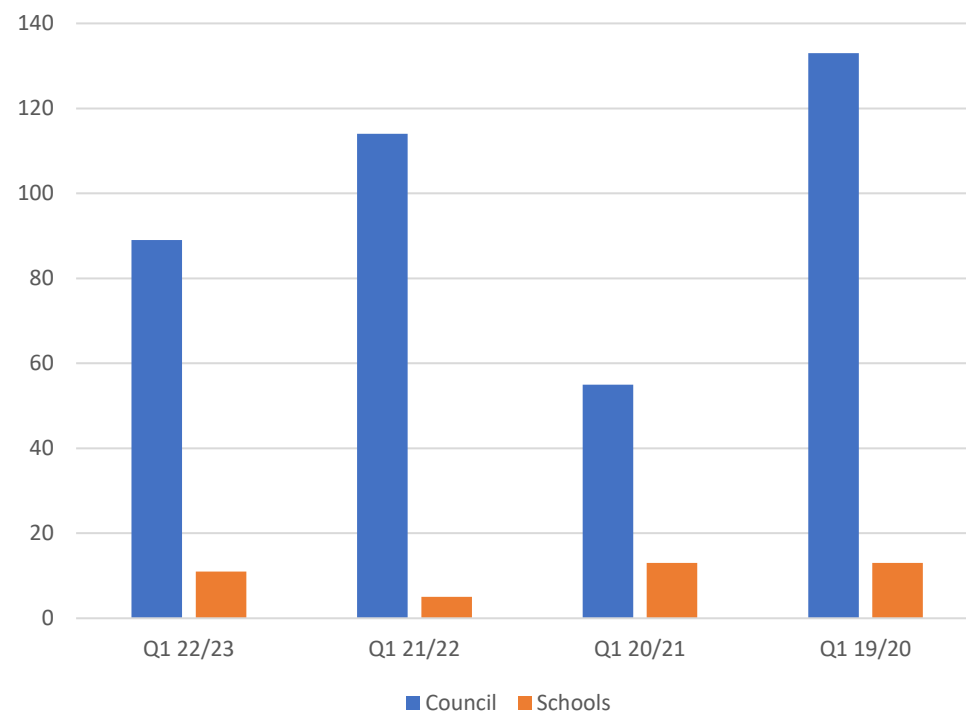
Council - Members of the Public Accidents  
Q2 2022/23 and previous year comparisons



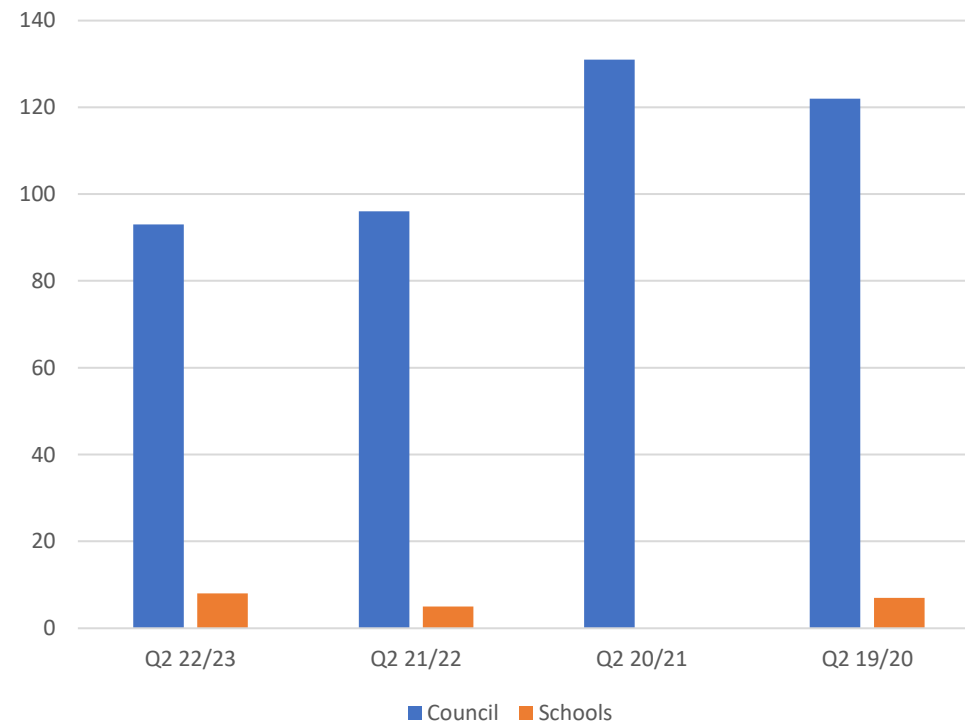
School - Members of the Public Accidents  
Q2 2022/23 and previous year comparisons



Incidents - Councils and Schools Q1 2022/23 and previous year comparisons



Incidents - Councils and Schools Q2 2022/23 and previous year comparisons



## School Visits – 2022/23

Type of School	Q1	Q2
Primary Maintained	18	3
Primary Academy	15	2
Secondary Maintained	1	0
Secondary Academy	2	0
Special	0	0
Special Academy	5	0

## Training Provision –2022/23 Year to date

Quarter 1			
Course	Number of Courses held	Council Staff Attendees	School Staff Attendees
First Aid at Work (blended-learning) (3 days)	1	3	2
First Aid at Work Re-qualification (2 days)	2	4	2
Paediatric First Aid (blended-learning) (2 days)	3	1	18
Emergency First Aid at Work (1 day)	4	19	6
Combined First Aid at Work and Paediatric First Aid (2 days)	1	1	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>34</b>
Quarter 2 2022/23			
Course	Number of Courses held	Council Staff Attendees	School Staff Attendees
First Aid at Work (blended-learning) (3 days)	2	14	1
First Aid at Work Re-qualification (2 days)	5	18	7
Paediatric First Aid (blended-learning) (2 days)	1	0	7
Emergency First Aid at Work (1 day)	2	0	18
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>33</b>



*Working for a brighter future together*

## **Corporate Policy Committee**

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<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	1 December 2022
<b>Report Title:</b>	Domestic Taxbase 2023/24
<b>Report of:</b>	Alex Thompson, Director of Finance and Customer Services
<b>Report Reference No:</b>	CP/43/22-23
<b>Ward(s) Affected:</b>	All

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### **1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1. This report sets out the Council taxbase calculation 2023/24 for recommendation from Corporate Policy Committee to Council in December 2022.

### **2. Executive Summary**

- 2.1. The calculation sets out the estimates of new homes less the expected level of discounts and the level of Council Tax Support (CTS). This results in a band D equivalent taxbase position for each Town and Parish Council.
- 2.2. The taxbase reflects an increase of £3.6m (1.4%) on the 2022/23 budgeted position which is £0.8m higher than the £2.8m (1%) forecast increase reported in February 2022, highlighting the positive changes locally. Additional new homes and more properties brought back into use over the last thirteen years, have increased the taxbase by 19.9% since 2010/11.
- 2.3. No changes are proposed to the Council Tax Support Scheme for 2023/24 other than to increase the income bands and non-dependant deductions in line with CPI. This continues the higher levels of support provided in 2022/23 to allow up to 100% relief for those on the lowest income.

- 2.4. The Community Governance Review concluded during 2022/23 and the taxbase now reflects the boundary and mergers changes that are due to commence from April 2023.

### 3. Recommendations

Corporate Policy Committee recommends to Council that:

- 3.1. In accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Taxbase) Regulations 1992, the amount to be calculated by Cheshire East Council as its Council taxbase for the year 2023/24 as 158,778.54 for the whole area.

Corporate Policy Committee note that:

- 3.2. The Council Tax Support scheme is agreed for 2023/24 as unchanged other than the increases in line with CPI as agreed in the last consultation and Council decision last year.

### 4. Reasons for Recommendations

- 4.1. In accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Taxbase) Regulations 1992 Cheshire East Council is required to agree its taxbase before 31st January 2023.

### 5. Other Options Considered

- 5.1. None.

### 6. Background

- 6.1. Cheshire East Council is required to approve its taxbase before 31 January 2023 so that the information can be provided to the Cheshire Police and Crime Commissioner and Cheshire Fire Authority for their budget processes. It also enables each Town and Parish Council to set their respective budgets. Details for each parish area are set out in **Appendix A**.
- 6.2. The taxbase for the area is the estimated number of chargeable dwellings expressed as a number of band D equivalents, adjusted for an estimated number of discounts, exemptions and appeals plus an allowance for non-collection. A reduction of 1% is included in the taxbase calculation to allow for anticipated levels of non-collection.
- 6.3. Processes to collect Council Tax locally continue to be effective despite the challenges of the covid pandemic and the impact on residents of the cost of living. Changes to Council Tax discounts, specifically the introduction and subsequent amendments to the CTS scheme are being managed and the forecast level of non-collection at Cheshire East has been maintained at 1% for 2023/24.



- 6.4.** The taxbase has been calculated in accordance with the Council's local policy to offer no reduction for empty properties except that Discretionary reductions of up to 100% for up to four weeks will continue to be allowed, for landlords, under Section 13A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.
- 6.5.** Analysis of recent trends in new homes, and homes being brought back into use, suggest an increase of nearly 4,800 homes is likely between the setting of the 2023/24 taxbase in October 2022 and the 31 March 2024. The impact of this growth is affected by when properties may be available for occupation and the appropriate council tax banding and this is factored into the taxbase calculation.
- 6.6.** In common with most Billing Authorities, Cheshire East Council charges a Council Tax premium of 100% on property that has been empty for 2 years or more in order to encourage homes to be brought back into use. The Local Government Finance Act 1992 (amended) enables Councils to charge a premium on empty properties.
- 6.7.** Additional flexibilities were introduced in subsequent Government budgets and Cheshire East now charges the following premiums for empty properties:

Time empty/unfurnished	Premium
2 to 5 years	100%
5 to 10 years	200%
Over 10 years	300%

- 6.8.** The taxbase also reflects assumptions around CTS payments. The Cheshire East CTS scheme was introduced in 2013/14 and subsequently amended following consultations in 2016/17, 2020/21 and was amended again for 2022/23 to make the scheme more supportive in the light of funding being provided by central government (£3.3m) to be able to assist the pandemic recovery.
- 6.9.** The funding for this Local Council Tax Support grant was received in 2020/21 and was transferred to the Collection Fund Earmarked reserve. The funding is used over the medium term to support the revenue budget to compensate for suppressed council tax levels as a result of higher Council Tax Support payments.
- 6.10.** No changes are proposed to the Council Tax Support Scheme for 2023/24 other than to increase the income bands and non-dependant deductions in line with CPI. This continues the higher levels of support for those on the lowest income.

- 6.11.** The taxbase and subsequent collection of council tax is subject to overall risks from a variety of sources, such as inaccuracies within:
- Numbers of new homes forecast
  - Levels of discounts and premium charges estimated
  - Under collection rate

Risks particularly associated with Council Tax Support levels include:

- Challenges over the medium-term economic position, especially in the light of increased inflation and economic slowdown.
  - The risk of a major employer leaving the area.
  - The risk of delay in the significant development projects delaying employment opportunities.
  - The prospect of a greater number of residents becoming of pensionable age and potentially becoming eligible for CTS.
  - The risk of increased non-collection due to the increasing demand on non-protected residents.
  - Recovery following increase in caseload as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic resulting in reductions in earnings and increased redundancies.
- 6.12.** The taxbase calculation also reflects the results of the Community Governance Review which concluded in April 2022. This will affect a small number of town and parishes where some will merge together, and some will have changes to their boundaries from April 2023. This has resulted in changes to the taxbase for the coming year in these areas. The number of town and parishes will also reduce from 114 in 2022/23 to 106 for 2023/24.
- 6.13.** Risks are managed throughout the year and regular monitoring and reporting takes place to ensure that preceptors are made aware of any possible shortfalls in the Collection fund.

## **7. Consultation and Engagement**

- 7.1.** The calculation of the taxbase is not subject to consultation.

## **8. Implications**

### **8.1. Legal**

- 8.1.1.** In accordance with the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000 as amended and Chapter 4 of the Council's Constitution, the calculation of the Council taxbase is a matter for full Council following a recommendation by Corporate Policy Committee.

### **8.2. Finance**

- 8.2.1.** The calculation of the taxbase provides an estimate that contributes to the calculation of overall funding for Cheshire East Council in each financial year.

**8.3. Policy**

8.3.1. None.

**8.4. Equality**

8.4.1. None.

**8.5. Human Resources**

8.5.1. None.

**8.6. Risk Management**

8.6.1. Consideration and recommendation of the taxbase for 2023/24 to Council ensures that the statutory requirement to set the taxbase is met.

8.6.2. Estimates contained within the Council taxbase calculation, such as the loss on collection and caseload for Council Tax Support, will be monitored throughout the year. Any significant variation will be reflected in a surplus or deficit being declared in the Collection Fund which is then shared amongst the major precepting authorities.

**8.7. Rural Communities**

8.7.1. This report provides details of taxbase implications across the borough

**8.8. Children and Young People/Cared for Children**

8.8.1. None.

**8.9. Public Health**

8.9.1. None.

**8.10. Climate Change**

8.10.1. None.

<b>Access to Information</b>	
Contact Officer:	Alex Thompson, Director of Finance and Customer Services Alex.thompson@cheshireeast.gov.uk
Appendices:	Appendix A – Taxbase 2023/24
Background Papers:	None

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## APPENDIX A

## COUNCIL TAX - TAXBASE 2023/24

CHESHIRE EAST	BAND D EQUIVALENTS	TAX BASE 99.00%
Acton	141.41	140.00
Adlington	637.36	630.99
Agden	82.67	81.84
Alderley Edge	2,719.00	2,691.81
Alpraham	235.40	233.04
Alsager	5,663.37	5,606.74
Arclid	211.69	209.57
Ashley	167.49	165.81
Aston by Budworth	207.08	205.01
Aston-juxta-Mondrum	90.17	89.27
Audlem	1,080.70	1,069.89
Austerson	48.04	47.56
Baddiley	94.87	93.92
Baddington	59.61	59.02
Barthomley	106.22	105.16
Basford	97.66	96.68
Batherton	31.20	30.89
Betchton	299.63	296.64
Bickerton	131.08	129.77
Blakenhall	72.93	72.20
Bollington	3,219.39	3,187.20
Bosley	224.40	222.15
Bradwall	92.95	92.02
Brereton	878.44	869.66
Bridgemere	70.41	69.70
Brindley	70.36	69.66
Broomhall	89.53	88.63
Buerton	243.93	241.49
Bulkeley	140.59	139.18
Bunbury	719.51	712.32
Burland	346.00	342.54
Calveley	138.76	137.37
Checkley-cum-Wrinehill	49.24	48.75
Chelford	845.28	836.82
Cholmondeley	93.27	92.34
Cholmondeston	92.60	91.67
Chorley	284.88	282.03
Chorley (Crewe)	62.01	61.39
Chorlton	655.09	648.54
Church Lawton	891.96	883.04
Church Minshull	223.05	220.82
Congleton	11,196.25	11,084.29
Coole Pilate	38.21	37.82
Crnage	706.97	699.90
Crewe	14,530.00	14,384.70
Crewe Green	94.30	93.36
Disley	2,099.24	2,078.25
Dodcott-cum-Wilkesley	223.74	221.50
Doddington	18.77	18.58
Eaton	186.54	184.67
Edleston	13.23	13.10
Egerton	37.27	36.89
Faddiley	83.18	82.35
Gawsworth	834.05	825.70
Goostrey	1,093.43	1,082.49
Great Warford	448.42	443.94
Handforth	2,476.80	2,452.03
Hankelow	189.77	187.88
Haslington	2,771.66	2,743.94
Hassall	112.85	111.72
Hatherton	190.08	188.18
Haughton	106.82	105.75
Henbury	379.91	376.11
Enhull	17.60	17.42
High Legh	906.41	897.35
Higher Hurdfield	334.01	330.67
Holmes Chapel	2,868.26	2,839.57
Hough	370.71	367.01
Hulme Walfield & Somerford Booths	293.92	290.98
Hunsterson	80.87	80.07
Hurleston	36.51	36.14

## COUNCIL TAX - TAXBASE 2023/24

CHESHIRE EAST	BAND D EQUIVALENTS	TAX BASE 99.00%
Kettleshulme	170.05	168.35
Knutsford	5,930.17	5,870.87
Lea	23.42	23.19
Leighton	2,032.55	2,012.22
Little Bollington	115.56	114.41
Little Warford	38.63	38.24
Lower Peover	74.49	73.75
Lower Withington	333.75	330.41
Lyme Handley	72.66	71.94
Macclesfield	19,171.04	18,979.34
Macclesfield Forest/Wildboarclough	118.37	117.18
Marbury-cum-Quoisley	146.80	145.33
Marton	123.00	121.77
Mere	461.30	456.69
Middlewich	5,017.43	4,967.25
Millington	86.95	86.08
Minshull Vernon	122.41	121.19
Mobberley	1,492.93	1,478.00
Moston	178.75	176.96
Mottram St Andrew	425.75	421.49
Nantwich	6,405.28	6,341.23
Nether Alderley	666.21	659.55
Newbold Astbury-cum-Moreton	363.75	360.11
Newhall	464.61	459.97
Norbury	110.38	109.28
North Rode	129.34	128.04
Odd Rode	2,028.17	2,007.89
Ollerton with Marthall	344.05	340.61
Over Alderley	279.45	276.65
Peckforton	79.85	79.06
Peover Superior	410.97	406.86
Pickmere	403.88	399.84
Plumley with Toft and Bexton	419.14	414.95
Poole	81.85	81.03
Pott Shrigley	163.89	162.25
Poynton with Worth	6,206.44	6,144.38
Prestbury	2,254.54	2,231.99
Rainow	617.81	611.63
Ridley	85.20	84.35
Rope	816.07	807.91
Rostherne	81.03	80.22
Sandbach	8,946.41	8,856.94
Shavington-cum-Gresty	2,559.04	2,533.45
Siddington	186.64	184.77
Smallwood	331.28	327.97
Snelson	84.31	83.47
Somerford	827.64	819.36
Sound	131.52	130.20
Spurstow	196.87	194.90
Stapeley	1,713.08	1,695.95
Stoke	112.44	111.32
Styal	369.81	366.11
Sutton	1,186.62	1,174.75
Swettenham	187.94	186.06
Tabley	248.45	245.96
Tatton	13.48	13.35
Twemlow	123.39	122.16
Walgherton	70.47	69.77
Wardle	78.18	77.40
Warmingham	119.58	118.39
Weston	869.15	860.46
Wettenhall	113.53	112.39
Willaston	1,618.55	1,602.37
Wilmslow	12,235.12	12,112.77
Wincle	95.14	94.19
Wirswall	41.51	41.09
Wistaston	3,372.24	3,338.52
Woolstanwood	242.38	239.95
Worleston	121.56	120.35
Wrenbury	543.64	538.20
Wybunbury	745.47	738.02
	<b>160,382.37</b>	<b>158,778.54</b>

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### Work Programme – Corporate Policy Committee – 2022/23

Reference	Committee Date	Report title	Purpose of Report	Report Author /Senior Officer	Consultation and Engagement Process and Timeline	Equality Impact Assessment Required and Published (Y/N)	Part of Budget and Policy Framework (Y/N)	Corporate Plan Priority	Exempt Item and Paragraph Number
CP/30/22-23	TBC	Financial Planning: Medium Term Financial Strategy 2023 to 2027 Consultation	<p>To allow the Committee to engage in the MTFS 2023 to 2027 consultation process</p> <p>The Committee will be asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Note the 2023 to 2027 MTFS proposals as related to the Committees responsibilities.</li> <li>- Provide feedback on the proposals as consultees</li> </ul>	Director of Finance and Customer Services (s151 Officer)	Public and partner consultation	No	Yes	Ensure that there is transparency in all aspects of council decision making	No

Reference	Committee Date	Report title	Purpose of Report	Report Author /Senior Officer	Consultation and Engagement Process and Timeline	Equality Impact Assessment Required and Published (Y/N)	Part of Budget and Policy Framework (Y/N)	Corporate Plan Priority	Exempt Item and Paragraph Number
CP/32/22-23	9 Feb 2023	Medium Term Financial Strategy 2023 to 2027	<p>To recommend the Medium-Term Financial Strategy for 2023 to 2027 to Council for approval. The report will incorporate the Council's Priorities, Budget, Policy Proposals and Capital Programme. The report will also include the Capital, Treasury Management, Investment and Reserves Strategies.</p> <p>The Committee will be asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Have regard to the report of the Chief Financial Officer on the robustness of financial estimates and adequacy of reserves.</li> <li>- Recommend the MTFS 2023 to 2027 to Council for approval</li> <li>- Note or approve financial management transactions, such as virement and supplementary estimates, as required by the Constitution.</li> </ul>	Director of Finance and Customer Services (s151 Officer)	Public Consultation December 2022 to January 2023.	Yes	Yes	Ensure that there is transparency in all aspects of council decision making	No
CP/33/22-23	9 Feb 2023	Annual Pay Policy Statement	To seek approval of the Pay Policy Statement 2023/24 – changes from 2022/23 will be highlighted in the report. Report then approved at Council.	Head of Strategic HR	N/A	No	Yes	Ensure that there is transparency in all aspects of council decision making	No
CP/34/22-23	9 Feb 2023	Media relations protocol review	To approve an updated media relations protocol.	Executive Director Corporate Services	Informal consultation with internal stakeholders prior to consideration by Committee.	No	No	Ensure that there is transparency in all aspects of council decision making	No



Reference	Committee Date	Report title	Purpose of Report	Report Author /Senior Officer	Consultation and Engagement Process and Timeline	Equality Impact Assessment Required and Published (Y/N)	Part of Budget and Policy Framework (Y/N)	Corporate Plan Priority	Exempt Item and Paragraph Number
CP/35/22-23	9 Feb 2023	ICT Strategy Update	To review progress with the ICT Strategy 2022-2025.	Executive Director Corporate Services	Yes	Yes	No	Ensure that there is transparency in all aspects of council decision making	No
CP/28/22-23	9 Feb 2023	Transformation Programme Update	To receive a report on the outcomes achieved by the Brighter Futures Transformation Programme and agree a refreshed Transformation Programme.	Director of Policy and Change	To be informed by the Residents Survey.	Yes	No	Ensure that there is transparency in all aspects of council decision making	No
CP/29/22-23	9 Feb 2023	Reporting Proposed Changes in Governance	Report from Constitution Working Group - Routine constitutional updates for Council 14 Dec 2022.	Director of Governance and Compliance (Monitoring Officer)	Throughout the year.	No	Yes	Ensure that there is transparency in all aspects of council decision making	No
CP/41/22-23	9 Feb 2023	Review of Outside Organisations	To receive the recommendations of the working group and make recommendations to Council.  Note: The member working group appointed to conduct the review believe that because of the amount of work involved, a final report to the Corporate Policy Committee in December will be challenging.	Director of Governance and Compliance (Monitoring Officer)	TBC	TBC	TBC	Ensure that there is transparency in all aspects of council decision making	No
CP/60/22-23	9 Feb 2023	Calendar of Meetings 2023/24	To recommend to Council the calendar of meetings for the 2023/24 municipal year.	Executive Director Corporate Services	N/A	No	No	Ensure that there is transparency in all aspects of council decision making	No

Reference	Committee Date	Report title	Purpose of Report	Report Author /Senior Officer	Consultation and Engagement Process and Timeline	Equality Impact Assessment Required and Published (Y/N)	Part of Budget and Policy Framework (Y/N)	Corporate Plan Priority	Exempt Item and Paragraph Number
CP/59/22-23	9 Feb 2023	The Future Model for ICT: Shared Service Review	The report will provide the final conclusions of the ICT shared service review and propose moving to a hybrid model. The report will also provide the outcome of a scrutiny exercise to provide assurance on the decision to move towards a new delivery model.	Executive Director Corporate Services	Shared Services Joint Committee	No	No	Ensure that there is transparency in all aspects of council decision making	No
CP/53/22-23	23 Mar 2023	Annual Review of Committee Decisions	To report on the decisions made by Service Committees during 2021/22.	Director of Finance and Customer Services (s151 Officer)	N/A	No	No	Ensure that there is transparency in all aspects of council decision making	No
CP/36/22-23	23 Mar 2023	Performance Outturn 2022/23 Report Quarter 3	To review the Performance Outturn for Q3.	Director of Policy and Change	N/A	No	No	A council which empowers and cares about people	No

Reference	Committee Date	Report title	Purpose of Report	Report Author /Senior Officer	Consultation and Engagement Process and Timeline	Equality Impact Assessment Required and Published (Y/N)	Part of Budget and Policy Framework (Y/N)	Corporate Plan Priority	Exempt Item and Paragraph Number
CP/44/22-23	23 Mar 2023	Third Financial Monitoring Report for 2022/23	<p>To provide information on the Council's performance against the financial strategy during the 2022/23 Financial Year.</p> <p>The Committee will be asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Note the financial performance in 2022/23 as it relates to: income and expenditure of Revenue and Capital budgets; movement in reserves; achievement of MTFS proposals across all Committees.</li> <li>- Note or approve any mitigating action as a consequence of the performance in 2022/23 in relation to the Committees responsibilities.</li> <li>- Note or Approve items being considered as part of the 2023 to 2027 MTFS</li> <li>- Note or approve financial management transactions, such as virement and supplementary estimates, as required by the Constitution.</li> </ul>	Director of Finance and Customer Services (s151 Officer)	N/A	No	Yes	Ensure that there is transparency in all aspects of council decision making	No
CP/37/22-23	23 Mar 2023	Strategic Risk Register Assurance Report 2022/23 Quarter 3	To provide update on Strategic Risk Register following a review of content at Q3.	Director of Governance and Compliance (Monitoring Officer)	Service area updates Early Feb 2022.	No	Yes	Ensure that there is transparency in all aspects of council decision making	No
CP/38/22-23	23 Mar 2023	Annual Cyber Security Update	To provide an update on Cyber Security, outlining key aspects and ongoing measures to protect against threats to CEC.	Executive Director Corporate Services	N/A	No	No	Ensure that there is transparency in all aspects of council decision making	No

Reference	Committee Date	Report title	Purpose of Report	Report Author /Senior Officer	Consultation and Engagement Process and Timeline	Equality Impact Assessment Required and Published (Y/N)	Part of Budget and Policy Framework (Y/N)	Corporate Plan Priority	Exempt Item and Paragraph Number
CP/40/22-23	23 Mar 2023	Census Data	To receive a report of the key Cheshire East data from the 2021 Census, subject to it being available.	Director of Policy and Change	N/A	Yes	No	Ensure that there is transparency in all aspects of council decision making	No
TBC	TBC	Locality Working	To consider an approach to improving the quality of life within the community and the way services are provided. The report will incorporate ways of working with parish and town councils and local Members' say in local decision.	Executive Director Adults, Health and Integration	TBC	TBC	TBC	A council which empowers and cares about people	TBC
NEW COUNCIL									
CP/1/23-34	13 Jul 2023	Appointments to Outside Organisations	Following the local elections, a decision is required to appoint members to the Council's outside organisations.	Director of Governance and Compliance (Monitoring Officer)	TBC	No	No	Ensure that there is transparency in all aspects of council decision making	No

## **CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL**

Minutes of a meeting of the **General Appeals Sub Committee**  
held on Tuesday, 23rd August, 2022 in the Council Chamber, Municipal  
Buildings, Crewe

### **PRESENT**

Councillor S Edgar (Chair)  
Councillor L Anderson  
Councillor P Butterill  
Councillor D Murphy  
Councillor J Weatherill

### **OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE**

Sue Kenyon, Legal Clerk  
Helen Rawlinson, Transport Manager  
Karen Shuker, Democratic Services Officer

### **7 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR**

#### **RESOLVED**

That Councillor S Edgar be appointed as Chair of the meeting.

### **8 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence.

### **9 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

In the interest of openness Councillor D Murphy declared that he was a Congleton resident and Congleton Town Councillor.

### **10 PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME/OPEN SESSION**

There were no members of the public present.

### **11 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

#### **RESOLVED**

That the press and public be excluded from the virtual meeting during consideration of the following item pursuant to Section 100(A)4 of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended on the grounds that it involves the likely discussion of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1 and 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 and the public interest would not be served in publishing the information.

**12 SCHOOL TRANSPORT APPEAL**

The Sub-Committee considered an appeal against a decision of the Council not to offer assisted school transport.

The Sub-Committee heard the appeal based on the written and oral evidence of the Presenting Officer, who detailed the local authority's case, and the written and oral evidence of the appellant and the appellant's supporter. Members of the Sub-Committee asked questions by way of clarification.

The Presenting Officer, the appellant and the appellant's supporter withdrew from the meeting, following which the Sub-Committee reached its decision.

**RESOLVED**

That the General Appeals Sub Committee agreed to adjourn the meeting to allow for provision of extra information.

The meeting commenced at 10.00 am and concluded at 11.26 am

Councillor S Edgar

## **CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL**

Minutes of a meeting of the **General Appeals Sub Committee**  
held on Tuesday, 20th September, 2022 in the Committee Suite 1,2 & 3,  
Westfields, Middlewich Road, Sandbach CW11 1HZ

### **PRESENT**

Councillor S Edgar (Chair)  
Councillor L Anderson  
Councillor P Butterill  
Councillor D Murphy  
Councillor J Weatherill

### **OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE**

Sue Kenyon, Legal Clerk  
Helen Rawlinson, Transport Manager (attended virtually via Microsoft Teams)  
Karen Shuker, Democratic Services Officer

### **13 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence.

### **14 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no further declarations of interest other than the interest Councillor D Murphy declared at the 23 August 2022 meeting whereby in the interest of openness Councillor D Murphy declared that he was a Congleton resident and Congleton Town Councillor.

### **15 PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME/OPEN SESSION**

There were no members of the public present.

### **16 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

#### **RESOLVED**

That the press and public be excluded from the virtual meeting during consideration of the following item pursuant to Section 100(A)4 of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended on the grounds that it involves the likely discussion of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1 and 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 and the public interest would not be served in publishing the information.

### **17 SCHOOL TRANSPORT APPEAL**

The Sub-Committee at its meeting on 23 August 2022 had adjourned to allow for additional information to be submitted in relation to the appeal.

This additional information was presented to the Sub Committee by the Presenting Officer and Applicant. Members of the Sub Committee asked questions by way of clarification.

The Presenting Officer and the appellant withdrew from the meeting, following which the Sub-Committee reached its decision.

**RESOLVED**

That the appeal be dismissed.

The meeting commenced at 10.00 am and concluded at 11.00 am

Councillor S Edgar



## **CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL**

Minutes of a meeting of the **General Appeals Sub Committee**  
held on Tuesday, 11th October, 2022 in the Committee Suite 1,2 & 3,  
Westfields, Middlewich Road, Sandbach CW11 1HZ

### **PRESENT**

Councillor S Edgar (Chair)  
Councillor P Butterill  
Councillor J Weatherill

### **OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE**

Nicola Burke, Adults and Education Lawyer  
Helen Rawlinson, Transport Manager  
Karen Shuker, Democratic Services

### **18 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR**

#### **RESOLVED**

That Councillor S Edgar be appointed as Chair of the meeting.

### **19 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors L Anderson, H Faddes and D Murphy.

### **20 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **21 PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME/OPEN SESSION**

There were no members of the public present.

### **22 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

That the press and public be excluded from the virtual meeting during consideration of the following item pursuant to Section 100(A)4 of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended on the grounds that it involves the likely discussion of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1 and 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 and the public interest would not be served in publishing the information.

### **23 SCHOOL TRANSPORT APPEAL**

The Sub-Committee considered an appeal against a decision of the Council not to offer assisted school transport.

The Sub-Committee heard the appeal based on the written and oral evidence of the Presenting Officer, who detailed the local authority's case, and the written and oral evidence of the appellants. Members of the Sub-Committee asked questions by way of clarification.

The Presenting Officer and the appellants withdrew from the meeting, following which the Sub-Committee reached its decision.

**RESOLVED**

That the appeal be upheld with travel assistance awarded until the end of the academic year and a review required for future academic years.

The meeting commenced at 10.00 am and concluded at 10.20 am

Councillor S Edgar

## **CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL**

Minutes of a meeting of the **General Appeals Sub Committee**  
held on Tuesday, 8th November, 2022 in the Committee Suite 1,2 & 3,  
Westfields, Middlewich Road, Sandbach CW11 1HZ

### **PRESENT**

Councillor S Edgar (Chair)  
Councillor P Butterill  
Councillor D Murphy  
Councillor J Weatherill

### **OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE**

Sue Kenyon, Legal Clerk  
Ian Marshall, Operations Support Manager, Transport  
Karen Shuker, Democratic Services Officer

### **24 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR**

That Councillor S Edgar be appointed as Chair of the meeting.

### **25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence.

### **26 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **27 PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME/OPEN SESSION**

There were no members of the public present.

### **28 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

#### **RESOLVED**

That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item pursuant to Section 100(A)4 of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended on the grounds that it involves the likely discussion of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1 and 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 and the public interest would not be served in publishing the information.

### **29 SCHOOL TRANSPORT APPEAL**

The Sub-Committee considered an appeal against a decision of the Council not to offer assisted school transport. The Sub-Committee heard

the appeal based on the written and oral evidence of the Presenting Officer, who detailed the local authority's case, and the written and oral evidence of the appellant and the appellant's supporter. Members of the Sub-Committee asked questions by way of clarification.

The Presenting Officer, the appellant and the appellant's supporter withdrew from the meeting, following which the Sub-Committee reached its decision.

**RESOLVED**

That the appeal be dismissed.

The meeting commenced at 10.00 am and concluded at 10.35 am

Councillor S Edgar